

Dartmouth Parental Leave Benefit January 1, 2023 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Overview

Q: What is parental leave?

A: Parental leave may be taken to bond with a new child during the first year after a birth or adoption, or for the foster placement of a child under the age of 18 (over the age of 18 if the child is mentally or physically disabled) during the first year after the foster placement. The leave must be completed by the first anniversary of the child's birth, adoption, or foster placement. This leave does not apply for the adoption of a spouse's or partner's current child. For more information, please see the [parental leave policy](#).

Q: How and when is the parental leave policy changing?

A: Historically Dartmouth has provided two weeks of paid parental leave to eligible staff to bond with a new child. Starting Jan. 1, 2023, regular benefits-eligible staff (including union employees) with more than one year of service will be eligible for eight weeks of parental leave:

- Weeks 1–6 are at 100% of your base pay
- Weeks 7 and 8 are at 60% of your base pay

We are pleased to be able to show our support for new parents by expanding this important benefit.

Q: Who is eligible for this expanded parental leave policy?

A: Regular benefits-eligible staff (including union employees) are eligible. Those with less than one year of service are eligible for a prorated benefit.

Q: I've worked at Dartmouth for less than one year. What is my parental leave benefit?

A: The parental leave benefit for regular benefits-eligible staff (including union employees) who have worked at Dartmouth for less than one year is adjusted to be six weeks, as follows:

- Weeks 1 and 2 are at 100% of your base pay (our historic benefit)
- Weeks 3–6 are at 60% of your base pay

Q: How does the Dartmouth parental leave benefit for eligible staff compare to the parental leave benefit that is part of the voluntary New Hampshire Paid Family and Medical Leave (NH PFML) program?

A: The Dartmouth parental leave benefit for eligible staff is more generous compared to the parental leave component of the voluntary NH PFML program effective Jan. 1, 2023, an optional plan that provides participating New Hampshire workers with 60% of their average weekly wage (up to the Social Security wage cap) for up to six weeks per year. (See "Coordination with State and Federal Benefits" at the end of this document, as well as [Dartmouth NH PFML FAQs](#) for more information.)

Q: Does parental leave need to be taken all at once?

A: Parental leave is usually approved as one continuous period of time. However, you may be able to take your leave intermittently, or on a reduced schedule basis, with departmental approval in coordination with HR. If approved, intermittent parental leave can be taken in no less than half-day increments.

Q: Does this parental leave policy replace current Dartmouth benefits for birth mothers?

A: No. If you are pregnant and giving birth to a baby, Dartmouth's Short-Term Disability (STD) plan provides income replacement for up to 6 to 8 weeks (depending on delivery type). If there are additional medical complications, STD can be extended up to 26 weeks (see dartgo.org/stdisability). Parental leave benefits are in addition to STD benefits.

Q: If I am a birth mother, do I have to take parental leave immediately following my Short-Term Disability (STD) leave?

A: No. You do not have to take your parental leave immediately following your STD leave; however, you must complete your parental leave before your child's first birthday.

Q: If I am a non-birth parent, do I have to take parental leave immediately following my child's birth, adoption, or foster placement?

A: No; however, your leave must be completed by your child's first birthday, or by the first anniversary of the adoption or foster placement.

Special Situations

Q: My partner and I are both Dartmouth employees. Do we have to share the parental leave benefit?

A: No. Each regular benefits-eligible staff member (including union employees) is entitled to either the full eight-week parental leave benefit after one year of service or the full six-week benefit if less than one year of service. Parents will generally be permitted to take the leave concurrently or separately, dependent on operational needs if both parents are in the same work unit.

Q: How does the new parental leave benefit apply for employees who are currently out on parental leave?

A: The newly expanded parental leave policy will apply for employees who are on parental leave when the policy becomes effective on January 1, 2023. These employees will receive notice about this change and their specific additional leave benefits.

Q: If I recently took parental leave, am I eligible for more parental leave with the expanded policy?

A: If you took parental leave for a child born, adopted or placed after July 1, 2022, the start of our fiscal year, the newly expanded parental leave policy may apply. In addition to the two weeks of parental leave you took on or after July 1, 2022, you may be eligible for up to an additional six weeks (the first four weeks at 100% of pay and the next two weeks at 60% of pay) if you had completed a full year of service prior to your initial leave. Those with less than one year of service at the time of the initial leave may be eligible for the prorated newly expanded benefit; however, please keep in mind that your leave must be completed by your child's first birthday, or by the first anniversary of the adoption or foster placement.

