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TIME OFF & LEAVE GUIDE

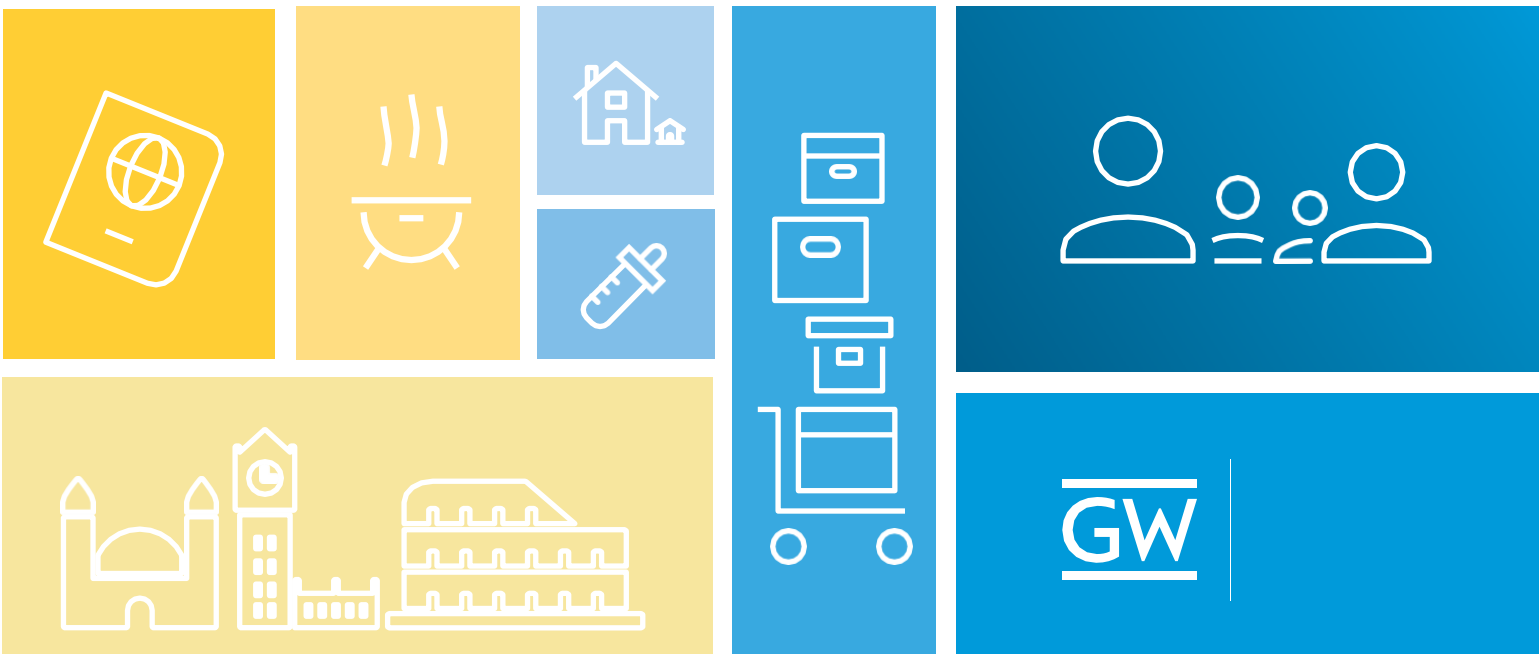




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The guidance and policies referenced in this Guide are not contracts. The university reserves the right to modify or discontinue its benefits programs in whole or in part at any time and without advanced notice, except as required by law. Nor does this guidance create, or is intended to create, a promise or representation of continued employment.



Your Time Away

We invite you to explore your GW paid time off and unpaid leave options that aim to help you manage personal, medical and family needs.

Important to Note:

While the Guide is the primary resource for time off and leave programs administered by Benefits, the following may apply:

- Postdoc benefits are managed separately from those of staff & faculty. The Office of Postdoctoral Affairs is responsible for management of the benefits package for all postdoc associates and scholars.
- The time off and leave information in this guide is applicable to postdocs unless otherwise dictated by sponsor guidelines. Please contact the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs at postdocsupport@gwu.edu with any questions.
- Anywhere on this guide that refers to “employees” only applies to Postdoctoral Associates, as Postdoc Scholars are not considered employees.

Am I Eligible for Time Off?

Eligibility for the various time off and leave programs is based on your primary job at GW (e.g., faculty, postdocs, GTA/GRA, medical residents, temporary workers or student postdocs, etc.), years of benefits-eligible service, part-time or full-time status, and in some cases, your actual hours worked.

Check out the “quick look” lists below and refer to the details in each of the following sections for information related to your eligibility. If you have any questions, please contact Benefits at timeoff@gwu.edu / (571) 553-8382 or postdocsupport@gwu.edu.

Quick Look at Paid Time Off Eligibility

- **Vacation Time:** Benefits-eligible postdocs and scholars
- **Sick Time:** Benefits-eligible postdocs and scholars
- **GW Paid Parental Leave:** Postdoc associates and scholars are eligible first of the month coincident with or next following their appointment date. **Please note: Postdocs, primarily postdoctoral scholars, who receive funding via externally sponsored projects are subject to and must comply with policies outlined by the terms and conditions of the sponsor, if different from GW policy.*
- **Bereavement:** Benefits-eligible postdocs and scholars
- **Jury and Witness Duty:** Benefits-eligible postdocs and scholars
- **Holidays:** Benefits-eligible postdocs and scholars
- **Voting Time:** Benefits-eligible postdocs and scholars



Quick Look at Unpaid Leave Eligibility

- **Federal Family Medical and Leave Act (FMLA)**
 - To qualify for federal FMLA, you must meet the following conditions:
 - ✓ You must have worked at the university for a period totaling twelve (12) months. Periods of employment prior to a break in service of less than seven (7) years count towards eligibility.
 - ✓ You also must have worked at least 1,250 hours during the twelve (12) month period immediately preceding the beginning of your leave.
- **District of Columbia Family Medical and Leave Act (FMLA)**
 - To qualify for DC FMLA, you must meet the following conditions:
 - ✓ For those employees who work more than 50% of the time in DC, you must have worked at the university for a period totaling twelve (12) months. Periods of employment prior to a break in service of less than seven (7) years count towards eligibility.
 - ✓ You also must have worked for at least 1,000 hours during your prior 12-month period of employment with the university, including paid time off and holiday hours.
- **USERRA Leave**
 - You must be called into service in the uniformed services, as defined by [USERRA](#).
- **Personal Leave (Benefits-Eligible Postdocs)**
 - Benefits-eligible postdocs may request personal leave for situations that do not fall within the provisions of other university leave categories.
- **DC Parental Leave (for School Events)**
 - You must be a DC worker who is a parent, guardian, custodian, aunt, uncle or grandparent of a child, or the spouse or domestic partner of any of the above.

