

## University Policy Impact and Tracking Statement

Proposed or Revised Policy Title: UA Parental Leave Policy (Revision)
Policy Sponsor: Allison M. Vaillancourt
Senior Leadership Review Dates: Routed March 26, 2018
Publication Dates: <i>Lo Que Pasa</i> - <i>UAnnounce</i> – Submitted March 26, 2018 Other -

**Policy description:** This policy grants University of Arizona employees who qualify for full benefits and have worked for the UA for at least 12 months to take six weeks paid leave on the birth or adoption of a child.

### Reason for new policy or revision:

Prior to the formal policy revision process, two changes to the scope were made by Human Resources to clarify the intended applicability of this policy: (a) to specify that employees must be eligible for full benefits, not just limited insurance benefits under the Affordable Care Act or graduate assistant benefits, and (b) to clarify that the benefit is intended to apply to employees on nine-month contracts, provided they are employed in consecutive years.

Currently two additional changes are proposed.

1. Change the required period of UA employment prior to taking parental leave from “at least 12 months” to “at least 12 **continuous** months.

**Rationale:** This clarifies that prior service at UA is not counted if there is a break in service: e.g., 12 months at one department, 3-month layoff, followed by 3 months in a new department.

2. Change the 90-day return-to-work provision to 30 days: Employees who fail to return to work for at least 30 days after their approved leave for the birth or adoption of a child agree to reimburse the University for the salary and benefits paid by the University for the period of Parental Leave.

**Rationale:** The return-to-work provision was intended to deter employees from taking paid parental leave if they intended to resign after the baby came. However, 90 days has been problematic. When employees do not return for a full 3 months, they typically do not have enough banked vacation and sick time to cover what is owed and face a large bill from the University. Even if the department does not wish to pursue the employee for the funds, Financial Services Office is obligated to do so because otherwise the paid time would constitute a gift, which is illegal under state statute. The 30-day return-to-work provision matches Arizona State University’s parental leave policy and minimizes disruption to UA business by allowing a department time to hire and train a replacement.

### Major impacts to University and potential stakeholders:

The continuous employment provision is intended to simplify implementation by clarifying previously ambiguous situations which invoked challenges that required department and central Human Resources time and effort to resolve. The change to 30 days is intended to make the return to work provision less onerous, we hope resulting in fewer cases where the UA has to pursue collections on a former employee.

**Anticipated concerns or objections:**

When this policy was enacted there was resistance to a new department-borne expense. If the change is perceived as facilitating employees' resigning after taking advantage of paid parental leave, resistance may be expected.

**Estimate and description of financial cost to implement, if any:**

The financial cost is incurred by paying wages and benefits for an employee for six weeks. That is unaffected by the present changes.

**Will the policy affect any of the following?**

- |                       |   |   |   |
|-----------------------|---|---|---|
| Existing UA Policy    | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No | Compliance with federal law/regulations | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No |
| Existing UA Procedure | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | Compliance with state law/regulations   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No |
| Existing Board Policy | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No | General Public                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No |

**Describe any item checked "yes":**

Changes the required period for return to work from 90 days to 30.