
Effective Date: **June 1, 2015**

POLICY

EMPLOYMENT

Employee Handbook – Section 314 Leave of Absence – Medical (unpaid)

RESPONSIBLE OFFICE

Human Resources

314 Leave of Absence – Medical (unpaid)

314.1 Definition

A leave of absence for medical reasons is an authorized absence from work without pay for a consecutive period of time between eleven (11) workdays and three (3) calendar months that may be granted after an employee has exhausted his or her Vacation Leave, Sick Leave, available Personal Days, and available Compensatory Time Off.

Non-exempt employees and exempt employees in salary grades 51, 52, 71, and 72 who have exhausted their accrued Sick Leave should consult Boston University's Short-Term Disability Plan to determine their eligibility for benefits under the plan.

Employees requiring time off for medical reasons related to pregnancy should consult the Parental Leave policy.

314.2 Eligibility

All regular, full-time employees and regular, part-time employees scheduled to work at least 50% of the regularly scheduled workweek are eligible for this leave of absence after completing three (3) months of continuous service.

An employee's accrued Vacation Leave, accrued Sick Leave, available Personal Days, and available Compensatory Time Off must be fully used before the leave commences.

314.3 Length of Leave

A Leave of Absence for medical reasons is granted only in consecutive whole-day increments. The period of leave cannot be less than eleven (11) consecutive workdays nor more than three (3) consecutive calendar months. A leave of absence for medical reasons cannot be granted for less than eleven (11) consecutive workdays (see [Unpaid Time Off](#) policy).

A maximum of two (2) consecutive three-month leaves of absence may be granted in unusual circumstances. Each leave must be requested separately and the combined total period of leave cannot exceed six (6) calendar months.

314.4 Medical Evidence of Illness

At any time, the University may require an employee to submit objective medical evidence that either establishes its expected duration, and/or require a medical examination by a physician chosen by the University.

314.5 Compensation and Benefits

Employees are not paid while on an approved leave of absence unless they are deemed eligible for Long or Short-Term Disability benefits. Eligible employees may be able to receive income under the Short-Term Disability or other University benefit programs. The Human Resources Service Center can assist employees with these benefits.

Vacation and Sick Leave Accruals—Employees do not accrue Vacation Leave or Sick Leave while absent from work on unpaid approved leave of absence.

Holidays—Employees on an unpaid approved Leave of Absence are not eligible for holiday benefits when a holiday falls within the period of the leave.

Intersession—Employees on an unpaid approved Leave of Absence are not eligible for Intersession if an Intersession Closing is declared and falls within the period of the leave.

314.6 Requests and Approvals

Employees must submit a written request for the Leave of Absence to their immediate supervisor at least one (1) month in advance of the desired time off. The one (1) month requirement may be shortened in emergency situations. Employee requests must specify the reason for the leave and the specific dates of the leave period.

Supervisors are responsible for forwarding Leave of Absence requests to the Department Head who will, in consultation with Human Resources, determine whether to grant the Leave. Employees are to be informed in writing of requests that are not approved at the Department Head level. Requests that are approved at the Department Head level must be forwarded to the Provost or the appropriate Vice President for the final decision. The final decision must be communicated in writing to the employee.

A Leave of Absence for medical reasons will be approved only if it is expected that the employee will return to his or her position when the leave is completed. Exceptions to this requirement may be made in unusual circumstances.

Approval decisions will be made on an individualized, case-by-case basis, and must take into consideration, among other things, the duration of Leave requested and the staffing and budgetary needs of the University.

314.7 Return to Work Conditions

An employee on an approved Medical Leave of Absence is entitled to return to the same or similar position without loss of the employment benefits for which he or she was eligible on the date the leave commenced.

If an approved Leave of Absence is for a period of one (1) month or longer, the employee must give his or her supervisor written notification of intent to return to work. Notification must

be received at least two (2) weeks in advance of the expected return date.

Upon returning to work, an employee is expected to provide a doctor's certificate that establishes the employee's fitness for work.

An employee who fails to return to work by the expected return date will be considered to have resigned voluntarily from the University.

314.8 Maximum Period of Medical Leave (Paid or Unpaid, Including FMLA and Short Term Disability)

An employee may be absent from work for medical reasons on approved paid or unpaid leave and inclusive of any leave covered by the Family and Medical Leave Act or Short-Term Disability, for a maximum period of six (6) months. The employee must then either return to his or her position or be terminated.

Exceptions to this policy include:

- (1) Employees who have applied for Long-Term Disability and are waiting for decision; and
- (2) Employees with disabilities who request and are granted a specific additional period of approved medical leave as a reasonable accommodation.

314.9 Related Policies

- 301 [Vacation Leave](#)
- 302 [Sick Leave](#)
- 303 [Personal Days](#)
- 304 [Parental Leave](#)
- 309 [Compensatory Time Off](#)
- 312 [Family and Medical Leave](#)
- 313 [Unpaid Time Off](#)
- 317 [Domestic Violence Leave](#)

THIS POLICY STATEMENT IS PART OF THE [EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK](#), AND SHOULD BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH ALL OF THE POLICIES THAT COMPRISE THE HANDBOOK. THE PROVISIONS OF THE EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK DO NOT CONSTITUTE AN EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT AND DO NOT ALTER THE AT-WILL STATUS OF AN EMPLOYEE.

END OF POLICY TEXT

Additional Resources Regarding This Policy

Related Policies and Procedures

- [Employee Handbook Policies Manual](#) (staff)
 - [301 Vacation Leave](#)
 - [302 Sick Leave](#)
 - [303 Personal Days](#)
 - [304 Parental Leave](#)
 - [309 Compensatory Time Off](#)
 - [312 Family and Medical Leave \(FMLA\)](#)
 - [313 Unpaid Time Off](#)
 - [314 Leave of Absence – Medical \(Unpaid\)](#)
 - [315 Leave of Absence – Personal \(Unpaid\)](#)

- [317 Domestic Violence Leave](#)
- [318 Paid Family and Medical Leave](#) – effective January 1, 2021
- [Faculty Handbook](#) (faculty)

Related BU Websites

- [Human Resources](#)
 - [HR Policies](#)
 - [Manager Resources](#) - HR Website
 - [Leaves of Absence](#)

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