

FAMILY FRIENDLY POLICIES FOR PHD STUDENTS

New Parent Accommodation

A student in a Ph.D. program at Penn is eligible for time off of eight weeks for the birth or adoption of a child. The student must complete the online New Parent Accommodation/Family Leave Request Form (<https://vpe.wufoo.com/forms/r72pat10x6xvtk/>) at least 60 days prior to the anticipated start date of the leave so that appropriate arrangements can be made to cover any teaching/research responsibilities.

The graduate group chair and dissertation advisor will be notified via email of the details of the student's accommodation request. The graduate group is responsible for making the necessary arrangements within their department and school.

A. Normally the "Time Off" period commences within two weeks of the birth or adoption.

B. During the "Time Off" period, the student remains enrolled full-time. In order to facilitate a rapid return, students may participate in the program as fully as they deem appropriate. By remaining on full-time status, student visa status and loan repayment schedules, if any, will remain unchanged.

C. The student is entitled to academic accommodation including relief from academic requirements, such as postponement of exams and course requirements.

D. A student receiving stipend support is entitled to continuation of support during the "Time Off" period as follows:

1. Students receiving stipends from University/school funds are entitled to draw support for eight weeks during the academic year.

2. Students funded by government grants or other external funding sources are entitled to benefits as determined by the funding agency.

Family Leave of Absence Policy

A student in the Ph.D. program at Penn may take an unpaid Family Leave of Absence for the birth or adoption of a child, child care, or care of an immediate family member (spouse, domestic partner, child, or parent) with a serious health condition.

The graduate group chair and dissertation advisor will be notified via email of the details of the student's leave request. The graduate group is responsible for making the necessary arrangements within their department and school.

A. Students may take a Family Leave of Absence for one semester or for two semesters.

B. The student must complete the online New Parent Accommodation/Family Leave Request Form (<https://vpe.wufoo.com/forms/r72pat10x6xvtk/>) at least 60 days prior to an anticipated leave so that appropriate arrangements can be made to cover any teaching/research responsibilities. In unanticipated and/or emergency situations, students should fill out the form as soon as possible.

C. Family Leave "stops the clock" on the student's academic requirements, including service requirements, for the duration of the leave.

D. Students whose University funding includes coverage of the Penn Student Health Insurance Plan will continue to receive coverage for their individual health insurance while on family leave for one full semester; students may petition for an additional semester. Students with external funding that includes health insurance coverage that will not continue if on leave will also receive coverage for their individual health insurance from the University while on family leave for one full semester; these students may also petition for an additional semester. Upon paying a fee, students on approved Family Leave will retain their PennCard, e-mail accounts, library privileges, and building access.

E. Funding commitments from the institution are deferred until the student returns from Family Leave. Students receiving funding from external sources, such as government grants, are subject to the conditions established by the funding source.

F. Service requirements (e.g., teaching, research) will be met by the student following return from Family Leave.

G. Requests for extension of Family Leave beyond one year, or for repeated Family Leaves, may be made. Approval of an extension, deferral of funding, and continued academic accommodation is at the discretion of the Graduate Dean.

**Important:* If you anticipate adding a dependent (e.g., newborn) to your Penn Student Insurance Policy while on Family Leave, you must remain in active student status at the start of the fall semester. Students should arrange with their school/division to maintain full-time student status for at least 31 days from the start of fall classes, after which time the Family Leave status can be recorded in the student's record. After the birth/adoption, contact the SHS Insurance Coordinator to enroll the dependent. The premium for dependent coverage is payable directly to the PSIP carrier.

Updated November 22, 2022 (Almanac Volume 69 Issue 15 (<https://almanac.upenn.edu/#of-record-phd-student-leave-of-absence-policy-and-family-friendly-policies-for-phd-students-new-parent-accommodation>))