

FAQs for Employees

What is a leave of absence?

A leave of absence is a period of time away from work for qualifying reasons, which may be protected under federal law such as Family Medical Leave, or may be a College provided benefit like Paid Parental Leave.

What types of leaves are available?

The College offers several leave options depending on eligibility and circumstances. Some leaves may run concurrently:

- Family Medical Leave (FMLA)
- Childbirth Recovery Leave
- Paid Parental Leave
- Temporary Leave
- Personal Leave
- Extended Leave
- Military Leave

How do I request a leave of absence?

Submit an absence request through Workday or email the Benefits Hub at Benefits@ivytech.edu

When should I apply for leave?

Notify the Benefits Hub at least 30 days before the anticipated start of leave, when possible. If 30 days notice is not feasible due to an emergency or unforeseen circumstance, notification should be made as soon as practicable. You should apply for leave in the following situations:

- Incapacitated for more than three consecutive days due to a serious health condition
- When you are hospitalized, planning to have surgery, ongoing treatment, or a chronic medical condition
- Need time off to care for a spouse, child, or parent with a serious health condition
- Expected repeated absences for care related to a serious health condition
- Birth of a child, placement of adoption or foster care

What documentation is required for leave?

Required documentation depends on the reason for the leave request. Examples of required documentation include, but are not limited to:

- Serious health condition: Medical Certification completed by a healthcare provider.
- Birth of a child: birth certificate or birth confirmation
- Placement of adoption or foster care: adoption decree or court order
- Military service: active duty orders, call to active duty orders, or notice of deployment or mobilization

Am I permitted to work while on leave?

It depends on the type of leave that has been approved and any applicable medical restrictions. If you have been approved for continuous Family Medical Leave or Temporary Leave due to your own serious health condition, you may be required to remain off work during the leave period if you are medically unable to perform your job duties. You may return to work only after providing a return-to-work certification from your healthcare provider. If you are approved for intermittent or reduced schedule Family Medical Leave, you may work during periods when you are not on approved leave. However, you should not perform work during the specific hours or days you are designated as being on leave.

Can I return early from my approved leave end date?

You may request to return to work before your approved leave end date. If your leave is for your own serious health condition, you must provide the Benefits Hub with a return-to-work certification from your treating healthcare provider clearing you to return to work, with or without restrictions.

Please notify your manager and the Benefits Hub as soon as possible of your intent to return early so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

What should I do if I need to extend my approved leave?

If you need to extend your leave, you must notify the Benefits Hub as soon as possible before your current approved leave ends. If your leave is for a serious health condition, you will be required to provide an updated medical certification supporting the need for additional time off. All extension requests are subject to review and approval in accordance with applicable policies and supporting documentation.

What happens if my baby arrives earlier or later than expected?

Please notify the Benefits Hub and your supervisor as soon as possible of any change. Your leave dates will be adjusted to reflect the actual birth event and updated accordingly.

Do I need to use all of my time off (sick, vacation/faculty release) before I apply for leave?

No, you should apply for leave as soon as you have a qualifying reason. However, once your Family Medical Leave or Temporary Leave begins, you will be required to use your available sick time concurrently with your leave, unless the leave is paid through Childbirth Recovery Leave and/or Paid Parental Leave.

If your sick time is exhausted, you will have the option to use vacation or faculty release time to remain in a paid status while on leave.

Do I need to submit time off while on approved leave?

For employees on continuous leave, their time will be submitted by the Benefits Hub. If an employee is not working but has not yet been approved for leave, it is the responsibility of the employee or their supervisor to submit the appropriate time off.

Employees on intermittent leave are responsible for submitting time off using the correct code (e.g., intermittent sick, intermittent vacation, intermittent faculty release, intermittent unpaid, or intermittent paid parental leave).

How do I report time off when using intermittent Family Medical Leave (FMLA)?

When using intermittent leave, you must follow normal call-in and attendance procedures. You only need to indicate that the absence is related to FMLA. You are not required to provide medical details. If the absence is foreseeable, such as a scheduled appointment, you should try to provide as much advance notice as possible.

What is the difference between Family Medical Leave and Short-Term Disability?

