



## **Family and Medical Leave Policy for Graduate Students**

### Section I: Justifications and Objectives

This policy was developed in order to facilitate a graduate student's degree obtainment and successful completion of their academic program and career goals. The policy will facilitate the recruitment and retention of graduate students from diverse backgrounds and life circumstances. The Office of Graduate Education at Oregon State University recognizes that unforeseen life circumstances, as well as planned life events, may occur during the course of a graduate career. The Office of Graduate Education recognizes that graduate students are holistic individuals who must navigate physical, psychosocial, academic, personal and family needs and events during the course of an advanced degree program, which often spans two (2) to seven (7) years depending on program requirements.

In commitment to increasing the graduating success rate of graduate students at Oregon State University, as well as the quality and diversity of graduating students, the Office of Graduate Education implements this family/medical leave policy and associated provisions. This family/medical leave policy is intended to complement the Regular Leave of Absence policy for graduate students, found here: <https://catalog.oregonstate.edu/college-departments/graduate-school/#leave-of-absence>

### Section II: Eligibility

This policy applies to all graduate students in good academic standing making satisfactory progress toward degree completion and includes, but is not limited to, those receiving Graduate Assistantships (GRA/GTA), Graduate Fellowships and other paid positions.<sup>1</sup>

### Section III: Policy

All eligible graduate students may take a twelve (12) week continuous block of approved leave as parental leave or to care for their own serious health condition or that of a family member.<sup>2</sup> Intermittent leave periods (i.e. – multiple leaves of less than 12 weeks) are not available under this policy.

The graduate student must re-enroll in the graduate program in the term directly following the end date of any approved leave. Failure to re-enroll in the term following the end date of the approved leave may result in the student being required to re-apply for admission to the Office of Graduate Education.

### Section IV: Additional Provisions and Benefits

During the term(s) in which the family/medical leave is approved, the following provisions and benefits apply to all Graduate Students requesting leave:

- 1) Enrollment is not required and there is no penalty for non-enrollment during the approved term of leave;
- 2) An additional one (1) term extension will be given for all courses and program requirements in progress at the beginning of approved leave (such as qualifying examinations, thesis defense, and other program requirements). Academic units, departments, programs, and committee

members will honor the one (1) term extension as outlined in this policy; if a student faces barriers in receiving their one-term extension, a grievance may be filed with the Office of Graduate Education, and that office will work with the student and their program to develop a plan for the successful continuance and completion of their degree program;

3) Graduate Students holding an external fellowship during the term in which leave is requested must work with their external grantors to ensure the student meets the scholarship guidelines/conditions of the award during leave. The Office of Graduate Education will provide support to fellowship students if needed in communicating with their external grantors about the requested family/medical leave once the leave is approved. The Office of Graduate Education has no control, however, over whether the grantor will approve the leave and continue funding the student, and the Office of Graduate Education will not provide alternative funding during approved leave if approval is not granted.

#### Section V: Procedure

To request leave under this policy, a Graduate Student must contact the Office of Human Resources (OHR) at [medical.leave@oregonstate.edu](mailto:medical.leave@oregonstate.edu). OHR notifies the Office of Graduate Education of the leave request and decision.

<sup>1</sup> *For specific policy governing Graduate Assistant, Graduate Fellow or other paid appointments, please see the Graduate Assistant Family Medical Leave Policy on the OHR website: <http://oregonstate.edu/admin/hr/>.*

<sup>2</sup> *“Family” is defined as it is defined in the Oregon Family Medical Leave Act, which includes same-sex domestic partners. “Parental leave” is defined as it is defined in the Oregon Family Medical Leave Act. “Serious health condition” is a condition that meets the definition of the same term in the federal Family Medical Leave Act.*