



Faculty Handbook | **C215 Parental Leave**

Approved By: Faculty Senate and UNM President

Effective: November 29, 2011 **Revised Draft 3/21/24**

Responsible Faculty Committee: Faculty Senate Policy Committee

Office Responsible for Administration: Provost and Executive Vice President_for Health Sciences (EVPHS)

Legend: Clean version for reading ease—proposed changes are not highlighted.

Revisions to the Applicability, Policy Rationale, and Policy Statement sections of this document must be approved by the Faculty Senate and the UNM President.

APPLICABILITY

This Policy applies to all academic University of New Mexico (UNM) units, including the Health Sciences Center and Branch Community Colleges. Agreements reached by collective bargaining will hold precedence over any element of this Policy for faculty members covered by the agreement. In areas where there are differences, the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) will hold precedence; however, parts of this Policy not covered by the CBA apply to all tenured faculty.

POLICY RATIONALE

UNM supports faculty in balancing their academic and personal lives. UNM strives to help faculty coordinate the needs and timing of an academic career and balancing the sometimes-competing priorities of their academic and personal lives. UNM is committed to creating an environment that supports faculty when the responsibilities of family life are particularly demanding by allowing faculty to take time away from work for caring for and bonding with children.

POLICY STATEMENT

This Policy provides one (1) semester of parental leave with full pay for a primary or co-equal care-giving faculty parent as defined within this Policy. Parental leave is not intended to take the place of medical leave for a birthing parent, but is granted in addition to any medically required leave. Faculty members may also take unpaid FMLA to arrange additional relief. For more information on FMLA refer to [UAP Policy 3440](#) "Family and Medical Leave."

1. Parental Leave Relief

The purpose of taking parental leave is to spend this time caring for and bonding with a child who has recently joined the household. All paid parental leave received by a faculty member

under this Policy will count toward the faculty member's Family Medical Leave (FML) entitlement, if the employee is eligible for FML. When parental leave runs concurrently with FML it will provide full relief from all duties and responsibilities. If the faculty member has exhausted their FML, the faculty member may still take parental leave, but the chair may request research and advising duties to continue during parental leave in accordance with departmental approved procedures.

Extraordinary circumstances such as multiple births/adoptions or events involving special-needs children may necessitate additional leave and/or flexibility and shall be referred to the Provost/EVPHS, or their designees, for a determination. Refer to Policy [C280](#) "Leave Without Pay."

2. Eligibility

Professorial and lecturer track faculty and postdoctoral fellows are eligible for parental leave if they have been employed at UNM at least one (1) semester at 0.5 FTE or higher. If both parents are faculty members, each is eligible for parental leave and will be reimbursed at their full salary whether taken consecutively or concurrently.

If both faculty members are in the same department, the faculty members and the chair will discuss how best to meet the needs of the department and the family including whether to take the leave concurrently or consecutively (preferable). Parents giving birth, spouses or domestic partners of parents giving birth, parents adopting, and parents accepting a long-term foster placement or fostering toward adoption, are all eligible for equal amounts of parental leave under this policy.

3. Eligible Events

Parental leave should normally begin within one (1) calendar year after a child is born or an adopted or foster child joins the household. Exceptions to the one-year time frame will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis in accordance with Procedures Section 3. herein.

4. Appeals

If a faculty member and the dean or department chair cannot reach agreement on a parental leave plan for relief, the faculty member may appeal the dean's decision to the Provost or EVPHS for a final decision.

Revisions to the remaining sections of this document may be amended with the approval of the Faculty Senate Policy and Operations Committees.

DEFINITIONS

Semester. For units that do not use the term "semester," semester shall mean a period of 120 calendar days.

Full Salary. This refers to the faculty member's guaranteed salary amount. It does not include:

- non-standard payments (see [UAP Policy 2615](#)),
- special administrative components (see *Faculty Handbook Policy* [C180](#)), or
- summer research or teaching (see *Faculty Handbook Policy* [C120](#)).

WHO SHOULD READ THIS POLICY

- Board of Regents
- Faculty and academic staff
- Academic deans and other executives, department chairs, directors, and managers

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Faculty Handbook

[C120](#) “Summer Session Teaching”

[C180](#) “Special Administrative Component”

[C210](#) “Sick Leave”

University Administrative Policies and Procedures Manual

[Policy 2615](#) “Non-Standard Payment Processing

[Policy 3415](#) “Leave with Pay”

[Policy 3440](#) “Family and Medical Leave.”

CONTACTS

Direct any questions about this Policy to your chair or dean.

PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

1. Role of Academic Leadership

Academic leaders and supervisors will attempt to foster an environment in which every eligible faculty member will be encouraged to consider freely the parental leave opportunity offered through this Policy. Deans, department chairs, and program directors should make every effort to promote use of this Policy. Individuals participating in reappointment, tenure, and promotion reviews shall not allow use of parental leave or family-related tenure-clock extensions to have a negative influence in the evaluation of any candidate.

2. Ethical Use

This Policy shall be promulgated, used, and applied within the intent and principles of the Policy and with the high ethical standards expected in all areas of academic endeavors and leadership.

The parent/s taking leave must also realize this is a revocable benefit under certain circumstances. The leave may not be used for outside work, whether part-time or full-time, for pay. The parent taking leave must also agree that they will return to work at UNM after leave has been taken for a minimum of time equal to leave time taken.

3. Relief

The faculty member should discuss the need for parental leave with the dean or department chair well in advance of the leave and when possible, in time for any alternative teaching, patient care, and other academic arrangements to be made. The faculty member and the dean or department chair will work together to develop a plan for parental leave that meets both the needs of the faculty member and the needs of UNM. They shall work together to minimize the impact of leave on students, grantors, patients, and other beneficiaries of the academic program.

4. Tenure Clock

The running of the probationary period will be suspended, unless otherwise requested in writing, when a faculty member is on parental leave. Subsequent mid-probationary and tenure reviews will be one (1) full year later. Deans, department chairs, and program directors should help faculty members to make informed decisions about suspending the probationary period.

5. Sabbatical

Parental leave time will count towards time worked to earn a sabbatical.

6. Extraordinary Circumstances

Extraordinary circumstances such as multiple births/adoptions or events involving special-needs children may necessitate additional parental leave and/or flexibility, and shall be referred to the Provost or EVPHS for a determination. These situations will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis to determine how best to meet the additional needs of the faculty member and UNM. These decisions will be applied consistently across UNM to ensure equitable treatment.

7. Program Review and Evaluation

The Provost's Office and HSC Office of Academic Affairs will review this parental leave program biennially to ensure that it is applied equitably and consistently across UNM within the intent of the Policy. This review will also analyze the program's impact on UNM's mission and faculty recruitment, retention, and satisfaction in relation to associated costs.

DRAFT HISTORY

[March 21 2024 –revised approved by Policy Committee to go out for review and comment.](#)

HISTORY

November 29, 2011 Approved by UNM President
November 23, 2010 Approved by Faculty Senate.