Family Medical Leave (FMLA) and Short-Term Disability (STD) are two separate benefits that serve different purposes, although they often run at the same time. FMLA is a federal law that provides up to 12 workweeks of unpaid, job-protected leave within a 12-month period for qualifying medical or family reasons. Its main purpose is to protect your job while you are out of work, ensuring that you can return to the same or an equivalent position. In contrast, STD is a benefit that offers partial income replacement if you are unable to work due to your own illness or injury. While FMLA does not provide pay, STD pays 60% of your wages after the elimination period is exhausted.

When both apply, they are used concurrently, meaning FMLA provides job protection while STD provides income. Ivy Tech requires employees to use any available sick time during leave before STD benefits are paid. During the period when sick time is being used, employees will receive the minimum weekly STD benefit of \$25 per week. Once sick leave is exhausted, STD payments typically increase to the full eligible benefit amount.

What happens to my benefits if I exhaust all of my time off and move into unpaid status while on leave?

If you move into unpaid status while on FMLA or Temporary Leave, you will be responsible for paying the employee portion of your health insurance premiums.

If you are on an unpaid Extended or Personal Leave, you will be responsible for paying the employee and employer portion of your health insurance premiums.

The Benefits Hub will email you an invoice outlining your benefit costs, and timely payment is required to keep your coverage active during your leave.

FAQs for Supervisors

Should I accept medical documentation?

No. Ask the employee to send any medical documentation to the Benefits Hub. Supervisors should not accept or save medical documentation. Medical documentation should be faxed (317) 218-7488 or securely emailed directly to the Benefits Hub at Benefits@ivytech.edu

Can I ask my employee for medical details?

No. Do not ask for specific diagnoses. The Benefits Hub will handle medical certifications. You may ask about scheduling and expected duration only as needed for business planning.

How will I know if my employee has been approved for leave?

When the Benefits Hub receives the required medical certification and processes the request, an approval email will be sent to the employee. The supervisor and campus HR will be copied on the email, which explains the dates for continuous leave, the frequency, and duration for intermittent leave.

What am I supposed to do with their workload while on leave?

Duties can be reassigned, or work with your campus HR on other available options.

Can I contact my employee while out on leave?

Limited contact for administrative purposes (e.g., transition of work, status updates, or return-to-work coordination) is permitted. Managers may not request an employee to perform work while on leave.

Can I discipline my employee who is on FMLA?

Employees cannot be disciplined for taking protected leave. However, they may still be subject to discipline for unrelated performance or conduct issues, in consultation with HR.

My employee has been out unexpectedly for a week. Is this covered under FMLA?

Maybe. Supervisors are responsible for recognizing situations that may qualify for FMLA and directing employees to the Benefits Hub or to submit an absence request through Workday.

Conditions or phrases you may hear that are typically considered a serious health condition:

- pregnancy
- serious surgery or recovery
- pneumonia
- cancer
- “My mom fell and is in the hospital.”
- “I have a doctor’s appointment two days a week for the next two months.”

Illnesses that are not typically considered serious health conditions:

- common cold
- upset stomach
- earaches
- toothaches or routine dental/orthodontic work
- seasonal allergies

Supervisors should err on the side of caution and contact the Benefits Hub immediately once they become aware that an absence may be FMLA-related.

What happens if my employee does not submit the required documentation for FMLA?

Leave may be delayed or denied. Any absences during that time will not be protected under FMLA. The employee must follow normal call-in procedures for each day they are absent and not on approved leave. Those absences may be addressed in accordance with the College’s attendance policy.

Can I deny the employee’s request for time off under FMLA?

No. If the employee is approved for FMLA, they must be able to take the time off.

What do I do when my employee wants to use additional sick time to extend time off past the 12 workweeks approved under their FMLA?

When an employee has exhausted the full 12 workweeks of FMLA, any additional time off is no longer protected under the Family Medical Leave Act and must be handled through other leave options.

- Extended Leave: Employees who need additional time off due to an ongoing serious health condition must apply for Extended Leave and provide appropriate medical documentation for review and approval.
- Vacation/Faculty Release: Employees may request to use available vacation or faculty release time. These requests are subject to supervisor review and approval based on departmental needs.

What do I do when an employee wants to return to work remotely from leave?

Requests to return to work remotely as an accommodation due to a medical restriction should be reviewed in coordination with the Benefits Hub and campus HR. Supervisors should not independently approve remote work as a substitute for approved leave.

If the request is related to a medical condition restriction, the employee will be required to follow the ADA process. This includes engaging in an interactive discussion with campus HR to determine whether a reasonable accommodation can be provided.