

Frequently Asked Questions

Graduate Assistants – ESTA/Paid Family Sick

What is the Earned Sick Time Act?

The Earned Sick Time Act (ESTA) is a Michigan law, passed on Feb. 21, 2025, that provides paid time off for certain employees, including graduate assistants, for their own illness or injury and/or for their family member's illness or injury.

I am a graduate assistant; how much paid time off am I entitled to for a family member's illness?

The amount of time a GA is entitled to is based on their appointment. The time is frontloaded at the beginning of the appointment.

¼ time appointment – 6 hours per appointment

½ time appointment – 12 hours per appointment

¾ time appointment- 18 hours per appointment

Appointment periods are per term – fall semester, spring semester, and a combination of Summer I and II semester.

What is included in the definition of “family member”?

“Family member” refers to: (a) A biological, adopted or foster child, stepchild or legal ward, a child of a domestic partner, or a child to whom the employee stands in loco parentis; (b) A biological parent, foster parent, stepparent, or adoptive parent or a legal guardian of an employee or an employee's spouse or domestic partner or a person who stood in loco parentis when the employee was a minor child; (c) A person to whom the employee is legally married under the laws of any state or a domestic partner; (d) A grandparent; (e) A grandchild, (f) A biological, foster, or adopted sibling; (g) Any other individual related by blood to the employee; or (g) an individual whose close association with the employee is the equivalent of a family relationship.

I am a graduate assistant, what if I don't use my paid family sick leave during my appointment?

There is no carryover or pay out of unused paid family sick at the end of the appointment.