

UTK FAMILY CARE POLICIES FOR FACULTY

SCOPE

These family care policies apply only to faculty members on academic year appointments. These policies are intended to provide guidance for granting leaves of absence without pay, modifying service requirements, and extending the tenure-track probationary period for reasons related to a faculty member's family care-giving responsibilities. Decisions made under this policy should not affect decisions concerning tenure or other merit-based evaluations. Annual merit reviews are conducted according to their own criteria and for their own purposes, which are different from those involved in the family care policies.

PROVISIONS

Leave Of Absence Without Pay

Faculty members on academic year appointments who have primary responsibility for the care of a child, or for an ill or disabled parent, spouse, or other family member, may request leave without pay. This leave normally will be approved for no more than one year. The faculty member should request leave without pay in a letter to the department head or other administrative officer, who then will forward the request and his/her recommendation to the appropriate dean. If the dean recommends approval, he/she will forward the request to the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs who will make the final decision on the request.

Eligibility for fringe benefits during the leave of absence without pay for family care reasons shall be governed by the policies applicable to other leaves of absence without pay (Personnel Policy No. 355). If the faculty member is eligible for leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), the maximum twelve (12) weeks of FMLA leave shall include a leave of absence without pay under the UTK Family Care Policy.

Modifications in Service

If warranted by birth, adoption, or commencement of foster care of a child, or by illness of a family member for whom a faculty member has primary care-giving responsibility, the faculty member, department head, and dean may agree upon modifications in the faculty member's service. Modifications in service may include a temporarily reduced teaching load or other mutually acceptable arrangement. Modifications in service normally will not exceed one year in duration. Administrative cooperation in addressing the faculty member's need for temporary time away from the classroom is strongly encouraged. Eligibility for fringe benefits during any modification in service shall be determined in accordance with the University Personnel Policy and Procedure for each fringe benefit.

Extending the Probationary Period

A faculty member who has primary responsibility for the care of a newborn or newly adopted child, or for an ill or disabled parent, spouse, or other family member, may request an extension of the tenure-track probationary period for up to one academic year. The faculty member's assumption of the primary care-giving responsibility offered as a justification for extending the probationary period should have occurred within one year prior to the date of the request, and the request must be made before the tenure review process begins. The Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs may waive these time requirements for what he/she deems to be good cause shown in a written statement of the faculty member.

The faculty member must submit a written request for the extension to the department head or other administrative officer, who then will forward the request and his/her recommendation to the appropriate dean. The dean will forward the request and his/her recommendation to the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, who will make the final decision on the request.

Faculty members who are granted an extension of the probationary period will continue to receive annual merit reviews in a process that is independent of the request for extension.

Except in the case of an extension granted for family care reasons, the probationary period at UTK shall not exceed seven years.