Please note:

- *Employees who work outside of DC may be eligible for additional leave programs. For more information, contact Benefits at timeoff@gwu.edu.*
- **Postdoc scholars do not meet the definition of a GW employee for FMLA, USERRA or DC Parental Leave eligibility.*

Other Statutory Disability and Paid Family and Medical Leave Programs

Postdocs may also be eligible for state disability and/or paid family and medical leave programs based on work location. For more information, contact Benefits at timeoff@gwu.edu.

Managing Your Time

You, with the help of your PI, are responsible for recording and managing your time off and leave. If you cannot schedule your time away in advance, your PI should be notified through established departmental procedures as soon as possible.

For unscheduled paid or unpaid time off, you must report those hours in your time reporting system upon your return. If you are unable to submit those hours in time to meet the payroll deadline, your PI (or PI's delegate) is required to submit your paid and unpaid time on your behalf.

Postdocs who use the university's centralized [Time Reporting System \(TRS\)](#) for time off requests can find training and other helpful resources on the university's [Time Reporting System \(TRS\) website](#) such as how to submit or cancel time off requests.

Managing Your Department Time Off Requests

PIs should process (i.e., approve or deny) their direct reports' time off requests in a timely manner so that postdocs are able to plan time off and to ensure accrual balances are accurate.



Please note: Postdocs who have timekeeping or time off processing access in the TRS will be able to see their own time off requests but should not approve them. Their PI or their PI's delegate should approve those requests, not the postdocs themselves.

Impact of University Closures on Approved Paid Time Off

In the event of inclement weather, the university may announce a change in operating status. Additionally, the university may announce the closure of administrative offices for various reasons including early dismissal. In these instances, scheduled and approved paid time off hours will be deducted from the postdoc's time off balance and not changed to University Closing Leave or Weather Flex. Only postdocs scheduled to work during those times will be eligible for University Closing Leave or Weather Flex.

Please visit the [HRMD website](#) for more information about reporting to work under various operating statuses.



Paid Time Off

Vacation Time

Vacation time provides benefits-eligible postdocs with the opportunity to have leisure time and to attend to personal matters. Whether it's celebrating a birthday or anniversary, planning a vacation, observing a religious holiday or just needing some time to tackle a laundry list of home improvement projects, we encourage postdocs to take time away. Just remember to request the time in advance and in accordance with established departmental procedures, as PI approval is required.

BEGINNING JULY 1, 2024: Vacation time accruals are not based on the university's fiscal year but will employ a maximum accrual structure. This means that vacation time will no longer be forfeited each June and August but continue to accrue until a maximum accrual cap has been reached.

Vacation Time Accruals

Postdocs

- **Full-time** benefits-eligible postdocs accrue vacation time based on years of benefits-eligible service, up to a maximum accrual limit.

POSTDOCS

For Postdocs with a start date prior to 1/1/22:

GW Service Time	Monthly Accrual Rate (Hours)	Maximum Vacation Hours
0-48 months	12	216
49+ months	14	252

For Postdocs with a start date of 1/1/22 and after:

Monthly Accrual Rate (Hours)	Maximum Vacation Hours
12	216

Part-time Postdoc Associate and Scholars accrue annual time based on years of benefits-eligible service (if applicable) and percentage of effort.

- **Part-Time** benefits-eligible postdocs accrue vacation time based on years of benefits-eligible service and percentage of effort, up to the maximum accrual limit.



Using Vacation Time

Vacation time may not be used prior to its actual accrual. You, with the help of your PI, are responsible for recording and managing your time off.

PIs should process (i.e., approve or deny) their direct reports' time off requests in a timely manner so that postdocs are able to plan time off and to ensure accrual balances are accurate.

Unscheduled Vacation Time

Requests for vacation time should be made in advance. However, there may be occasions where the need to use vacation time may not be foreseeable. In such cases, postdoc must follow established department procedures to report their absence; otherwise, the absence may be treated as unauthorized. Postdocs with unauthorized absences will be considered absent without approval (AWOL).

If it is determined that postdoc is AWOL, vacation time will not be accrued for the month in which the AWOL occurs. The postdoc will not be paid for the day(s) for which AWOL occurred and the postdoc may be subject to disciplinary action.

PI Tip: PIs should establish written call-in procedures for un-planned absences and provide to employees. A PI who believes that a postdoc is abusing paid time off, or that a postdoc's performance is affected due to excessive use of paid time off, should consult with the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs for assistance in determining appropriate action.

Introductory Employment Period (IEP)

The IEP is defined as the first 90 days of employment following your hire, transfer, or promotion into a GW benefits-eligible postdoc position. While eligible postdocs accrue vacation time from their date of hire, vacation time may only be used by postdocs after completing their IEP. The [HRMD website](#) has additional information on the IEP.

PI Tip: PIs may consider permitting the use of vacation time during the IEP based on extenuating circumstances. Please consult with the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs before approving or denying vacation time requests during the IEP.

If an employee separates during the IEP and has taken accrued vacation time, the PI should consult with the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs approval (documentation of approval required), no repayment will be required. Employees will not be paid for accrued but unused vacation time if they leave the university for any reason during the IEP, unless required by state law.

Anniversary Date and Change in Accrual

Changes in the accrual rate for vacation time are based on years of benefits-eligible service. Changes are effective the first of the month following a benefits-eligible postdoc's anniversary date, or on the postdoc's hire date anniversary if hired on the first of the month.

