

## Family and Medical Leave for Faculty Members

Fort Lewis College is committed to supporting faculty members as they balance work with other aspects of their lives. Family and medical leave are available for faculty members who need to take time off work due to

- The employee's own serious health condition
- The care of a sick family member
- Childbirth or adoption

Such leave may be a combination of paid and unpaid leave but in all cases ensures qualified faculty members with job protection and maintenance of group health benefits.

### **Paid Family and Medical Leave:**

All full-time members of the teaching faculty are qualified for the following **paid** leave:

- 75 work days (15 weeks) of paid medical leave for a faculty member's own serious health conditions (with certification from a healthcare provider)
- 20 work days (4 weeks) of paid family leave for the care of a newborn, newly adopted child, or sick family member. The 20 days of family leave taken for birth or adoption may be taken any time during the first 12 months after the birth or adoption.

### **Unpaid Family and Medical Leave:**

The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 states that employers must grant eligible employees up to 12 weeks of **unpaid** family and medical leave during each fiscal year from July 1 to June 30<sup>th</sup>, with job protection and maintenance of group health benefits. Eligible employees are those who have been employed by the College for at least one year and worked at least 1,250 hours

### **Summary of Available Leave for Birth Mothers:**

In cases of births without complications, birth mothers who have been employed by the College for at least one year and worked at least 1,250 hours are eligible for 6 to 8 weeks of paid medical leave for the birth of a child plus 4 weeks (20 work days) of paid family leave for care of the child or **a total of 10 to 12 weeks of paid leave**. Because a semester is 15 weeks and in order to ensure a continuous education experience for students, it often makes sense for a birth mother to take a full 15 weeks of leave. In general, the additional 3 to 5 weeks may be taken as **unpaid** leave.

Many births, of course, do not fit neatly into the academic calendar. The aforementioned leave may be adjusted to fit the needs of the faculty member and her students.

Note: Healthcare providers typically certify 6 to 8 weeks of medical leave for birth mothers. Medical leave for childbirth usually begins the day of birth. In some cases, if there is medical certification, it can begin prior to birth.

### **Summary of Available Leave for Birth Fathers and Adoptive Parents:**

All birth fathers and adoptive parents who have been employed by the College for at least one year and worked at least 1,250 hours are eligible for 20 days (4 weeks) of **paid** family leave at any time during the first twelve months after the birth or adoption of a child. This leave may also be taken as a one 3 or 4 credit course release. In addition, birth fathers and adoptive parents are eligible for an additional 8 weeks of **unpaid** Family and Medical Leave during the first 12 months after the date of birth or adoption. Because a semester is 15 weeks and in order to ensure a continuous education experience for students, it often makes sense for a father or adoptive parent to take a full 15 weeks of leave. In general, the additional 3 to 5 weeks may be taken as **unpaid** leave.

Note: If both parents are employees of the College, federal law states that parents must share the 12 weeks of **unpaid** Family and Medical Leave. Parents themselves should decide how to divide the allotted 12 weeks of leave.

### **Summary of Available Leave for the Care of a Sick Family Member**

All faculty members may take up to 20 work days (4 weeks) of **paid** family leave for the care of a sick family member. This leave may also be taken as a 3 or 4 credit course release during one term. If additional leave is needed, faculty members may supplement the 20 work days (4 weeks) of paid leave with 8 additional weeks of **unpaid** leave.

### **Summary of Available Leave for Faculty Members Who Have Been Employed by Fort Lewis College Less than 12 Months or Who Have Worked Less than 1,250 Hours:**

Faculty members are eligible for 20 work days (4 weeks) of **paid** family leave from the initial date of employment. If additional leave is needed, the faculty member should discuss the situation with her/his chair and/or Human Resources. The chair should help formulate a solution that best accommodates the needs of the faculty member and her/his students and then provide to the dean an explanation of the recommended leave.

### **How to Request Family and Medical Leave**

Faculty members should schedule an appointment with Human Resources to discuss their unique situation and how College policies can accommodate their needs. Human Resources will determine whether the faculty member is eligible for paid and/or unpaid leave and will notify the employee, department chair, dean and provost of its determination. The faculty member should then submit her/his request for family and/or medical leave to her/his department chair. Every effort should be made to balance the needs of the faculty member with the pedagogical needs of her/his students. The

chair shall then provide to the dean an explanation of the recommended leave as well as the pedagogical accommodations that may be made. The dean will indicate support or disapproval for the recommendation and forward her/his determination to the provost. Final approval rests with the provost.