Q: What if I (or my partner) had a baby, or I adopted a baby or had a foster child placed with me in 2022?

A: If your child was born or adopted on or after July 1, 2022, the start of our fiscal year, and you were eligible for parental leave at that time, the newly expanded parental leave policy will apply; however, please keep in mind that your leave must be completed by your child's first birthday, or by the first anniversary of the adoption or foster placement.

If you received Dartmouth's 2-week paid parental leave benefit in effect in 2022, you are eligible for the difference between the 2-weeks and the new benefit under the parental leave policy effective January 1, 2023.

Q: What if I am hired by Dartmouth in January of 2023 and I had a baby in 2022?

A: You would need to be actively employed with Dartmouth and be eligible for parental leave at the time of the child's birth in 2022 for the newly expanded parental leave policy to apply.

Q: If I am fostering, adopting, or having more than one child in a year, what is the parental leave benefit?

A: Eligible employees will receive a maximum of eight total weeks of paid parental leave for the birth, adoption, or foster care placement of a child(ren) in a 12 month period. The 12-month period commences with the birth or placement of the adopted or fostered child regardless of when the leave is taken. Multiple births, adoptions, or placements (e.g., the birth of twins) does not increase the total amount of paid parental leave benefit.

Coordination with State and Federal Benefits

Q: How does Dartmouth’s parental leave policy coordinate with the voluntary New Hampshire Paid Family and Medical Leave (NH PFML) program effective Jan. 1, 2023?

A: Voluntary New Hampshire Paid Family and Medical Leave (NH PFML) provides participating New Hampshire workers with 60% of their average weekly wage (up to the Social Security wage cap) for up to six weeks per year for specified leaves of absence from the workplace.

NH PFML is an optional plan that individuals will need to purchase directly through MetLife during the NH PFML annual enrollment (Jan. 1, 2023 – March 2, 2023). Individual policies have a seven-month waiting period for benefits and require individuals to use all but one week of Dartmouth paid time off prior to paying a benefit. We recommend you review [Dartmouth NH PFML FAQs](#) for more details as you consider purchasing a NH PFML policy. If you choose to purchase an individual NH PFML policy, you may be eligible for a supplemental benefit through Dartmouth’s parental leave benefit.

Q: How does Dartmouth’s parental leave policy coordinate with another state’s Paid Family and Medical Leave?

A: For example, if I live in Massachusetts, how does it coordinate with Massachusetts Paid Family and Medical Leave (MA PFML)? If you *live* in Massachusetts but work at a Dartmouth location in New Hampshire, you are not eligible for MA PFML. You are eligible for the optional NH PFML benefit described above. If you *work* for Dartmouth in Massachusetts, Dartmouth’s parental leave policy will run concurrently with the MA PFML bonding benefit. You may be eligible for supplemental pay. Please contact the Disability Office at disability@dartmouth.edu for details related to supplemental pay and benefits coordination with other states.

Q: How does Dartmouth’s parental leave coordinate with the federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)?

A: FMLA is a federal law that provides unpaid, job-protected family and medical leave. FMLA will run concurrently with Dartmouth’s parental leave benefit where applicable. If you take eight weeks of parental leave, you may be eligible to take another four weeks of unpaid leave under FMLA. (Note: To be eligible for FMLA you need to have been employed by Dartmouth for 12 months and worked at least 1,250 hours. Additionally, if both parents are Dartmouth employees, FMLA requires the 12-week unpaid, job protected leave to be shared.)

Q: Can I take parental leave to care for a family member with a serious health condition?

A: No. Parental leave benefits are offered solely to enable parents to bond with a new child. Family medical leave benefits to care for a family member with a serious health condition is not part of this policy. Dartmouth is currently evaluating family medical leave benefits and expects to introduce a new benefit during 2023.

To Learn More and Apply

Q: How do I apply for parental leave?

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Benefits Office, Human Resources

7 Lebanon St., suite 203
Hanover, NH 03755
603-646-3588
human.resources.benefits@dartmouth.edu

A: To apply for parental leave, contact the Disability Administrator at the Office of Human Resources prior to taking your leave. If you have additional questions, please call 603-646-6825 or email disability@dartmouth.edu.

Q: How can I learn more?

A: To learn more, visit “Having a Baby and Paid Parental Leave” on the [Dartmouth Human Resources website](#).

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