- Example 1: If postdoc's anniversary date in a benefits-eligible position is March 18, any change in accrual rate would be effective on April 1.
- Example 2: If postdoc's anniversary date in a benefits-eligible position is April 1, any changes in accrual rate would be effective on April 1.



Prorating Vacation Time Balances

Accruals may be prorated based on the postdoc’s start date in a benefits-eligible position and during periods of unpaid absences.

Proration for New Postdocs (Or Newly Eligible)

Vacation Time Proration for Newly Hired or Newly Eligible

Hire/Newly Eligible Date	Hours Accrued for Month
1st - 15th	Normal Accrual Rate*
16th or after	0

**Part-time postdocs’ hours accrued will be based on percentage of effort.*

Proration during an Unpaid Absence

Vacation Time Proration for Unpaid Absence

Unpaid Hours in Month	Hours Accrued for Month
Up to 80	Normal Accrual Rate*
More than 80	0

**Part-time postdocs’ hours accrued will be based on percentage of effort.*

Leaving the University

Accrued but unused vacation time is paid out upon separation from the university. If postdoc has been paid vacation time in excess of the accrued amount at the time of separation, those excess hours will need to be repaid to the university, unless prohibited by state law. Please see the “Leaving the University” section of this guide for details.

Returning to GW?

Rehires who leave GW and return with less than a 365-day break in service will have their most recent vacation time accrual rate reinstated.



Change in Employment Status

Vacation Time: Postdocs are able to transfer all accrued but unused vacation time into a new position (for example when changing from a postdoc scholar to a postdoc associate or vice versa; or transitioning from a postdoc to a research scientist) as long as the new position accrues vacation time and the transfer amounts are within the limitations of the new position. If the balance exceeds the max limit of the new position, the excess accrued but unused vacation time will be paid out. If the new position does not accrue annual time, all accrued but unused annual time will be paid out.

Sick Time: Postdocs are able to transfer all accrued but unused statutory sick time into a new position as long as the new position accrues statutory sick time and the transfer amounts are within the limitations of the new position.

Note, new accruals available to postdocs who move from a non-benefits eligible position to a benefits-eligible position are effective on the effective date of the new position. If the effective date is after the first of the month, accruals may be prorated that month. Please see the charts in the vacation time and sick time sections for more details.



Sick Time

Feeling under the weather? Stay under the covers. Sick time provides postdocs with paid time to take care of their basic health and safety needs as well as caring for family members.

Using Sick Time

Unlike annual time, sick time **does not** need to be used during the fiscal year in which it is accrued. Sick time can be taken in fifteen (15) minute increments. Sick time may be used for absences due to illness (physical or mental), self-care, medical treatment or medical care for yourself and your family members, the latter defined as:

- A person related by blood, legal custody or marriage;
- A foster child or child who lives with you and for whom you permanently assumes and discharges parental responsibility;
- A person with whom you share or have shared, within the last year, a mutual residence and with whom you maintain a committed relationship.

Safe Time

Sick time may also be used for “safe” reasons including:

- If you or your family member (as defined above) is the victim of stalking, domestic violence or sexual abuse, and the absence is directly related to seeking medical, social or legal services pertaining to the violent or abusive conduct; or
- If you or your family member needs to obtain help from a victim services organization, prepare for or take legal action relating to the conduct, seek medical attention or counseling or relocate; or
- If you or your family member needs to take another action (related to the assault) that could be reasonably determined to enhance your or your family member’s physical, psychological or economic health.

Sick Time Accruals

Sick time for postdocs begins accruing after the first working day of the month and can be used at any time with manager or faculty mentor approval. Accrued sick time is credited on the last day of each month. Sick time may not be used prior to its actual accrual.

- **Full-Time**
Full-time postdocs accrue sick time at a rate of one (1) day per month. One day equals eight (8) hours when accruing paid time off.
- **Part-Time**
Part-time postdocs accrue sick time at a rate of one (1) day per month multiplied by the postdoc’s percentage of effort. One day equals eight (8) hours when accruing paid time off. To calculate monthly sick time accrual rate, take 8 hours and multiply by the percentage of effort (number of hours scheduled to work per week divided by 40).

Please note: *Percentage of effort (the number of hours an individual is scheduled to work per week divided by 40) is used to determine part-time accrual calculations and is also referred to as full-time equivalent (FTE).*

Manager Tip A manager or mentor may approve the use of annual time as a substitute for sick time if all accrued sick time has been used.



Prorating Sick Time

Sick time accrual may be prorated based on a postdoc's appointment date and during periods of unpaid absences. Please see the charts below for details.

Sick Time Proration for Newly Hired or Appointed Postdocs

Hire Date	Annual Time Days (Hours) Accrued for Month
1st – 7th	1 (8 hours) *
8th – 14th	0.5 (4 hours) *
15th – 21st	0.25 (2 hours) *
22nd or after	0

**Part-time postdocs' hours accrued will be based on percentage of effort.*

Sick Time Proration for Unpaid Absence (Postdocs)

Unpaid Workdays in Month	Sick Time Days (Hours) Accrued for Month
Up to 5	1 (8 hours) *
More than 5 up to 11	0.5 (4 hours) *
More than 11 up to 16	0.25 (2 hours) *
More than 17	0

**Part-time postdocs' hours accrued will be based on percentage of effort.*

Did you know? When determining prorated sick time accrual postdocs in a partial pay status (for example, if working a reduced work schedule, or taking a leave of absence and receiving only 50 percent pay), every eight (8) hours of unpaid time (multiplied by percentage of effort for part-time postdocs) equals one (1) unpaid workday.



Sick Time Carryover

A full-time or part-time postdoc can accrue and carry over up to a maximum of 180 days of sick time. (180 days x 8 hours).

Absences Due to Unplanned/Unscheduled Sick Time

If an illness or injury occurs that prevents you from reporting to work, you (or your representative) must notify your manager or mentor as soon as possible, following the established guidelines of the department. Once able, you are required to submit the time off in the university Time Reporting System (TRS). If you are unable to submit those hours, your manager or mentor can submit the time on your behalf.

If you need to take unplanned or unscheduled sick time and do not follow established department procedures to report your absence, the absence may be treated as unauthorized. Individuals with unauthorized absences will be considered absent without approval (AWOL).

