



LEAVES OF ABSENCE

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DISCUSSION OVERVIEW

1) Leaves of Absence

- Family Medical Leave (FMLA)
- Parental Leave
- Victims Economic Security & Safety Leave (VESSA)
- Funeral Leave & Family Bereavement Leave
- Etc.

2) Impacts of Paid vs Unpaid Leave

3) Timekeeping Requirements

4) Leave Approval Process

TYPES OF LEAVE OF ABSENCE

The leaves listed here are the most common leaves at UIS. It is not a comprehensive listing.

The U of I System regularly updates leave options as federal and state laws are updated. For a complete listing of current leave benefits, please visit:

https://www.hr.uillinois.edu/leave/university_leaves

FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE (FMLA)

- ▶ Provides employees with 12 weeks unpaid leave (accrued benefits may be used to remain in paid status) for each consecutive 12-month period for which eligibility criteria have been met. It may be used as a block of time, intermittently, or on a temporarily reduced work schedule.
- ▶ FMLA coverage protects an employee's employment with the University while on leave.
- ▶ Types of FMLA Leave:
 - Serious health condition of employee or eligible family member
 - Birth of baby or placement of a son/daughter for adoption or foster care
 - Qualifying exigency of an eligible service family member
 - Care for a covered service member with serious injury/illness
- ▶ Eligibility Requirements: Employed for at least 12 consecutive months and worked at least 1,000 hours in last 12 months.

PARENTAL LEAVE

- ▶ Grants employees up to 6 weeks of University-paid leave following the birth of a child, or upon initial placement of a child under 18 for adoption or foster care. Also granted to birthing parents in cases of stillborn or newborn fatality if the child was at least 25 weeks gestation.
- ▶ Automatically counted toward the 12-week FMLA entitlement for eligible employees. FMLA and Parental Leave run concurrently.
- ▶ Taken as a 6-week block of time or intermittently and must be used in full-day increments. Employees choosing intermittent leave must have the leave agreed upon with their unit supervisor prior to using it intermittently. Birthing parents must utilize a 6-week block of time unless a doctor's release is provided.
- ▶ All 6 weeks must be taken within 12 months following the date of birth or placement of the child, or the benefit is forfeit, and the benefit is limited to one event per academic appointment year based on first date leave begins.

VICTIMS ECONOMIC SECURITY & SAFETY LEAVE (VESSA) – 12 WEEK BENEFIT

- ▶ Provides 12 weeks of unpaid leave to employees during a rolling 12-month period for injuries caused by domestic, sexual, or gender violence, or any other crime of violence to employee or employee's family or household member (accrued benefit leave may be used to remain in paid status). May be used as a block of time and/or intermittently. All University employees are eligible.
- ▶ May run concurrently with FMLA leave, if eligible, and related to a medical condition.
- ▶ Types of 12-week VESSA Leave:
 - Medical attention for, or recovering from, physical or psychological injuries
 - To obtain services from a victim services organization
 - To obtain psychological or other counseling
 - To participate in safety planning and/or relocation
 - To seek legal assistance to ensure health and safety, including preparing for or participating in any civil, criminal, or military legal proceeding related to a crime of violence.

VICTIMS ECONOMIC SECURITY & SAFETY LEAVE (VESSA) – 2 WEEK BENEFIT

- ▶ 2 weeks of unpaid leave during first 60 days following notice of death of family or household member caused by domestic, sexual, or gender violence, or any other crime of violence (accrued benefit leave may be used to remain in paid status). May be used as a block of time and/or intermittently. All University employees are eligible.
- ▶ May run concurrently with FMLA leave, if eligible.
- ▶ Types of 2-week VESSA Leave:
 - To attend funeral services or alternative to funeral or wake services
 - To make necessary arrangements
 - To grieve the loss of family or household member

FUNERAL/BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

- ▶ 5 days University-paid leave for an immediate family member or member of employee's household.
- ▶ 1 day University-paid leave for a relative other than immediate family listed above who is not a member of employee's household.
- ▶ Expected to be taken within 60 days after notice of death and may be taken as a block of time or intermittently, but it must be used in full-day increments.
- ▶ Relationships that exist due to marriage terminate upon the death or divorce of the relative through whom the marriage relationship exists. Marital status is defined in accordance with Illinois State law.

UNPAID FAMILY BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

- ▶ 10 unpaid leave days for the death of a covered family member under the Family Bereavement Act (IPA 102-1050). May be used with paid Funeral/Bereavement Leave and/or accrued benefit leave to remain in paid status. Unpaid and Paid Funeral Leave run concurrently and do not exceed ten total days of leave.
- ▶ Expected to be taken within 60 days after notice of death in full-day increments and may be taken as block of time or intermittently. If using both paid and unpaid leave, all leave days must be used as a block of time in full-day increments.
- ▶ Eligibility Requirements: All University-paid employees that meet FMLA leave requirements are eligible for Unpaid Family Bereavement Leave.
- ▶ Relationships that exist due to marriage terminate upon the death or divorce of the relative through whom the marriage relationship exists. Marital status is defined in accordance with Illinois State law.

