

Maternity and Paternity Leave Policy

Table of Contents

1. Purpose
2. Scope
3. Definitions
4. Policy Statements
5. Maternity Leave Provisions
 - I. Eligibility
 - II. Duration and Payment:
 - III. Notification
 - IV. Job Protection and Return:
6. Paternity Leave Provisions
 - I. Eligibility
 - II. Duration and Payment:
 - III. Notification
 - IV. Antenatal Appointments
 - V. Job Protection and Return
7. Adoption Leave
8. Employee Benefits and Support
9. Compliance With Government of India Guidelines
10. General Provisions
11. References

Purpose

This policy aims to ensure a supportive, equitable workplace for new parents, aligning with national regulations and global standards, including the Sustainable Development Goals [SDG 3(Good Health and Well-being): Promotes physical and mental health of employees, ensuring time for recovery and bonding with the child; SDG 5 (Gender Equality): Ensures equal rights for men and women, supporting female employees through paid maternity leave and recognizing shared parental responsibilities; SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth): Provides decent compensation, job security, and career progression during and after parental leave].

Scope

It applies to all eligible university employees, including faculty and non-teaching staff, and covers both biological and adoptive parents.

Definitions

- I. **Maternity Leave:** Paid leave for female employees following childbirth or adoption, allowing time for care, recovery, and bonding with the child.
- II. **Paternity Leave:** Paid leave for male employees (fathers) or partners following childbirth or adoption, to support family care and parental responsibilities.
- III. **Eligible Employee:** Any full-time staff member, with minimum service requirements as specified, applicable to first two children only.
- IV. **Adoption:** Legal adoption of a child by eligible employee(s), recognized under relevant Indian laws.

Policy Statements

The University recognizes the rights of both male and female employees to parenthood, irrespective of gender or sexual orientation, and supports the balance between professional and family responsibilities. All provisions comply with the Government of India's Maternity Benefit Act, 1961 and amendments (2017), and UGC guidelines on leave for Higher Education Institutions.

Maternity Leave Provisions

Eligibility:

Female employees who have completed one year of continuous service are entitled to paid maternity leave. Valid for first two children, whether by birth or adoption.

Duration and Payment:

- I. 180 days (6 months) paid maternity leave, to be availed not earlier than six weeks before the expected delivery date.
- II. May be availed as a single block or split as agreed with Human Resources.
- III. Pay and benefits are maintained as per contract and length of service; university contributions to healthcare, retirement, and incremental salary continue uninterrupted.

Notification:

- I. Employees must inform their respective Head of Departments/Supervisors and the HR of maternity leave plans at least 30 days before the intended start date.
- II. The leave schedule and duration should be discussed and agreed upon with the supervisor.
- III. If the need for leave is not foreseeable, employees must request leave as soon as reasonably practicable.
- IV. In emergencies, the supervisor must be notified by the employee or their representative.
- V. Applications for maternity leave must be submitted via Darwinbox along with a doctor's certification of the expected delivery date or appropriate adoption documentation, at least 30 days before the leave begins.
- VI. Employees must contact their supervisor and HR no later than five working days before the scheduled end of their leave to confirm their return date.
- VII. Any changes to the return date must be communicated promptly to the supervisor and HR.
- VIII. Additional documentation or certification may be required by the University.

Job Protection and Return:

Employees are guaranteed re-employment in the same or equivalent role under the same terms following return from leave.

Paternity Leave Provisions***Eligibility:***

Fathers who have completed one year of service, for first two children (by birth or adoption).

Duration and Payment:

- I. 5 days paid leave, to be taken as a continuous period anytime within 26 weeks following the child's birth or adoption.
- II. Leave is fully paid; all employment benefits and service continuity are preserved.

Antenatal Appointments:

Fathers may avail up to three hours off on two occasions to accompany partners to antenatal appointments.

Notification:

- I. Employees shall inform their respective HODs/Supervisors and the HR of their intention to take paternity leave at least 30 days prior to the intended start date.
- II. Early notice is encouraged to support planning and adjustment of responsibilities during the period of absence.
- III. The leave schedule and duration shall be discussed and agreed upon with the HOD/supervisor.
- IV. If the need for leave is not foreseeable, the request shall be made as soon as reasonably practicable.
- V. In cases of emergency, the HOD/supervisor shall be notified by the employee or their representative.
- VI. Applications for paternity leave shall be submitted through Darwinbox, accompanied by a doctor's certification of the expected delivery date or relevant adoption documentation, at least 30 days before the start of the leave.
- VII. Employees shall contact their HOD/supervisor and HR no later than five working days before the scheduled end of their leave to confirm their planned return date.
- VIII. Any changes to the return date shall be communicated immediately to the supervisor and HR.

- IX. The University reserves the right to request additional documentation or certification, if required.

Job Protection and Return:

Employees have assured job protection and right to resume their previous or a similar position after leave.

Adoption Leave

Adoption of a child entitles eligible employees to applicable maternity or paternity leave, with the same duration and conditions as for biological parents.

Employee Benefits and Support

- I. All statutory and contractual benefits continue throughout leave.
- II. Leave does not impact seniority, promotion eligibility, or termination, except in cases of gross misconduct unrelated to parental absence.
- III. HR provides support for reintegration and addresses specific needs or concerns upon return.

Compliance With Government of India Guidelines

- I. The policy abides by Maternity Benefit Act (1961/2017), which mandates six months paid leave for female employees in educational institutions.
- II. University Grants Commission (UGC) guidelines for Higher Education Institutions are followed, ensuring adherence to all national and local statutes regarding parental leave.
- III. Absence due to maternity/paternity leave is treated as 'on duty' for the purpose of assessment, service continuity, increments, and career advancement.

General Provisions

- I. The University recognizes the importance of supporting family-friendly values and the role of both parents in child care.
- II. The policy is reviewed periodically to reflect changes in legislation, UGC, and Government of India guidelines.
- III. Discrimination or disciplinary action against employees for availing this leave is strictly prohibited under university policy, and anti-discrimination laws.