If it is determined that an individual is AWOL, no GW provided sick time will be accrued for the month in which the AWOL occurs and disciplinary action may be taken

Manager Tip HR may request certification if a postdoc has frequent unplanned absences due to illness, three (3) consecutive sick days or there is evidence of a pattern of abuse. The physician's statement should be sent directly to the HR representative.

The HR Representative will work with the appropriate stakeholder office to validate the documentation and to recommend approval where appropriate. If the individual is unable to provide appropriate documentation to the HR Representative, the absence may be considered unauthorized.

Income Protection Program

GW provides long-term disability to all postdocs, which would provide partial income replacement due to extended illness or injury. Note that LTD is not a job-protected leave program. Please visit the [Benefits website](#) for further information on long-term disability.

Leaving the University

Upon separation from the university (for any reason), unused accrued sick time is never paid out. Please see the "Leaving the University" section of this guide for details.

Returning to GW?

Rehired postdocs who leave GW and return with less than a 365-day break in service will have their most recent annual time accrual rate reinstated as well as their applicable sick time balance.



Paid Parental Leave

(Birth/Adoption/Foster Care Placement of Child) – updated effective July 1, 2023

GW provides six (6) continuous weeks of paid parental leave to all postdocs. Postdocs are eligible the first of the month coincident with or next following their appointment date.

Please note: The leave information in this guide is applicable unless otherwise dictated by sponsor guidelines. Please contact postdocsupport@qwu.edu with any questions.

Eligibility

Eligibility for paid parental leave will begin the first of the month coincident with or next following a postdoc's appointment date. Paid parental leave applies to postdocs who have given birth or are the spouse/partner of the birth mother; for the placement of a child (adoption, foster or other eligible custody); or for the placement of a child for whom the postdoc permanently assumes and discharges parental responsibility. Eligibility criteria for paid parental leave must be met prior to the birth or placement of a child.

Eligible postdocs can take up to six (6) weeks of paid parental leave one (1) time during a defined twelve (12) month period. For instance, if the postdoc received paid parental leave benefits beginning in January and received six (6) or fewer weeks of paid parental leave, they would not be eligible for additional paid parental leave benefits until January of the following year.

In the event that that paid parental leave eligibility has not been met for a subsequent birth or placement, other university paid time off or leave programs may still apply (e.g., FMLA, sick and/or annual time).

Using Paid Parental Leave

Paid parental leave covers up to six (6) continuous weeks for the birth mother and/or the partner, adoptive or foster parent. Paid parental leave must be taken within twelve (12) months following the birth or placement of a child and may not be taken intermittently.

Both parents work at GW? If both parents are eligible for paid parental leave, both can receive the full six (6) weeks

In certain situations, paid parental leave may be granted up to six (6) months prior to or following an adoption or foster placement to fulfill legal requirements of the placement but may not be taken intermittently. Leave must be completed within twelve (12) months of the birth or placement date. Paid parental leave eligibility must be met prior to the start of the qualifying placement of a child. If a postdoc returns to work within the first six weeks following the placement, any remaining unused paid parental leave will be forfeited.

Coordination with Other Benefits

FMLA

Paid parental leave will run concurrently with FMLA, if eligible for both paid parental leave and FMLA.

Holidays

If a holiday falls within an approved paid parental leave payment period, the postdoc will be compensated for that day as paid parental leave pay and not holiday pay. Holidays do not extend paid parental leave beyond six (6) weeks.



Paid Parental Leave Approved Mid-Pay Period

Paid parental leave benefits will only cover pay up to forty (40) hours per week. During pay periods where a postdoc both works and receives paid benefits, paid parental leave will not cover more than the difference between hours worked and forty (40) *.

**Part-time postdocs: A maximum of 30 hours of PPL will be paid for part-time postdocs who are paid based on a 0.75 full-time equivalent (FTE) rate.*

Benefits Continuation

All eligible benefits continue during paid parental leave. All GW paid benefit contributions continue.

Returning to Work

A postdoc associate on paid parental leave will be reinstated to the same position held when paid parental leave began or, in the university's sole discretion, to a position with equivalent pay and benefits, provided that they can perform the essential functions of the position with or without reasonable accommodation. They will not be restored to any position if:

- The employment relationship would have terminated had paid parental leave not been taken;
- They inform the university of the intent not to return to work at the expiration of the paid parental leave; and/or
- They fail to return to work at the expiration of the paid parental leave.

Postdoc scholars on paid parental leave will retain the same position held when paid parental leave began, in accordance with sponsor requirements.

If you need to apply for paid parental leave, please contact the postdoctoral support office at postdocsupport@gwu.edu for further assistance.



Bereavement

Postdocs are eligible to receive paid bereavement time, should time off be needed because of the death of an immediate family member, as defined by:

- A person related by blood, legal custody or marriage
- Foster child or child who lives with you and for whom you permanently assume and discharge parental responsibility
- A person with whom you share or have shared, within the last year, a mutual residence and with whom you maintain a committed relationship

Requesting Bereavement

Postdocs may request up to five (5) scheduled workdays of paid time off (per event) due to the death of a family member. One (1) workday equals 8 hours for full-time postdocs (pro-rated for part-time postdocs).

The requested workdays do not need to be consecutive. When requesting the use of bereavement time, notify your manager or mentor about the use of time and submit the request via the university Time Reporting System (TRS) as soon as possible; however, it is understood that in most cases, this time is unplanned.

Leaving the University

Bereavement time is not paid out upon separation.

Jury and Witness Duty

Paid time off for jury and witness duty is provided to postdocs who have been summoned by the courts to serve on a jury or if subpoenaed or requested by university attorneys to appear as a witness in connection with a work-related matter on behalf of the university or are required by the university to attend certain university court or administrative proceedings.

One day (1 day) of paid time off for jury/witness duty is equivalent to 8 hours for full-time postdocs (pro-rated for part-time postdocs).

Other Witness Duty Situations

Postdocs subpoenaed or requested to be a witness for non-work-related matters, provide testimony in support of their own case or serve as an expert witness in situations other than on behalf of the university are not eligible for jury/witness duty pay. In these situations, annual time or unpaid time (if annual time is exhausted) can be requested.

