

Research Faculty Leaves of Absence – Frequently Asked Questions

Which titles fall into the category of Research Faculty?

Faculty with the following titles are considered Research Faculty: Research Professor, Research Associate Professor, Research Assistant Professor, Senior Research Investigator, Research Scientist-Professor, Research Scientist-Associate Professor, and Research Scientist-Assistant Professor.

What benefits are available for medical leave?

Full-time Research Faculty with at least 6 months of service are allowed up to 6 months of paid leave in cases in which a serious personal medical condition, or recovery following the birth of a child (typically up to 6 weeks of leave for recovery after birth, or longer as medically necessary), necessitate their time away from work.

What about parental leave?

4 weeks of paid parental leave are available for Research Faculty who have at least 3 years of continuous service or who are serving in an appointment of 3 years or greater at the time of the leave. For a mother who gives birth, this is in addition to any medical leave taken (see previous question).

Why is this information being shared now?

As part of the shift in administrative oversight of Research Faculty appointments from the Office for Research to the Office of the Provost, the Office of the Provost has worked with the Office for Research and with Human Resources to clarify policies in place to support Research Faculty, focusing first on leaves of absence. Research Faculty are a critical component of the University's research mission, and it is the University's goal to strengthen and provide clarity regarding the options available to members of this community who may need to take time away from work for medical or childbirth-related reasons.

How are the above leaves different from FMLA?

Any research faculty with at least one year (1,250 hours) of continuous full-time service will remain eligible for up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA). It is expected that any leaves taken for FMLA purposes would occur concurrently with those taken for self-medical conditions, including birth, or parental leave.

When is this change in oversight going into effect?

The Office of the Provost's administrative oversight of Research Faculty appointments, and the updated leave-of-absence policies for Research Faculty, are in effect beginning on September 1st, 2017.

Is the cost of these leaves charged to the grant that funds a Research Faculty member's salary?

Medical leaves, including those for medical recovery following birth, may be covered by the Central Benefits Pool after the first week. The costs of parental leaves will be charged to the same funding source(s) as the Research Faculty member's salary, consistent with policy and practices for other University populations.

How do I request a leave of absence if I need one?

Any Research Faculty members who find themselves in need of a leave of absence for medical or maternity/paternity-related reasons should contact Alex Rot, Director of Faculty Information in the Office of the Provost, at facultyrecords@northwestern.edu or 847-467-4127.

Where can I get more detailed information regarding the details of leaves of absence, including qualifications?

Individuals seeking more detailed information regarding these policies should contact Alex Rot, Director of Faculty Information in the the Office of the Provost, at facultyrecords@northwestern.edu.