

ADOPTION LEAVE POLICY

SLT 4.1

Date of Last Update:

July 31, 2008

Approved By:

- Senior Leadership Team

Responsible Office:

Human Resources

POLICY STATEMENT

The University recognizes the need for family and medical related leave. The following policy complies with The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and provides guidelines for procedures regarding unpaid leave. By enacting this policy Grand Valley aims to allow necessary time away from the university for individuals to cope with and adapt to various family and medical related situations as described in this policy.

PROCEDURES

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) provides eligible faculty and staff up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave a year. A faculty or staff member must work for 12 months, completing 1,250 work hours within those 12 months, to be eligible for FMLA leave. If eligible, leave may be requested for the following reasons:

- Birth of a child
- Adoption of a child
- Placement of a child for foster care
- The faculty or staff member is needed to care for a family member (child, spouse, or parent) with a serious health condition
- The faculty or staff member's own serious health condition makes him or her unable to perform his or her job

Further provisions of the law are addressed in the FMLA policy. A copy of the FMLA policy is available on the Policy Website.

Grand Valley, along with all other Michigan Public Universities, does not provide for paid

adoption or parental leave. However, the University does provide unpaid leave that exceeds the requirements of FMLA. FMLA requires the University to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave while the University's unpaid leave policy allows for up to 12 months of unpaid leave. Further details of the program are outlined in [section 4.2.30.12](#) of the Board of Trustees' Policies. This section is also included in the Faculty Handbook. In order to receive an unpaid leave, the faculty or staff member should submit a written request to the Unit Head. The request will outline the need for the leave and the expected duration. The request should be submitted as soon as possible. When possible, the request should be submitted at least 30 calendar days prior to the date the leave will begin.

Qualifying Expenses

Qualifying adoption expenses will be reimbursed up to a maximum of \$3,000 per child. Qualifying expenses are defined as those that are reasonable and necessary adoption fees, court costs, attorney fees, traveling expenses while away from home, and other expenses related to, and whose principal purpose is for, the legal adoption of a child.

Process for Applying for Benefits

Upon formal placement of the adopted child, submit an adoption assistance claim form to Human Resources at 1090 James H. Zumberge Hall along with detailed receipts for eligible expenses. Human Resources will determine eligible expenses, the amount payable for reimbursement and will submit a request to the Payroll Office for payment. The reimbursement will be processed with the next payroll.

Taxation of Benefits

The amount of tax credits and exclusions available to adopting parents vary. Since an employer's adoption assistance is not subject to income tax withholding, GVSU will not determine the extent to which the payment of reimbursement on behalf of each employee is eligible for the exclusion. However, GVSU will withhold taxes only for Social Security and Medicare.

Adding Dependent to Insurance

At the time of placement, you may add your child to your benefit plans. Any additions or changes must occur within 30 days of the official placement. Contact Human Resources at 331- 2215 to add dependents.
