

# Leave of Absence Q&A

This Q&A is generic. We encourage all employees to contact Human Resources (in advance, when possible) before going out on a leave of absence. Leave of absence questions can be directed to [benefits@rowan.edu](mailto:benefits@rowan.edu) or by calling 856-256-4134.

**1. I have to go out for surgery or my immediate family member needs surgery. What forms do I need?**

Please contact the Benefits team via email at [benefits@rowan.edu](mailto:benefits@rowan.edu) or by calling 856-256-4134.

If you qualify for FMLA, you will need to complete the **Rowan Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)/New Jersey Family Leave Act (NJFLA)** request form and have your physician complete the **Certification of Health Care Provider for Employee's Serious Health Condition (FMLA)** or **the Certification of Health Care Provider for Family Member's Serious Health Condition**. **Please return the medical certification at least 15 - 30 days before your leave of absence.** If you do not qualify for Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), you will need to complete the Rowan Sick Leave Request form and have your physician send a note to HR with the following information:

- The date the employee was seen by the doctor
- The date(s) the employee was out or will be out
- The expected date of return
- The reason for the absence and/or the nature of the illness
- A statement from the doctor that the employee is unable to carry out expected duties

**2. I have been absent for five (5) or more consecutive days. Do I need a doctor's note?**

Please contact the Benefits team via email at [benefits@rowan.edu](mailto:benefits@rowan.edu) or by calling 856-256-4134.

An employee who is on sick leave absence for five (5) or more consecutive working days is required to submit to the Office of Human Resources acceptable medical documentation substantiating the illness. Additionally, on the day of return to work, the employee is required to bring to the Office of Human Resources medical documentation that includes the return-to-work date and any limitations or restrictions.

Employees submitting a medical note should ensure that the note contains the following information:

- The date the employee was seen by the doctor
- The date(s) the employee was out or will be out
- The expected date of return
- The reason for the absence and/or the nature of the illness
- A statement from the doctor that the employee is unable to carry out expected duties

Any medical excuse note containing this information will be returned for the necessary details.

Failure to provide appropriate medical documentation may result in disciplinary action.

**3. When I go out on FMLA or a Sick Leave of Absence, what time can I use?**

Please contact the Benefits team via email at [benefits@rowan.edu](mailto:benefits@rowan.edu) or by calling 856-256-4134.

When going out on the Family Medical Leave Act – FMLA (only) leave, if you have more than two (2) weeks of earned sick time, you will be required to use at minimum two (2) weeks of that time. You may request to use additional earned or unearned sick time, earned vacation time, and Administrative leave or Comp time.

When taking a Sick leave of absence, you may use earned and unearned sick, earned vacation, administrative leave, and comp time.

**4. If I am in an unpaid status while out on a leave of absence for my own serious health condition, what is my option for wage replacement?**

Please contact the Benefits team via email at [benefits@rowan.edu](mailto:benefits@rowan.edu) or by calling 856-256-4134.

You will have the option of applying for Temporary Disability through the State of New Jersey.

**5. If I am in an unpaid status while out on a leave of absence, to whom do I send my health premium payments to?**

Please make your check or money order payable to Rowan University. If payment is not made on time, your group health, prescription drug, and dental insurance will be canceled. You will be provided notification in writing at least 15 days before the date that your health coverage will lapse. The University is not responsible for the employee's share of health insurance premiums while they are on a leave of absence without pay. Send your payment to:

Rowan University Human Resources  
201 Mullica Hill Road  
Glassboro, NJ 08028

**6. How long can I pay the employee share of my health premiums while I am in an unpaid status with Rowan University?**

The State of New Jersey Health Benefits Program permits an employee who is on an approved leave of absence without pay to continue paying the employee share of the benefits for a maximum period of three (3) months. If you are still on a leave of absence after the three (3) month maximum, you will be required to pay the full cost of your health and prescription coverage. However, you would have the option to continue the dental plan through COBRA.

**7. I am an expectant mother. What are my options for maternity leave?**

Please contact the Benefits team via email at [benefits@rowan.edu](mailto:benefits@rowan.edu) or by calling 856-256-4134.

If you qualify for the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), FMLA allows the expectant mother four (4) weeks of leave prior to your due date and six (6) weeks after for vaginal delivery or eight (8) weeks after for C-Section. Sick days may only be used during this period of incapacity. If you qualify for NJFLA, the State allows you 12 weeks of bonding time with your newborn. \*Twelve (12) of those weeks, the State will pay 85% under the Family Leave Insurance (FLI).

If you do not qualify for the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) or the New Jersey Family Leave Act (NJFLA), please contact HR.

## **8. What is Family Leave Insurance?**

For more information on Family Leave Insurance, please see the link below:

<https://nj.gov/labor/myleavebenefits/worker/fli/>

## **9. How do I receive NJ State Temporary Disability and Family Leave Insurance payments?**

It takes the State 2-3 weeks to process your claim. The payments are dispersed through a State-issued debit card. The State will send you a confirmation letter in the mail and the State-chosen bank will send you a debit card in the mail to your home address.

