

1 Paid Leave – UW Policy Model

I. Purpose

The Paid Parental Leave policy provides eligible employees with up to six weeks of paid time off every 12 months for qualifying events. This policy aims to support employees in bonding with a new child, adjusting to new family situations, and balancing personal obligations resulting from a birth or adoption.

II. Definitions

- **Adoption:** The legal process where children become permanent members of another family while maintaining genetic and psychological connections to their birth family.
- **Birth or Adoptive Event:** The birth or adoption of a child under 18 on or after July 1, 2024. For adoptions involving a child incapable of self-care due to mental or physical disability, the age limit of 18 may be waived.
- **Child(ren):** A person under 18. The child's parent must be an employee of the City of Whitewater.
- **Foster Care:** Home-like care provided by licensed foster parents for children temporarily unable to live with their parents.
- **Full-Time Equivalent (FTE):** The number of hours budgeted for a position. 1.0 FTE equals 80 hours in a bi-weekly pay period; 0.5 FTE equals 40 hours.
- **Guardianship:** A legal relationship where one party is empowered to act for another's benefit, transferring decision-making authority and legal responsibility without terminating the parents' rights.
- **Kinship Care:** Care provided by grandparents, other adult family members, or close family friends with no parents in the home.
- **Paid Parental Leave:** Up to six weeks of paid time off in a 12-month period for eligible employees to care for and bond with a newborn or newly adopted child. The leave is pro-rated based on FTE.
- **Parent:** A person identified on a child's birth certificate, adoption certificate, or other legal document certifying adoption.
- **Qualifying Event:** Birth or adoptive event. For birth, it is the date the child is born. For adoption, it is the date the child is placed with the employee.
- **12-Month Period:** The period starting from the date of a qualifying event within which up to six weeks of Paid Parental Leave can be taken.

III. Guidelines

Eligibility:

- Employees must have a qualifying event on or after the policy's effective date and hold an eligible appointment with the City of Whitewater at the time of the event.
- Eligible employee is defined as an employee of the City of Whitewater who is entitled to accrue leave balances who has a qualifying event. Limited term employees are excluded from this policy.

Leave Provisions:

- Eligible full-time employees receive up to six weeks (240 hours) of Paid Parental Leave. Part-time employees receive a pro-rated amount based on their FTE.
- Leave must be taken within 12 months following the qualifying event. Unused leave cannot be banked or paid out.
- Paid Parental Leave can be taken continuously, intermittently, or on a reduced schedule with departmental approval (except for WFMLA-designated leave).
- Employees on paid parental leave will continue to receive non-salary fringe (dental insurance, health insurance, vision insurance, life insurance, accident insurance, sick leave accrual, vacation accrual) benefits provided under the Employee Handbook on the same basis as if working.

1 Paid Leave – UW Policy Model

Employees on Paid Parental Leave will also continue to receive compensation for fixed holidays on the same basis as if working.

- Employees may only be approved for Paid Parental Leave once during a payroll year.
- Eligible Employees must use all of their Paid Parental Leave within six months of the qualifying event. If an employee has any unused Paid Parental Leave six months after the qualifying event, that amount of leave shall be forfeited.
- All employees except those in 24/7 operated departments may use Parental Paid Leave intermittently, up to the six-month limitation. Employees in a 24/7 operated department may use Paid Parental Leave intermittently with the prior written approval of their supervisor.
- All employees except those in 24/7 operated departments may use PPL in order to work part-time, if that is an arrangement that works for their family. Employees in a 24/7 operated department may use PPL to work part-time with the prior written approval of their supervisor.

Coordination with Other Leave:

- Paid Parental Leave runs concurrently with FMLA/WFMLA if the employee qualifies for these leaves.
- Employees must follow normal procedures for requesting time off for non-parental leave reasons when on intermittent or reduced schedule Paid Parental Leave.

Limitations:

- Multiple births or adoptions on the same date count as one qualifying event.
- Stepchild adoption, surrogacy, foster care, kinship care, guardianship, and sperm donation do not qualify for Paid Parental Leave under this policy.

IV. Procedure

Notice Requirement:

- Employees must submit a completed Parental Leave Request form at least 30 days in advance of the leave start date. If 30 days' notice is not possible, the request form and notification must be submitted within 14 days of becoming aware of the need for leave.
- Additional documentation may be required based on the qualifying event.

Confidentiality:

- All medical information related to Paid Parental Leave is confidential and maintained in the employee's medical file within the Human Resources Department.

Reinstatement:

- Employees typically return to the same position held before leave. In limited cases, an equivalent position may be offered.
- Fitness for duty may be required if the employee experiences a serious health condition during Paid Parental Leave.

Non-Compliance:

- Providing false information may result in denial of leave, repayment of taken leave, or disciplinary action.

1 Paid Leave – UW Policy Model

City of Whitewater Request for Paid Parental Leave

Employee's Name: _____

Employee's Department: _____

Expected date of qualifying event: _____

Date the Leave of Absence will commence: _____

Probable date of return to work: _____

Employee's Anticipated Use of Benefit Time During Leave of Absence:

Please use this space to describe how you intend to use PPL during your FMLA/other Leave of Absence. Please make sure to note any time in which you intend to work part time. (For example: Feb 1 to Feb 28 – 4 weeks (160 hours) PPL and March 1 to March 28 – work part-time (80 hours), use 80 hours PPL)

Acknowledgements:

1. Please read the Paid Parental Leave in the Employee Handbook.
2. I understand that if I am eligible for FMLA, then I must submit an application for FMLA.
3. I understand that I must provide appropriate and timely documentation of the upcoming event. Forms of documentation include: a health care certification from a medical doctor, a certified copy of an adoption order listing the eligible employee as a parent, a certified copy of a foreign adoption order registered in the State of Wisconsin.
4. Eligible Employees must use all of their PPL within six months of the qualifying event. Any portion of the PPL remaining six months after the qualifying event is forfeited. The start date of an employee's PPL is at the employee's discretion, as long as the employee's PPL balance has not yet been forfeited.
5. Employees may use PPL intermittently. Employees in a 24/7 operated department may use PPL intermittently with the prior written approval of their supervisor.
6. Employees may use PPL in order to work part-time, if that is an arrangement that works for their family. Employees in a 24/7 operated department may use PPL to work part-time with the prior written approval of their supervisor.

Employee's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Supervisor's Approval (if necessary): _____