

Frequently Asked Questions

Paid Family Sick Leave for Faculty and Academic Staff

Who is eligible under the Paid Family Sick Leave Policy?

All full-time and part-time salaried faculty and academic staff on annual year (AN) and academic year (AY) appointments. Faculty and academic staff paid on an hourly or project pay basis are covered under the [Earned Sick Time Act](#) policy.

Under what circumstances can I use paid family sick leave?

Paid family sick leave may be used to:

- Care for a family member's mental or physical illness, injury, or health condition;
- Attend appointments related to the medical diagnosis, care/treatment, or preventive care of the family member's mental or physical illness, injury, or health condition;
- Address needs related to the domestic violence or sexual assault of a family member;
- Attend school or childcare meetings for a child's health, disability, or effects of assault;
- Address disruptions caused by public health emergencies as it relates to a family member.

Who qualifies as a family member?

The term family member is defined broadly:

1. a biological, adopted or foster child, stepchild or legal ward, or a child to whom the employee stands in loco parentis
2. a biological parent, foster parent, stepparent, or adoptive parent or legal guardian of an employee or an employee's spouse or an individual who stood in loco parentis when the employee was a minor child
3. an individual to whom the employee is legally married under the laws of any state or a domestic partner
4. a grandparent or a grandchild
5. a biological, foster or adopted sibling
6. any other individual related by blood or affinity whose close association with the employee is the equivalent of a family relationship

How much paid time off will faculty and academic staff receive under this new policy?

The amount of paid family sick time that faculty and academic staff receive is based on their appointment type (Annual or Academic Year) and employment percentage (FTE).

For full-time (100% FTE) employees:

- Annual Year (AN) faculty and academic staff receive 12 paid days of family sick time per year.
- Academic Year (AY) faculty and academic staff receive 9 paid days per academic year. If they work during the summer, they may receive up to 12 paid days based on the length and percentage of their summer appointment.

Overview of Paid Family Sick Leave Allocation for Full-Time Faculty and Academic Staff

Appointment Type	Duration	Paid family sick Leave Accrual
Annual Year (AN) Appointments	Full Annual Year Appointment	12 days of paid family sick time provided in full on July 1 of each year.
	Mid-Fiscal Year Hire	Prorated amount of paid family sick time based on the start date of the appointment.
Academic Year (AY) Appointments	Full Academic Year (9-months)	9 days of paid family sick time provided in full on August 16.
	Mid-Academic Year Hire	Prorated amount of paid family sick time based on the start date of the appointment.
	Summer Appointments	Additional 3 days of paid family sick time, proportionately allocated during the summer period when a salary is earned.

When does the Paid Family Sick Leave Policy go into effect, and how is the leave allocated for the remainder of this year?

The Paid Family Sick Leave Policy goes into effect on March 24, 2025.

Because this implementation occurs mid-year, faculty and academic staff will receive a prorated amount of leave for the remainder of their current appointment period:

- Annual (AN) employees will receive a prorated amount of leave from March 24 through June 30, 2025, based on their full-time equivalent (FTE).
- Academic Year (AY) employees will also receive a prorated amount of leave through the end of their current academic year appointment.

Full annual leave amounts (9 days for AY and 12 days for AN at 100% FTE) will begin at the start of the next fiscal year, July 1.

How and when do I receive my paid time off?

Eligible faculty and academic staff receive an annual allocation of paid family sick leave at the start of each fiscal year (July 1). The leave is available at the beginning of the fiscal year and can be used immediately, without a waiting period. There is no accrual over time, and unused leave does not carry over to the next year. Academic Year (AY) faculty and academic staff will be able to begin using their paid family sick leave once their official duty period begins on August 16.

Is the paid family sick leave tracked in a central system?

No. MSU will not be centrally tracking paid family sick leave for faculty and academic staff, and there is no requirement for units to do so. However, units may choose to establish local procedures if needed to support planning or coverage.

Faculty and academic staff have long managed caregiving needs by adjusting their schedules informally. This policy does not change that practice—it simply formalizes a bank of leave time, providing clarity and assurance that time off for family care is supported.

What if I am a part-time faculty and academic staff member? Am I still eligible for leave under this policy?

Yes, part-time salaried faculty and academic staff are eligible for paid family sick leave. However, the amount of leave you receive is pro-rated based on your appointment's full-time equivalent (FTE).

For example:

- A 50% FTE salaried Annual (AN) faculty member will receive 6 days of paid leave per year.
- A 50% FTE salaried Academic Year (AY) faculty member will receive 4.5 days of paid leave per academic year.

The leave allocation adjusts proportionally based on your appointment percentage.

May I be denied Paid Family Sick Leave if I cannot find someone to cover my class or responsibilities?