Time Reporting

If summoned to jury or witness duty, the postdoc is expected to account for their hours in the university Time Reporting System (TRS) and to provide supporting court documents to their manager or mentor. The manager or mentor will approve paid time off for scheduled work hours and workdays that are missed and forward all approved requests and supporting court documentation to their HR representative for inclusion in the postdoc's record.

Please note: Postdocs are required to report to work on those days or partial days when court attendance is not required, unless otherwise instructed by their manager.

Compensation

Postdocs called for jury duty or a court-related appearance may keep all court-provided compensation.

What if I need to take time to attend a funeral of someone not defined as an immediate family member?

In this situation, you may request annual time.

What if I've exhausted my bereavement time but need additional time?

With manager or mentor approval, you may take annual, sick or unpaid time to extend a bereavement leave period. You should follow established departmental procedures.

Please note: You must exhaust all accrued but unused annual and sick time prior to using unpaid time.



Holidays

The university generally recognizes the following paid holidays. Exact dates for observance of these holidays are posted on the Holiday Schedule on the [Benefits website](#).

- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving
- Day after Thanksgiving
- Winter Break (December 24 – January 1) *
- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- Inauguration Day
(If Inauguration Day coincides with the date on which Martin Luther King, Jr. Day is observed, the university will observe both holidays on the same day).
- President's Day
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth

**When calculating holiday pay during Winter Break, holiday pay is only provided on the weekdays that fall between December 24 and January 1. Weekends are not considered paid holidays.*

Holidays and Eligibility

- Full-time postdocs are eligible to receive eight (8) hours of holiday time for each paid university holiday.
- Part-time postdocs are eligible to receive prorated holiday time based upon percentage of effort (the number of hours they are scheduled to work per week divided by 40).

Holidays and Paid Status

Postdocs must be in paid status on the last scheduled work day immediately preceding and first scheduled work day following a holiday in order to be paid for that holiday.

- Postdoc associates in **paid status** are those who receive pay that is processed through GW payroll and includes regular hours worked as well as approved annual time, sick time and GW paid parental leave. *(Long-term disability and workers' compensation are paid by outside administrators; therefore, those pay types are not considered "paid status".)*
- Postdoc scholars paid via stipend must have a start date that aligns with the first of the month and an end date that aligns with the end of the month. Monthly stipends include any holiday which may fall during the month which the stipend is paid for as well as approved annual time, sick time and GW paid parental leave.

Holidays during Approved Annual and Sick Time

University holidays that occur during approved periods of annual or sick time should be charged to holiday time, not to accrued annual or sick time.



Holiday Time for Part-Time Postdocs

Part-time postdocs receive *prorated* holiday time based upon percentage of effort. The number of prorated holiday hours is equal the weekly scheduled hours divided by five (5) weekdays worked. See the table below for examples:

Scheduled Work Hours	Holiday Proration Hours
36	7.20
30	6.00
24	4.80
16	3.20

Options for Using Prorated Holiday Time

When a holiday falls on a part-time postdocs' regularly scheduled workday:

- Option 1 - Take the prorated holiday time (based on percentage of effort) and will not receive pay for the remaining hours not worked, if any.
- Option 2 - Take the prorated holiday time and use annual time for the difference between the prorated holiday time and any additional time normally worked.
- Option 3 – Take the prorated holiday time and, if approved by manager/mentor, work any additional hours that would normally be worked on another day during the same week.

When a holiday falls on a day a part-time postdoc does not work:

- Option 1 - Work a regular day and receive additional pay for prorated holiday time.
- Option 2 - Take prorated holiday time on a regular workday in the same week as the holiday.

“Real world” example

A benefits-eligible part-time postdoc works M-Th and is scheduled to work 24 hours each week (six hours per day). The holiday falls on Monday.

The postdoc would be eligible for 4.8 holiday hours and able to choose one of the following options: (Option 1) take the 4.8 holiday hours, (Option 2) use annual time (1.2 hours) to supplement the holiday hours to reach a normal six-hour workday or (Option 3) work the additional 1.2 hours on another day during the same week (requires manager or mentor approval).

Additional Holiday Compensation Guidelines

The university operates on a 24/7 schedule and, therefore, some postdocs must work on scheduled holidays. When university departments remain open on holidays, the following guidelines apply:

Postdocs Scheduled to Work on a Holiday

A postdoc in an exempt or nonexempt position who works on a holiday will be paid as if the day were not a holiday and will be provided a substitute day off, to be used by the end of the fiscal year. The postdoc and their manager or mentor are responsible for tracking and coordinating the substitute day off.

Postdocs will not be paid out above their normal salary (or stipend for postdoc scholars) so the substitute day should be taken in a timely manner.

Failure to Report to Work on a Scheduled Holiday Workday

A postdoc is not entitled to a substitute day off if they fail to report work on a scheduled workday that falls on a holiday. The manager or mentor may treat the absence on the holiday as an unauthorized absence (AWOL). Managers and mentors should review the situation with their HR representative prior to assigning AWOL status.

If a postdoc is AWOL on the scheduled workdays immediately preceding or following the holiday observance but works on the holiday, they will be paid for the holiday, but no substitute day off will be granted.

Note: Annual and GW sick time will not be accrued for the month in which an AWOL occurs.



Voting Time

Polling places are generally open for extended hours on Election Day, but some schedules may make it difficult to vote during these hours. In instances where a polling location is not open at least two to three (2-3) hours before or after a scheduled shift, a department should provide sufficient time, generally up to two (2) hours of paid time off, for voting. The two (2) hours is considered paid time off, but will not be deducted from the postdoc's annual time balance and will not be used to calculate overtime and other premium pay.

Postdocs should provide reasonable notice to their managers or mentors if they will need to be absent from their regularly scheduled work shift to vote. Postdocs should also provide the hours of operation of their polling location before paid time off is approved. An increasing number of jurisdictions offer early voting prior to Election Day therefore it might be more convenient to vote during these early voting periods.

Note: the [Leave to Vote Amendment Act of 2020](#), which took effect on October 1, 2020, gives all District workers the right to at least two hours of paid leave off to vote.



