

Going on an Intermittent Medical Leave

What classified staff need to know about intermittent medical leaves with the University of Pittsburgh

If you or a family member have a serious health condition that may require you to miss work occasionally, you may be eligible for an intermittent leave under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

FMLA is a federal law that provides up to 12 weeks (60 working days) of unpaid, job-protected leave to eligible staff members. You may be able to take time off of work to care for a spouse, registered domestic partner, dependent son or daughter, or parent who has a serious health condition, or your own serious health condition. In order to qualify, you must have been employed by the University of Pittsburgh for at least 12 months, and you must have worked at least 1,250 hours at the University in the past 12 months.

Why should I apply for intermittent FMLA?

FMLA leave is meant to protect you and your job. Even if you have paid time off to cover your entire leave, you are still required to file a claim. If your own medical condition or the medical condition of an eligible family member requires you to miss work on a regular basis, but not necessarily continuously, you should file for an intermittent FMLA claim.

What conditions could be eligible for intermittent FMLA?

Intermittent FMLA could be used for yourself or a family member. An example for one's own condition could be diagnosed severe migraine headaches. An example for a family member could be assisting a qualified family member to weekly therapy appointments or a family member with an illness resulting in unpredictable medical needs.

How do I apply for intermittent FMLA?

- Contact your supervisor or department administrator to inform them of your intent to take a medical leave.
- Contact MetLife at 1-888-777-7418 to file your claim. MetLife will send you a packet of information that you must review. In the case of your own serious health condition, you and your attending physician must complete the forms in the packet and return them to MetLife. In the case of a medical leave for your family member, you and your family member's attending physician must complete the forms in the packet. These forms must be returned directly to MetLife.

How do I know how much time off I can take under FMLA?

You, MetLife, and your doctor (or family member's doctor) will discuss and determine a leave duration and frequency.

Some examples are:

- two days per month
- four hours a day, two times a week
- three episodes per month of one to two day duration

Do I have to use paid time off to cover the leave?

You are required to exhaust your sick time while on intermittent FMLA. You may use your vacation and personal time to cover the leave, but you are not required to.

Do I have to complete my Pitt Worx time card while I am on Intermittent FMLA?

Yes, while you are on a paid leave you will be required to document the sick, vacation, and/or personal time that you use to cover your leave. You should also document the dates that are related to the FMLA leave in the comments section of your Pitt Worx time card. You will be required to submit a biweekly tracking sheet to MetLife to document your FMLA time. This tracking sheet will be provided to you by MetLife.

What happens if I do not have sick, vacation, or personal days to cover the time I take off?

If you are exempt, you can enter dock time on your time card for the time you did not work and did not have sick, vacation, or personal time to use related to the FMLA leave. Your pay will automatically be reduced based on the information submitted on your Pitt Worx time card.

If you are non-exempt, you will enter zero hours worked on your time card for the days missed. Your department will be required to submit a pay adjustment to reduce your pay each month.

Do I accrue vacation and sick time while on intermittent leave?

Yes, you will continue to accrue paid time off while on intermittent leave.

What do I do if I do not meet the eligibility criteria for FMLA?

Notify your department of the need to take time off intermittently. The Office of Human Resources' Employee & Labor Relations will work with you and your department to determine if an accommodation can be made. If approved, the agreement will be documented.

Am I eligible for short-term disability (STD) payments while on Intermittent FMLA?

No, only continuous claims are eligible for STD payments.

What happens to my benefits and other deductions while I am on intermittent FMLA?

If you use your paid time off to cover the leave, your earnings will be calculated and deductions will be taken in the following order: pretax deductions, taxes, involuntary deductions, then voluntary deductions.

If your paycheck is not enough to cover your deductions, you will be responsible for outstanding obligations. Depending on the length of time you will be on an unpaid status, you will either be directly billed for the cost of your health and welfare benefits by the Payroll Department or the cost of the insurance will be deducted from your paycheck upon your return to work. It is your responsibility to ensure your premiums are paid. Educational benefits are not affected by intermittent FMLA.

I was a temporary employee prior to being hired as a staff employee. Does my time at a temporary status count towards FMLA eligibility?

Yes. Time as a University employee, including time worked as a temporary employee, counts toward FMLA eligibility.

What if I’m part of a collective bargaining unit?

Reference your collective bargaining agreement for your union’s specific leave requirements and process.

Can I have multiple leaves at one time?

Yes, you can have an intermittent claim for a family member at the same time as an intermittent claim for your own serious health condition. However, you still only have a total of 12 weeks to use.

Who do I call if I have questions?

MetLife	1-888-777-7418
Benefits Department.....	833-852-2210
Parking	412-624-4034
Payroll Department	412-624-8070
Credit Union	412-624-2249
Life Solutions.....	1-866-647-3432