

Postdoctoral Appointee Time Off Policies

Effective July 1, 2020

Vacation, Sick Leave and Holidays

This policy summarizes the vacation, sick time and holidays available to postdoctoral appointees on 12-month appointments. Postdoctoral appointees with academic-year appointments that are less than 12 months will receive prorated allotments of the vacation and sick time described below.

There are two types of postdoctoral appointees: Postdoctoral Associates and Postdoctoral Scholars.

Postdoctoral appointees should normally be appointed as Postdoctoral Associates, who are employees of the University. However, if their funding source prohibits appointment as a University employee (e.g., NIH F32 fellowships and T32 training grants) or if the appointee is paid directly from their funder (e.g., paid directly from an agency in their home country), then the appointee should be appointed as a non-employed Postdoctoral Scholar.

Although the same benefits are generally available to both categories of postdoctoral appointees, some differences may exist as a result of federal regulations and/or funding requirements.

For more information on other types of leaves available to postdoctoral appointees, visit the Policies section of the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs website (postdoc.wustl.edu).

Vacation

Postdoctoral appointees are allowed 20 days of paid vacation leave per year. Vacation leave is not accrued, but is allotted in full every July 1. Unused vacation days do not carry over from year to year and are not paid out upon termination. Vacation leave will be prorated for the amount of time from the date of the initial appointment through June 30, and thereafter annual allocations of 20 vacation days will occur every July 1.

Use of vacation leave must be approved in advance by the postdoctoral appointee's supervisor. Postdoctoral appointees should consult with their supervisor for more information about how to request and report vacation time. Failure to comply with departmental policy may result in corrective action, up to and including separation.

Sick Leave

Postdoctoral appointees are allowed 12 days of paid sick leave per year. Sick time provides paid time off for postdoctoral appointees who are unable to work for any of the following reasons:

1. For their own physical or mental illness, injury, or medical condition (inclusive of FMLA qualifying conditions);
2. To obtain diagnosis, care, or preventative care, including dental care; or

3. To care for a child, parent, spouse or domestic partner (as defined under the Family and Medical Leave Act) who has an illness, injury or medical condition or who needs to obtain diagnosis, care or preventive care.

Sick leave is not accrued, but is allotted in full every July 1. Unused sick days do not carry over from year to year and are not paid out upon termination. Sick leave will be prorated for the amount of time from the date of the initial appointment through June 30, and thereafter annual allocations of 12 days of paid sick leave will occur every July 1.

Postdoctoral appointees should consult with their supervisor for more information about how to request and report sick time. Failure to comply with departmental policy may result in corrective action, up to and including separation.

Holidays

The official holidays for which time off with pay is granted are as follows:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Friday after Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day
- New Year's Eve

When a holiday falls on Sunday, the following Monday will be observed as the holiday. If a holiday falls on Saturday, the preceding Friday will be observed as the holiday.

Caregiver and Parental Leave Policy for Postdoctoral Appointees

Washington University recognizes that postdoctoral appointees must balance work obligations with providing care for their families. The intent of this Caregiver/Parental Leave policy is to provide eligible postdoctoral appointees with a dedicated paid leave to support them while meeting family obligations outside the workplace. *This policy will apply unless a postdoctoral appointee's funding agency requires different or additional leave.*

The policy provides eligible postdoctoral appointees with up to four weeks of leave paid at 100% of regular base pay to care for sick family members. The policy provides eligible postdoctoral appointees with up to eight weeks of leave paid at 100% of regular base pay to care for or bond with children within the 12 months following birth or placement via adoption, surrogacy or foster care. Leave under this policy may not be used for a postdoctoral appointee's own medical condition.

This policy takes effect July 1, 2020 and provides coverage for qualifying caregiver or parental leave events occurring on or after that date.

Eligibility

Full-time postdoctoral appointees (i.e., those scheduled to work at least 37.5 hours per week) are eligible to request caregiver/parental leave after completing 12 consecutive months or a full academic cycle of their full-time and/or academic-year appointment. Leaves requested prior to completing the service requirement may be granted with supervisory approval.

Spouses and/or domestic partners who are both eligible postdoctoral appointees may each take leave under this policy for the same qualifying event; supervisory approval is required for both appointees to be on leave at the same time.

Description of Benefit

Caregiver/parental leave may be taken for one or more of the following events, consistent with how those events are defined under the Family and Medical Leave Act:

- The birth or placement with the postdoctoral appointee of a child via adoption, surrogacy or foster care, within the 12 months following that event (Parental Leave);
- The care of the postdoctoral appointee's spouse/domestic partner, child or patient with a serious health condition (Caregiver Leave);
- The care of a spouse, child, parent, or next of kin who is a member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, and who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy, is otherwise in outpatient status, or is otherwise on the temporary disability retired list, for a serious injury or illness incurred by the service member in the line of active duty (Military Caregiver Leave);
- A qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that the spouse, child, or parent of a postdoctoral appointee is on active duty (or has been notified of an impending call or order to active duty) in the Armed Forces in support of a contingency operation (Military Exigency Leave).

Up to four weeks of caregiver leave or up to eight weeks of parental leave under this policy may be taken within a rolling 12-month period. This limitation also applies when the leave is used for a combination of qualifying events and when more than a single qualifying event occurs within the 12-month period. Additional leave may be available through other benefits or policies, such as paid sick time and vacation and unpaid FMLA leave.

Leave under this policy must be taken in full week increments, based on the postdoctoral appointee's regularly scheduled work week. If a partial week is needed, sick or vacation must be used for those days. For example, if a postdoctoral appointee requests 1.5 weeks of caregiver leave, one week of leave may be taken under this policy and the remaining half week must be taken using sick or vacation time.

Where leave under this policy also qualifies for leave under the FMLA, both leaves will run concurrently.

Applying for Leave

For foreseeable qualifying events, eligible postdoctoral appointees must notify their supervisor in writing at least 30 calendar days in advance of the start of their leave.

If leave is not foreseeable, postdoctoral appointees must provide as much written notice as is reasonably practicable under the circumstances. Postdoctoral appointees applying for leave under this policy will be required to submit the documentation requested to support the request.

Where the leave requested under this policy also qualifies for FMLA leave, postdoctoral appointees will need to submit the required FMLA forms and documentation, which may also suffice to support this policy's documentation requirement.

Postdoctoral Associates will contact Unum to request a FMLA leave and/or Caregiver/Parental leave in one of three ways: by calling 1-866-371-5723, registering for an online account via unum.com/claims, or by downloading the Unum Customer App ([Download for Android](#); [Download for iPhone](#)). [View details on Unum's online portal and app](#)

Postdoctoral Scholars should contact the WashU leaves team at: MyTimeOff@wustl.edu to request FMLA and/or Caregiver/Parental leave.

Miscellaneous

Regular University benefits (e.g., medical and life insurance, retirement savings) continue during caregiver/parental leave for benefits-eligible postdoctoral appointees.

Holidays occurring during caregiver/parental leave will be recorded as such and do not extend the leave period or augment pay.

Eligibility for leave ceases as of the termination of the appointment; unused caregiver/parental leave days are not subject to payout.

The University reserves the right to modify this policy in whole or in part at any time.