No, you may not be denied leave because a replacement is not immediately identified. The right to use Paid Family Sick Leave is protected, and faculty and academic staff are not required to arrange their own coverage as a condition for taking leave.

That said, proactive planning is important, especially when your absence may impact teaching or student learning. While your unit administrator is ultimately responsible for determining how responsibilities are covered, you are often in the best position to recommend and arrange for coverage strategies based on your course structure or departmental context.

Open communication with your chair, director, or supervisor as early as possible can help ensure a smooth plan for instructional continuity while supporting your need to take leave.

Is the Paid Family Sick Leave in addition to Parental Leave and Short-Term Disability? How do these policies interact?

Yes, the Paid Family Sick Leave is in addition to MSU's existing [Parental Leave](#) and [Short-Term Disability](#) policies.

Each policy serves a distinct purpose:

- Paid Family Sick Leave is intended to support faculty and academic staff in caring for family members or as it relates to a medical diagnosis, treatment, health condition, illness, etc.
- Parental Leave provides paid time off for bonding with and caring for a new child following birth, adoption, or foster placement.
- Short-Term Disability provides paid leave for an employee's own serious health condition.

These leave types may be used separately or consecutively, depending on individual circumstances. For guidance on how these leaves may apply to your specific situation, please contact the Office for Faculty and Academic Staff Affairs at FSAffairs@msu.edu.

What is the university's expectation for unit administrators in implementing the Paid Family Sick Leave Policy?

Unit administrators—such as department chairs, school directors, and other unit leaders—play an important role in supporting the consistent and thoughtful application of the Paid Family Sick Leave Policy.

This policy does not introduce a new practice, but rather formalizes and clarifies the university's commitment to allowing faculty and academic staff to take time to care for ill family members—a practice that has long been part of our academic culture. The policy helps ensure that all faculty and academic staff are aware of their options and that support is applied equitably across units.

The university's expectations for unit administrators include:

- Applying the policy equitably across faculty and academic staff, while balancing individual needs with instructional and operational responsibilities.
- Helping faculty and academic staff understand the scope of the policy and connecting them to relevant university resources.
- Encouraging proactive communication, so that anticipated caregiving needs can be addressed early and with minimal disruption.
- Planning for instructional continuity to ensure that student learning remains uninterrupted when leave is taken.

Although formal time-tracking is not required, units may adopt reasonable internal procedures to support planning and transparency, as appropriate to their local context.

Above all, the university encourages unit leaders to foster a culture of trust, flexibility, and fairness, recognizing that this policy reflects longstanding practices and helps to clarify and support them consistently across the institution.

What if an administrator is concerned that someone may misuse or abuse the Paid Family Sick Leave Policy?

The university expects that faculty and academic staff will use paid family sick leave responsibly and in good faith, as they have historically managed caregiving responsibilities with professionalism and integrity.

The policy is designed to support well-being and provide clarity—not to impose unnecessary oversight. While formal time-tracking is not required, unit administrators may establish reasonable procedures to help manage planning needs, such as requiring or encouraging advance notice when possible.

If there are serious or repeated concerns about potential misuse, administrators should address them on a case-by-case basis, following established university practices for employee conduct. In such situations, we recommend consulting with the Office for Faculty and Academic Staff Affairs or for guidance.

The goal of this policy is to build trust, flexibility, and fairness, recognizing that most faculty and academic staff are committed to their work and take leave only when truly needed.

Will there be centralized funding to support instructional coverage when faculty take Paid Family Sick Leave?

At this time, there is no centralized funding designated specifically for instructional coverage related to the Paid Family Sick Leave Policy. Units are expected to manage coverage using their existing processes and resources—just as they currently do for other types of leave that may affect teaching, such as FMLA, short-term disability, and pregnancy-related leave.

It's important to recognize that faculty and academic staff have long adjusted their schedules and taken time away from work to care for family members. This policy does not introduce a new practice, but rather formalizes and clarifies existing norms by codifying a defined bank of leave time.

We encourage proactive planning and open communication within departments to help maintain instructional continuity while supporting the well-being of faculty and their families.

How does the Paid Family Sick Leave Policy relate to the existing Medical Leave Policy (Short-Term and Long-Term Disability)?

The Paid Family Sick Leave Policy is separate from and in addition to the paid time off available to employees for their own serious health conditions under MSU's [Medical Leave Policy](#), which includes Short-Term and Long-Term Disability.

What is the difference between the Michigan Earned Sick Time Act (ESTA) and MSU's Paid Family Sick Leave Policy?

The Earned Sick Time Act is a Michigan law that applies to all Michigan employers. The Paid Family Sick Leave for Faculty and Academic Staff Policy is a University Policy that incorporates required aspects of state law.