MILITARY LEAVE

- ▶ Leave granted to an employee for any period actively spent in military service, in accordance with State and Federal law.
- ▶ Compensation is in accordance with the Service Member Employment & Reemployment Rights Act. Compensation varies based on the reason for leave and ranges from 0-100%, with or without differential compensation. Employees receiving full or differential pay during leave are required to furnish copies of military orders and proof of military compensation prior to processing of payment by the University.
- ▶ Annual Training, Active Duty, Named Operation Overseas or Disaster, and Funeral Honors Detail are all considered eligible for Military Leave and have varying rates of compensation based on individual orders received.

DISABILITY LEAVE (SURS)

- ▶ Disability Leave is available for employees who have been absent because of an occupationally incurred disability, or who have been on leave for illness, injury, or disability including pregnancy. Disability Leave, specifically through the State Universities Retirement System (SURS), is a long-term disability solution that provides compensation from SURS while off work, if eligible.
- ▶ Employees must be off work 60 calendar days or more, must participate in SURS for at least 2 years, and must exhaust all Sick leave to be eligible.
- ▶ The length of leave is determined by SURS based on medical documentation and requires an application process separate from UIS. UIS HR will assist employee with process.

SHARED BENEFITS PROGRAM

- ▶ Provides employees up to 45 additional paid leave days when they are out on a block of time, have exhausted all Sick time, and have a SURS Disability claim pending. The Shared Benefits Program is intended to bridge the gap in the 60-day window from the time an employee exhausts their Sick Leave until SURS Disability picks up.
- ▶ Eligibility Requirements for Participation:
 - Must be Civil Service, Faculty, or Academic Professional staff
 - Must be employed at a 0.51 FTE or greater
 - Must have a cumulative accrued benefit leave balance of 11 days to donate to program pool
- ▶ Eligibility Requirements for Withdrawal:
 - Must donate one full day of Sick or Vacation leave to program pool
 - Must exhaust all Sick leave, and Vacation leave if applicable, prior to withdrawing Shared Benefits Program hours

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

- ▶ If you experience an injury or illness arising out of your work duties for the University, you must always:
 - Report incident immediately to your supervisor, even if you feel it is minor and doesn't require medical attention at time of incident.
 - Complete and submit the First Report of Injury/Illness Form within 24 hours of incident to your Supervisor.
 - Seek medical attention as needed and provide a written medical update from doctor.
- ▶ Supervisor responsibility:
 - Complete Supervisor section of First Report of Injury/Illness Form and submit to UIS HR (hkimb2@uis.edu) and U of I System Workers' Compensation Office (WorkComp@uillinois.edu) as soon as possible.
- ▶ If injury requires employee to be placed out of work for a time, UIS HR will assist both employee and unit throughout leave of absence and serve as a liaison throughout the workers' compensation process.
- ▶ Workers' Compensation leave time may run concurrently with FMLA leave.

IMPACTS OF PAID VS UNPAID LEAVE

- ▶ **Paid Leave**, whether University-paid or in conjunction with accrued benefit leave, ensures an employee's benefits remain unchanged while remaining in paid status. No further action is needed once a leave is processed and approved except reporting the leave time regularly and accurately in the employee's timekeeping system. The Leave Coordinator can help discern if/when an employee may run out of paid leave options prior to going into unpaid status to help plan for any issues or changes that may arise.
- ▶ **Unpaid Leave**, even while on an approved leave, may result in changes to an employee's benefits and insurance, depending on the length of unpaid leave and other factors. Employees and supervisors should notify UIS HR as soon as the employee is expected to go into unpaid status. Employees should also contact **University Payroll & Benefits** to discuss potential benefit options for them should they be absent unpaid for a time.

TIMEKEEPING REQUIREMENTS

- ▶ While on any leave of absence, employees are expected to keep their timekeeping records updated timely and accurately and account for any time absent from work. Each timekeeping system may have different ways of reporting leave time, but employees and supervisors may reach out to the Leave Coordinator, Heather Moore, for additional guidance on proper reporting of time.
- ▶ Errors can happen, especially around the time each system syncs with the BANNER system, if timekeeping is not updated in a timely manner.
- ▶ Timekeeping Systems:
 - ▶ AVSL – Academic Professionals
 - ▶ CS VSL – Civil Service Exempt
 - ▶ Department Time Entry – Civil Service Non-Exempt
 - ▶ FLRS - Faculty

LEAVE APPROVAL PROCESS

- ▶ Some leaves require HR approval and others require Unit approval only. Below is a list of leaves that require employees to go through an application and approval process through UIS HR. These leaves may not be used and recorded unless approved through UIS HR. Please reach out to the UIS Leave Coordinator to start the application process for:

- ▶ Family & Medical Leave (FMLA)
- ▶ Victims Economic Security and Safety Leave (VESSA)
- ▶ Parental Leave
- ▶ Military Leave
- ▶ Unpaid Family Bereavement Leave
- ▶ Shared Benefits
- ▶ Firefighter Training Leave

- ▶ SURS Disability Leave (This application is facilitated by UIS HR but SURS processes and approves/denies this leave.)

LEAVE OF ABSENCE CONTACT

- ▶ For questions or more information regarding leaves of absence, please contact:

Heather Moore, Human Resource Associate

- Email: hkimb2@uis.edu
- Phone: (217) 206-7020
- On Campus: HR Building, Rm. 30

**If you'd like to set up an in-person or Teams meeting with Heather to discuss your specific situation, please feel free to reach out and request a 1:1 meeting! Any sensitive or medical information discussed in this meeting remains confidential.*