Change in Employment Status

Changes in employment status, such as moving from a full-time postdoc position to a full-time benefits-eligible staff positions, may impact annual and sick time balances and accruals.

Annual Time: All accrued but unused annual time can be transferred into a new position as long as the new position accrues annual time and the carryover amounts are within the limitations of the new position. If the new position does not accrue annual time, all accrued but unused annual time will be paid out.

Sick Time: Applicable accrued but unused sick time up to a maximum of 180 days can be transferred.

Leaving the University

Annual Time

Postdocs will be paid for accrued but unused annual time upon separation of employment or upon appointment end. Annual time is prorated in the month of separation if the separation date is prior to the last day of the month, as outlined in the chart below. The prorated time is credited on the date of separation or appointment end date.

If annual time was used in excess of the accrued amount at the time of separation, the excess days must be repaid to the university. Under no circumstances will un-accrued annual time be paid out upon separation.

Note: If a postdoc used accrued annual time during the Initial Ninety Day (IND) period with manager or mentor approval, no repayment will be required.

Annual Time Proration at Separation or Appointment End Date

Separation Date	Annual Time Days (Hours) Accrued for Month
1st – 7th	0
8th – 14th	0.5 (4 hours) *
15th – 21st	1 (8 hours) *
22nd or after	Normal Accrual Rate*

**Part-time postdocs' hours accrued will be based on percentage of effort.*

Annual Time Carryover

If a postdoc leaves the university between July 1 and August 31, up to 40 hours of accrued but unused carryover can be paid out for full-time postdocs and up to 20 hours of accrued but unused carryover can be paid out for part-time postdocs.

Sick Time

Unused accrued sick time is never paid out at time of separation. Sick time is prorated in the month of separation if the separation date is prior to the last day of the month, as outlined in the chart below.

Sick Time Proration at Separation or Appointment End Date

Separation Date	Sick Time Days (Hours) Accrued for Month
1st – 7th	0
8th – 14th	0.25 (2 hours) *
15th – 21st	0.5 (4 hours) *
22nd or after	Normal Accrual Rate*

**Part-time postdocs' hours accrued will be based on percentage of effort.*



Additional Guidelines

Last Work Day

A postdoc's last working day cannot fall on a holiday or any other scheduled time off, except when the postdoc is on job-protected leave or is regularly scheduled to work on the holiday. Annual time cannot be used to extend the separation date beyond the last day worked (excluding those on an approved, job-protected leave of absence).

Annual Time Requests after Retirement Notice

Postdoc associates who have provided at least 90 days' notice of retirement from the university can use accrued annual time after their retirement notice but must work the last two work weeks to provide adequate transition time within the department. If the retirement notice is not provided timely, accrued annual time cannot be used through the retirement date.

Proration during an Unpaid Absence

If a postdoc was on approved unpaid leave (or was placed on unpaid leave) in the month of separation, the **Proration during an Unpaid Absence** rules will take precedence. All unpaid workdays in the month will be considered, including those post-separation. For example, if a postdoc was on unpaid leave in November and then separated on 11/16, all workdays between 11/17 through 11/30 would be considered unpaid days (in addition to the leave period) for purposes of calculating accrual for November. For annual and sick time proration details, please refer to those individual sections of this guide.



Unpaid Leave

Family and Medical Leave

The Family and Medical Leave Acts, the federal FMLA, the District of Columbia (DC) FMLA and other state or local FMLA laws, provide unpaid, but job-protected, leave for specified family and medical situations.

Qualifying Reasons

FMLA laws provides job reinstatement and benefits continuation rights while on a qualifying leave of absence for reasons such as:

- The birth, adoption or placement of a child for foster care
 - Your own serious health condition
 - The care of a family member who has a serious health condition
 - A qualifying exigency leave related to a family member who is on covered active duty, has been called to covered active duty status, or has been notified of an impending call to covered active duty
 - To care for a covered service member or veteran with a serious injury or illness incurred in the line of active duty

Eligibility

Federal Family Medical and Leave Act (FMLA)

- To qualify for federal FMLA, you must meet the following conditions:
 - You must be a GW employee*, as defined by federal FMLA.
 - You must have worked at the university for a period totaling twelve (12) months. Periods of employment prior to a break in service of less than seven (7) years count towards eligibility.
 - You also must have worked at least 1,250 hours during the twelve (12) month period immediately preceding the beginning of your leave

District of Columbia Family Medical and Leave Act (FMLA)

- To qualify for DC FMLA, you must meet the following conditions:
 - You must be a GW employee*, as defined by DC FMLA.
 - for those who work more than 50% of the time in DC, you must have worked at the university for a period totaling twelve (12) months. Periods of employment prior to a break in service of less than seven (7) years count towards eligibility.
 - You must have worked at least 1,000 hours (including paid time off and holiday hours) during the twelve (12) month period immediately preceding the beginning of the leave.

Federal and DC FMLA run concurrently and cannot be used consecutively if leave is covered under both laws.

**Postdoc scholars do not meet the definition of a GW employee for FMLA eligibility.*

Entitlements

Under the DC FMLA, eligible employees are permitted up to sixteen (16) workweeks of unpaid family leave **and** sixteen (16) workweeks of unpaid medical leave during a twenty-four (24) month period.

Under the federal FMLA, eligible employees are permitted up to a total of twelve (12) workweeks of unpaid family and medical leave during a twelve (12) month period or up to twenty-six (26) workweeks during a single twelve (12) month period for military caregiver leave. An eligible employee is limited to a combined total of twenty-six (26) workweeks of leave for any federal FMLA-qualifying reason during the “single twelve (12) month period”.

Employees can request FMLA to cover a continuous period of absence. Employees may also be able to take FMLA leave

Did you know annual and sick time can be used during family and medical leave?

Available annual and/or sick time can be used during an approved family and medical leave (FMLA) period in order to remain in paid status. Any period of annual (or sick) time taken while on FMLA will run concurrently with the FMLA leave and cannot be taken in lieu of FMLA if the absence is FMLA qualifying.



Employees approved for intermittent FMLA must also notify Lincoln Financial, GW's FMLA administrator, of FMLA absences within seven (7) days of the absence for accurate record keeping. [Instructions for reporting ongoing intermittent FMLA absences \(PDF\)](#) are available. If these absence-reporting procedures are not followed, these absences may not be approved for job-protected leave.

