

# ***Eastern Connecticut State University***

## *Procedure Related to Employment*

### *AAUP Request for Maternity Leave*

#### **Introduction/Purpose:**

In accordance with Articles 13.4 and 13.4.1 of the CSU-AAUP Collective Bargaining Agreement, AAUP members are asked to provide advance notice in writing when requesting maternity and related FMLA leave. This policy is intended to provide greater clarification during the request process while meeting the operational/academic needs of the University and the students we serve.

#### **Procedure Action Steps:**

1. At the appropriate time and upon verification from an attending physician of an employee's pregnancy status, the employee is requested to secure initial paperwork (e.g., doctor's note) to officially document the medical condition. The note should include the estimated date of delivery (EDD).
2. The employee will attach a copy of the doctor's note to the State of CT FMLA form (see attached) requesting approval for maternity leave. The request for leave should be addressed to the individual's department chair. At the same time, a copy of the form and the medical documentation should be submitted to the Office of Human Resources.
3. The leave request will be reviewed and forwarded through the Department Chair, the appropriate Dean's office, the Office of the Academic Vice President, and the Office of Human Resources for approval by the President.
4. The employee's request will be acknowledged in writing by the President and/or her designee.
5. A faculty member, in consultation with his/her academic department, may propose a plan for meeting academic responsibilities for the period during which the maternity/FMLA leave will be taken and/or for the balance of the academic semester involved. Such proposal will be subject to the review and approval of the Academic Dean, the Vice President for Academic Affairs and the President. Approval of the plan will be provided in writing to the faculty member within two (2) weeks following final approval by the President and prior to the employee going out on maternity leave. The plan approval will contain a calendar of the projected events of the leave establishing the days of paid and/or unpaid leave. When circumstances change the plan (e.g. change in delivery date), the calendar will be adjusted accordingly and the member provided a copy.
6. Employees are reminded that accrued paid sick leave days may be used during the period of medical incapacity (i.e., typically 6-8 weeks following the birth of the child). Paid leave may further be augmented by the use of personal (PL) leave days.

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Once all accrued leave time has been exhausted and/or the employee has been medically cleared to resume work, scheduled work days for the balance of the semester will need to be accounted for by either the employee reporting back to work and fully resuming all faculty responsibilities or by an approved plan as indicated in #5 above. This is necessary in order to account for each remaining workday in the academic semester.

7. Regarding unpaid leave, there may be occasions when an employee will not have sufficient accrued paid sick leave to cover the full period of medical incapacity until reporting back to work. Under those circumstances, members may elect to take family (FMLA) leave for the balance of the semester under the provisions of Article 13.4 of the AAUP contract which provides for “24 weeks of unpaid leave in a two (2) year period upon the birth of a child”. In these instances, an employee may be placed on unpaid leave pending return to work or until implementation of an approved work plan for the balance of the semester, whichever is appropriate. It should be noted that the 24 week period is based on a full-time leave of absence request. Requests for part time leave (50% work assignment) could afford a member additional leave on a pro-rated basis in the same 2 year period. Such a request would need to be considered as part of a proposed plan indicated as in #5 above.
8. While on leave, faculty members are instructed to complete necessary leave slips that will be submitted (on a biweekly basis) as documentation of accrued leave usage. It may be best to complete these slips in anticipation of going out on leave to eliminate any possible delay in providing notification to the payroll office.
9. For a faculty member seeking maternity/family leave related to a pregnant spouse, that employee may use all available accrued PL leave and available sick leave (**only when critical circumstances warrant such use, up to 3 sick days may be taken**) as provided for in the AAUP contract (Article 13.2). Any additional leave beyond PL and sick leave must follow the steps enumerated in #5 above.
10. Should a medical condition necessitate an employee going out on medical leave before the birth of the child, the faculty member must secure additional medical documentation (i.e., P-33A - medical certificate) confirming the date upon which the member is considered to be medically incapacitated. Following the birth, there may be a need to provide updated medical documentation to confirm the date of birth, approximate period of incapacity and a date to return to work. This would be necessary in cases where prior medical documentation has not already provided this information. Of utmost importance is the written confirmation of a “return to work” date since an employee must provide that notification (to the Office of Human Resources) before resuming work of any kind.

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### **Conclusion:**

It is important that faculty members have a clear understanding of the steps to follow when requesting a maternity leave period. It is in the best interest of the employee, the University and especially the students we serve that careful and timely planning is done to facilitate the needs of everyone involved. In addition, set guidelines insure that employees are treated in an equitable fashion as it relates to this type of leave. In order to avoid confusion and facilitate ease of communication, it is recommended that faculty members first meet with their department heads and academic deans to discuss their request for leave, filing of paperwork and possible proposal for returning to work during the affected semester. However, employees may also contact the Office of Human Resources for further clarification of the process or for additional information on how the maternity leave may relate to their employment benefits at the University.

### **Statutory/BOT Resolution/Administrative Regulation/ECSU Policy Reference:**

AAUP Article 13.2.

CT General Statutes (C.G.S.) 5-248a

### **Effective Date:**

December 1, 2007

### **Responsible Function Area:**

Affected Academic Department

Affected Academic Dean

Vice President of Academic Affairs

Office of Human Resources

President's Office

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