

Standard Practice Guide Policies

Seasonal Leave of Absence

201.30-
3

Applies to: : Regular staff with the exception of those represented by a collective bargaining agreement

I. POLICY

Employing departments may structure positions as “Seasonal Leave of Absence Appointments” to accommodate recurring, predictable periods during which reduced staffing is needed. In addition, employees or candidates for employment who desire continuous active employment for periods of less than a calendar year, may request a Seasonal Leave of Absence Appointment, that includes a prearranged period of inactive employment annually (e.g. summer).

A seasonal leave appointment is a commitment by an employee to a specified annual work schedule involving periods without work or compensation. Once granted by the University, an appointment involving a Seasonal Leave of Absence will not be changed without prior agreement of the head of the employing department.

During the annual scheduled inactive period, an employee will be on a “Seasonal Leave of Absence”, without University or Unemployment Compensation.

II. REGULATIONS

A. A Seasonal Leave of Absence Appointment is pre arranged based on the recurring reduced needs and workload of the department. An employee may also request this leave, including as an initial appointment or as a change in appointment.

B. USE OF TEMPORARY EMPLOYEES

Temporary staff should not be hired to perform work that would otherwise be the responsibility of the employee on seasonal leave.

C. APPROVAL

A Seasonal Leave of Absence approved by the department head of the employing

department.

D. DURATION OF APPOINTMENT

A seasonal leave appointment may be established for a period of one or more years. Once established, appointment cycles will remain in effect indefinitely, unless the circumstances of the University change so that it is no longer practical to maintain the appointment. Employees who later desire a change in appointment may apply for other positions, as they become available.

E. COMPENSATION

Employees will be paid their regular rate of pay during periods of active employment. During the annual Seasonal Leave of Absence period, no University salary or unemployment compensation will be payable.

F. DURATION

Seasonal Leaves of Absence may be established for any period of 3 weeks or more, up to a maximum of 6 months.

G. FULL-TIME/PART-TIME COMBINATION

Appointments may be designed to provide full-time employment during periods of normal to peak work loads and part-time employment during periods of diminishing work loads. This combination may also be coupled with a seasonal leave of absence.

H. BENEFITS

1. Employees with Seasonal Leave of Absence Appointments may be appointed on a full-time or part-time basis during the period of active employment, but only those employee whose appointment is 75% or more during the period of active employment will be eligible for the continuance of University contributions to benefits (life insurance, health insurance, dental, and periodic health physical). Others may continue such benefits in effect by direct payment of entire premiums in advance of the leave.
2. Group Life insurance coverage will be continued at the elected enrollment level immediately prior to the leave for optional and dependent life unless the employee elects to cancel coverage.
3. Employee otherwise eligible for Long Term Disability will continue their eligibility during the period of inactive employment; however, benefit payments will not commence during inactive employment. The salary used in determining Group Life insurance will be the salary used for the determination of Long Term Disability benefits.
4. Employees' contributions toward health, dental and life insurance coverages

for the period of the seasonal leave of absence will be deducted from the employee last paycheck prior to the seasonal leave.

5. All retirement plan contributions and all Social Security contributions will be discontinued during the period of inactive employment.
6. Vacation, PTO, and sick pay will accrue, as provided by the appropriate policy, and be provided only during the period of active employment. For employee whose sick pay is not accrued, sick pay will be prorated based on their annual effort. Unused vacation time and sick pay will be maintained during the seasonal leave of absence.
7. Employees otherwise eligible for paid parental leave are not able to access these paid leave benefits during the period of seasonal leave. Access to proportional amounts of maternity (childbirth) and parental leave is available upon return to previously agreed return to work date. As the purpose of the paid leave, whether maternal recovery or bonding, is assumed to begin immediately following the arrival or placement of a child, the paid time available will be proportional to the event date and the return to work. For example, if the birth was four weeks prior to the scheduled return to work, the employee who gave birth will have two weeks of paid maternity (childbirth) and six weeks of paid parental leave. A non-birth parent in this scenario would have two weeks of paid parental leave available.

I. PROBATIONARY PERIODS

Seasonal leaves of absence may begin during a probationary period; however, the time spent on the leave of absence will not count toward completion of the probationary period.

J. OTHER EMPLOYMENT

Employees may work for other employers, including holding a temporary appointment at the university, while on a seasonal leave of absence.

K. RETURN TO ACTIVE EMPLOYMENT

An employee returning from a seasonal leave of absence will be assigned to their previously held position, unless the circumstances of the University have changed to the extent that the position no longer exists. Those who are affected by a reduction in force while on seasonal leave of absence will be eligible for all provisions, including minimum notice requirements, of the Reduction in Force Policy (SPG 201.72 (/policy/201.72)).

Notes

February 2025 Update reflects more inclusive language for birth mother. Clarified that employees on seasonal leave may hold a temporary appointment at the university during the period of seasonal leave.

December 2023 Updated benefit information and clarified intent of a seasonal appointment

7/3/2018 Update on 7/2/2018 eliminated the after-tax option for employees to contribute to retirement savings plans.

This policy was updated in September to clarify eligibility and use of Paid Maternity (Childbirth) and Parental Leaves (SPG 201.30-6)

This policy was reviewed in January 2013. No changes were made.

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201.30-3

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University Human Resources; Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

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Primary Contact:

Staff HR

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December 11, 2028

Related Policies:

Reduction in Force (/policy/201.72)

Short-Term Layoff (Furlough)/Short-Term Effort Reduction (/policy/201.73)

Related Links:

Faculty Handbook - Reduced Staffing (<http://www.provost.umich.edu/faculty/handbook/16/16.B.html>)

Seasonal Leave of Absence Procedure (<https://hr.umich.edu/working-u-m/management-administration/uhr-procedures/20130-3-seasonal-leave-absence-appointment>)

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