Please note: Any annual, sick or unpaid time used during intermittent FMLA absences should be submitted using the employee's departmental time reporting system.

Benefits Continuation

Detailed [benefits continuation](#) information is available on the Benefits website.

Employer Rights and Responsibilities under the FMLA

Employees who are requesting leave for an FMLA-qualifying reason will be informed that they may be eligible for FMLA and will be provided with information about how to request FMLA leave. If eligible, the notice will specify any additional information required as well as the employee's rights and responsibilities. If the employee is not eligible, the notice will provide the reason(s) for ineligibility. Employees will also be notified if the leave will be designated as FMLA-protected and the amount of leave counted against the employee's FMLA leave entitlement.

Employees who require intermittent or reduced work schedule FMLA may be transferred to an alternative position, for which the employee is qualified, during the period of intermittent or reduced work schedule FMLA. The alternative position must have equivalent pay and benefits but does not have to have equivalent duties. Upon conclusion of FMLA, the employee must be placed in the same or equivalent job the employee had prior to being on FMLA.

Please note: Federal and DC FMLA include provisions that allow an employer to deny restoration of employment to individuals defined as key employees under certain circumstances.

Coordination with Paid Time Off

Annual and Sick Time during FMLA

FMLA provides job protection; however, it does not provide pay. Employees can elect to use their available annual and sick time during approved FMLA leave to remain in paid status. Employees can also elect to take FMLA unpaid. Employees are not required to use available annual or sick time; however, any annual or sick time used will run concurrently with FMLA leave.

Any annual or sick time that an employee wishes to use during FMLA absences should be submitted using the employee's departmental time reporting system.

Other Paid Benefits during FMLA

Postdoc associates are also eligible for up to six (6) weeks of continuous paid parental leave, during FMLA, following the birth or placement of a child. Any paid time off requested while on approved FMLA will run concurrently with the FMLA entitlement. An applicable paid parental leave claim will be opened at Lincoln Financial in coordination with the FMLA leave for eligible employees; there is no separate application required.

Please note: Benefits receives approval notifications from Lincoln Financial and processes any applicable paid parental leave pay for postdoc associates.

Paid Status and Accruals during FMLA

Employees who maintain full paid status during FMLA leave will accrue annual and sick time as normal. For the purpose of accruals, employees in "paid status" are those who receive pay that is processed through GW Payroll Services, such as regular hours, holiday pay, annual and sick time, GW paid short-term disability as well as paid parental leave. Long-term disability and worker's compensation are paid by outside administrators; therefore, those pay types are not considered "paid status" under the GW time off policy.

An employee in an unpaid status for a full calendar month will not accrue annual or sick time for that month. Employees, who maintain paid status for some portion of a calendar month, may receive prorated annual and sick time for that month, as outlined in the proration charts in those respective sections of this guide.



Returning to Work

Reinstatement – FMLA

Postdoc associates should contact the postdoctoral support office at postdocsupport@gwu.edu prior to returning to work. Failure to notify OVPR of an impending return to work may negatively affect payroll and benefits processing.

If an employee does not return to work following FMLA leave for a reason other than those listed below, the employee may be required to reimburse the university for the employer share of benefits premiums paid on the employee's behalf during FMLA leave. The exceptions include:

- The continuation, recurrence or onset of a serious health condition that would entitle the employee to FMLA leave;
- The continuation, recurrence or onset of a current service member's or veteran's serious injury or illness that would entitle the employee to FMLA leave; or
- Other circumstances beyond the employee's control.

Employees who return in a timely manner from approved FMLA leave will be restored to the same or equivalent position with equivalent pay, benefits and other terms and conditions of employment, provided all required documentation, including the "authorization to return to work" form described below, have been submitted. Employees returning from FMLA have no greater right to reinstatement than if the employee had been continuously employed during FMLA leave.

Fitness for Duty

Employees out on FMLA leave for their own serious health condition, will be required to present an [authorization to return to work \(PDF\)](#) prior to reinstatement. If such authorization is not received in a timely fashion, the employee's return to work may be delayed until authorization is provided. The university may request a second medical opinion at its own expense prior to the employee's return to work.

Benefits Enrollment

Upon return to active employment, employees may re-enroll or make a change (consistent with a qualifying life event) to benefits coverage within thirty (30) calendar days of returning to work via the EasyEnroll system. If no election is made, the next opportunity to enroll will be during open enrollment or within thirty (30) calendar days of a Qualified Life Event (QLE).

Did You Know? Employees who wish to participate in the FSA dependent care account upon returning to work must enroll/re-enroll in the FSA dependent care benefit within thirty (30) calendar days after their return date.

If you need to apply for FMLA leave, please contact the postdoctoral support office at postdocsupport@gwu.edu for further assistance.



DC Parental Leave (for School Events)

Under the [District of Columbia Parental Leave Act](#), eligible employees may take twenty-four (24) hours of unpaid DC Parental Leave per year to attend school-related events for the employee's own children or other children in the employee's direct family.

School-related events are those sponsored by a teacher, school or parent-teacher association, including concerts, plays, rehearsals, sporting games or practices and meetings with teachers or counselors.

Please note: *The university has elected to extend the leave provisions under the DC Parental Leave Act to eligible employees whose work location is outside of DC.*

This Act applies to a GW employee* who is a:

- parent of a child;
- guardian of a child;
- custodian of a child;
- aunt of a child;
- uncle of a child;
- grandparent; or
- spouse or domestic partner to a person listed above.

**Postdoc scholars do not meet the definition of a GW employee for DC Parental Leave eligibility.*

Employees must provide at least ten (10) days' advance notice, unless the school event was not foreseeable.

During DC Parental Leave, employees may elect to use annual time to remain in paid status or take the leave unpaid. Those time off requests should be made via the applicable time reporting system.

If you need to apply for DC Parental leave (for school events), please contact the postdoctoral support office at postdocsupport@gwu.edu for further assistance.