## **10. How do I qualify for FMLA and NJFLA?**

### *FMLA Qualification:*

- Employed for at least 12 months and
- Worked 1250 actual hours in the previous 12 months

For more information on FMLA, click [here](#).

### *NJFLA Qualification:*

- Employed for at least 12 months and
- Worked 1000 actual hours in the previous 12 months

For more information on NJFLA, click [here](#).

## **11. Web Time Entry for Payroll while on a Leave of Absence:**

The employee or the employee's department time-keeper is responsible for submitting timesheets for the duration of the leave (even when the employee is unpaid).

## **12. Return to Work Information**

If the employee is out for their own health condition, they will need to submit to Human Resources a return to work note on their treating doctor's letterhead with the following information:

- The date of return

- If they are being returned with or without restrictions.
  - Please note if being returned with restrictions, the restrictions will need to be approved prior to your return.

**13. Can I perform work when I am on a medical leave of absence?**

Any agreements to work while on a medical leave of absence would require supervisor approval as well as documentation from the physician and an approved ADA request from the Office of Employee Equity and Labor Relations.

**14. Am I required to submit medical documentation if I am using vacation time or if the medical treatment occurs between semesters?**

Yes, employees will need to submit a medical note regarding their ability to return to work. The note should be written on their physician's letterhead and include the date they can return and if they are returning with or without restrictions. If an employee is returned with restrictions, the restrictions need to be approved prior to their return.

**15. Do I accrue time while on an unpaid leave?**

An employee who leaves State service or goes on a leave of absence without pay before the end of the calendar year shall have his or her leave prorated based on time earned, except that the leave of an employee on a voluntary furlough or furlough extension leave shall not be affected.

An employee who is on the payroll for 23 days or more shall earn a full month's allowance, and earn one-half month's allowance if he or she is on the payroll for greater than 14 calendar days, but less than 23 calendar days.

- An employee shall reimburse the appointing authority for paid working days used in excess of his or her prorated and accumulated entitlements.
- An employee who returns to work from a leave of absence shall not be credited with paid vacation or sick leave until the amount of leave used in excess of the prorated entitlement has been reimbursed.
- In State service, intermittent days off without pay other than voluntary furlough or furlough extension days shall be aggregated and considered as a continuous leave without pay for calculation of reduced vacation and sick leave credits. When intermittent days off without pay other than voluntary furlough or furlough extension days equal 11 working days, the employee's vacation and sick leave credit shall be reduced by one-half of one month's entitlement. Union leave days pursuant to a negotiated agreement shall not be included in such calculations.

**16. What is the difference between a continuous leave of absence and an intermittent leave of absence?**

A continuous leave of absence occurs when you are out of work continuously. In this scenario once the leave of absence begins, you will not return to work until the end date of your leave.

An intermittent leave of absence occurs when time off is interrupted by one or more returns to work. Example of intermittent leaves are leaves for appointments with a treating physician or leaves due to a chronic health condition where over a time period you or a dependent will require care sporadically.

**17. I am a member of the Alternate Benefits Program (ABP) Plan. What happens to my retirement plan during a leave of absence?**

While in paid status, your employee contributions will continue to be deducted from your paycheck and Rowan will continue to make the employer contribution to your account. If your leave of absence is unpaid you will not make contributions to your retirement account and Rowan will not make employer contributions to your retirement account.

**18. I am a member of the Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS) pension plan. What happens to my pension plan accrual during a leave of absence?**

While in paid status, your employee contributions will continue to be deducted from your paycheck. During an unpaid leave you will not receive pension credits and no contributions will be made to your plan on your behalf. Upon your return to active status, you will be offered the option to "buy back" pension service credits.

**19. As an expectant father, am I eligible to apply for a leave of absence in order to care for my spouse and/or newborn or newly adopted child?**

Yes, you are eligible to apply for an FMLA/NJFLA leave of absence. Since the leave of absence would be to care for someone besides yourself, the leave is applied to both FMLA and NJFLA. A maximum of 12 weeks of leave may be taken during the first year of your child's arrival.

**20. What documents do I need to complete to apply for paternity leave?**

To provide care for your spouse, you would need to have the Certification of Health Care Providers for Family Member's Serious Health Condition form completed by your spouse's doctor. You would also need to complete Rowan's FMLA Request.

To be eligible for bonding leave you will need to provide proof of relationship (ie birth certificate, adoption documents) and Rowan's FMLA Request form.

**21. What time will be used while I am on paternity leave?**

If caring for your spouse, you may use earned sick time. If bonding with your newborn or newly adopted child, if eligible you may elect to use earned vacation time, administrative leave time, or comp time. You may also apply for New Jersey Family Leave Insurance (NJFLI).