USERRA Leave

The [Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994](#) (USERRA) protects the rights and protections of employees who voluntarily or involuntarily, leave employment positions to undertake military service or certain types of service in the National Disaster Medical System. USERRA guarantees an employee returning from qualifying service the right to be reemployed at their former job (or as nearly comparable a job as possible) with the same benefits. [Your Rights under USERRA \(PDF\)](#) summarizes the employment and reemployment rights for qualifying service members. You must be an employee* (as defined by USERRA) and be called into qualifying service to be eligible for USERRA leave.

**Postdoc scholars do not meet the definition of a GW employee for USERRA Leave eligibility.*

Pay Protections

USERRA leave is unpaid; however, employees may elect to use accrued annual or sick time during USERRA leave. While USERRA forbids an employer from requiring an employee to use accrued paid time off during a period of qualifying service, if elected, the paid time off would be paid at the employee's regular base pay rate.

Benefits Continuation

When activated for duty, uniformed service members receive TRICARE however you can elect to continue your GW health coverage, with premium payment. An employee may not be subjected to a waiting period for health insurance coverage after the employee returns from military service and is reemployed. Detailed [benefits continuation](#) information is available on the Benefits website.

Reemployment Guarantees

If the criteria listed below are met, returning service members will be reemployed upon application for reinstatement. Service members must return to their jobs within a predetermined period after they are deactivated, based on how long they were gone.

In general, if the employee has been absent from a position of civilian employment because of qualifying service, the employee will be eligible for reemployment under USERRA by meeting the following criteria:

- The employer had advance notice of the employee's military or National Disaster Medical System obligations;
- The employee has been away from this employer five (5) years or fewer due to qualifying obligations (excluding exemptions);
- The employee returns to work in a timely manner as defined under USERRA;
- The employee has not been separated from uniformed services with a disqualifying discharge or under other than honorable conditions; and,
- The employee was not in a position that was temporary or limited to a specific time period or project where there was no reasonable expectation that employment would continue indefinitely or for a significant period.

Manager Tip Employers may fill positions with temporary or contract workers for the duration of the original employee's service. Employers must notify employees temporarily filling such positions when service members are slated to return.

With certain exceptions, returning service members, upon reapplication, will be reemployed in the job that they would have attained had they not been absent for qualifying service, with the same seniority, status and pay, as well as other rights and benefits determined by seniority. To be eligible for protection under USERRA, the service member must report to work or apply for reemployment within the following guidelines:

- 1 - 30 days of service: Report next scheduled workday after safe travel and eight (8) hours rest;



- 31-180 days of service: Apply within fourteen (14) days after completion of service; or
- 181+ days of service: Apply within ninety (90) days after completion of service.

Reasonable accommodation must be made for returning employees who have become disabled during their service. If the employer is unable to make reasonable accommodation within the old position, the employee will be offered another position for which the employee is qualified or could become qualified. Disabled veterans have two (2) years to return to their jobs after their service ends. Returning service members should contact their HR representative prior to returning to work as outlined in the USERRA rules. Failure to notify HR of an impending return to work may negatively affect payroll and benefits processing.

Benefits Enrollment

Upon return to active employment, employees may [re-enroll or make a change](#) (consistent with a qualifying life event) to benefits coverage within thirty (30) calendar days of returning to work via the EasyEnroll system. If no election is made, the next opportunity to enroll will be during open enrollment or within thirty (30) calendar days of a Qualified Life Event (QLE).

Retirement Contributions

Eligible employees will also receive any base contributions to their [retirement savings account](#) that would have been made if the employee had not been on unpaid USERRA. Eligible employees also have the right to make up any missed contributions to the Supplemental Retirement Plan and receive matching contributions within a certain period after returning to work. Please contact [Benefits](#) for details.

Annual Time Reinstatement

Returning employees who had an accrued annual time balance prior to going on USERRA leave that was forfeited at the end of the fiscal year will have that balance reinstated. Please contact Benefits at timeoff@gwu.edu for further details.

If you need to apply for USERRA leave, please contact the postdoctoral support office at postdocsupport@gwu.edu for further assistance.



Personal Leave

Postdocs may also request personal leave for certain personal situations. Examples include but are not limited to:

- For educational or training purposes
- To attend a personal or family event
- For an extension of family leave after exhausting FMLA
- To care for a family member when not eligible for FMLA

Personal Leave Eligibility

Unpaid personal leave may be requested after ninety (90) days from the postdoc's appointment date.

Postdocs who have fewer than six (6) months of service may request a personal leave of absence for a period not to exceed ten (10) workdays.

Postdocs who have completed a minimum of six (6) months of service may request longer periods of personal leave.

Please note: The leave information in this guide is applicable unless otherwise dictated by sponsor guidelines. Please contact postdocsupport@gwu.edu with any questions.

Coordination with Paid Time

All applicable accrued annual and sick time must be exhausted during approved personal leave. For example, if the personal leave request is to care for an ill family member, both annual and sick time will be exhausted. If the leave is for training or educational purposes, only annual time will be exhausted.

Benefits Continuation

While on approved personal leave, eligible benefits can be continued with premium payment. Detailed [benefits continuation](#) information is available on the Benefits website.

Effect of Personal Leave on Merit Increases

For personal leave periods exceeding ninety (90) calendar days, the amount of merit increase, if any, may be prorated based on time spent at work during that performance review period.

Requests for Personal Leave

Personal leave requests should be submitted to your manager or mentor as far in advance as possible. The request must include the purpose of the leave, the date the leave is to begin and the date you intend to return to work. In deciding whether to grant the request, the department's operational and staffing needs, the reason for the request and job performance should be considered. The approval of the request does not guarantee job reinstatement, and the position may be filled, modified or eliminated during the period of personal leave. If not reinstated, you may apply for vacant positions.

Leave for Religious Observances

Postdocs may use unpaid time (or annual time) for religious observances that are not part of the university's regular [Holiday Schedule](#) by submitting their time off request via the university Time Reporting System (TRS), in accordance with established departmental procedures. For further support, please contact [Equal Employment Opportunity & Access](#) at eeo@gwu.edu or (202) 994-9656.



We Are Here to Help

For questions regarding postdoc paid time off and leave programs, please contact the Postdoctoral Support Office at postdocsupport@gwu.edu

Email: postdocsupport@gwu.edu

Online: <https://research.gwu.edu/current-postdocs>