

HIGHLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
GENERAL PERSONNEL POLICY

SUBJECT: Parental Leave  
BOARD OF TRUSTEE APPROVAL: 01/22/2025

Page 1 of 3  
EFFECTIVE DATE: 01/23/2025

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Highland Community College will provide paid parental leave to employees following the birth of an employee's child or the placement of a child with an employee in connection with adoption or foster care. The purpose of paid parental leave is to enable the employee to care for and bond with a newborn or a newly adopted or newly placed child. This policy will run concurrently with Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leave, as applicable. This policy will be in effect for births, adoptions or placements of foster children occurring on or after the policy being approved by the Highland Community College Board of Trustees.

### **Eligibility**

Eligible employees (Administrative, Classified, and Professional employees) must meet the following criteria:

- Have been employed with the college for at least 12 months (the 12 months do not need to be consecutive).
- Have worked at least 1,250 hours during the 12 consecutive months immediately preceding the date the leave would begin.
- Be a full- or part-time, regular employee (temporary employees, student employees, and interns are not eligible for this benefit).

In addition, employees must meet one of the following criteria:

- Have given birth to a child.
- Be a spouse or committed partner of a woman who has given birth to a child.
- Have adopted a child or been placed with a foster child (in either case, the child must be age 17 or younger). The adoption of a new spouse's child is excluded from this policy.

### **Amount, Time Frame and Duration of Paid Parental Leave**

- Employees, upon requesting parental leave, will be required to self-identify as a primary or secondary caregiver.
  - (a) A parent designated as a primary caregiver will receive up to six (6) weeks of paid parental leave.
  - (b) A parent designated as a secondary caregiver will receive up to three (3) weeks of paid parental leave.
  - (c) If both parents are employees and eligible for paid parental leave, one employee must be designated as the primary caregiver and one must be designated as the secondary caregiver.
- The fact that a multiple birth, adoption or placement occurs (e.g., the birth of twins or adoption of siblings) does not increase the total amount of paid parental leave granted for that event. In

addition, in no case will an employee receive more than six weeks of paid parental leave in a rolling 12-month period, regardless of whether more than one birth, adoption or foster care placement event occurs within that 12-month time frame.

- Each week of paid parental leave is compensated at 100 percent of the employee's regular, straight-time weekly pay. Paid parental leave will be paid on regularly scheduled pay dates.
- Approved paid parental leave may be taken at any time during the 12-week period immediately following the birth, adoption or placement of a child with the employee. Paid parental leave may not be used or extended beyond this 12-week time frame.
- In the event of a female employee who herself has given birth; the 6-weeks of paid parental leave will commence at the conclusion of any short-term disability leave/benefit provided to the employee for the employee's own medical recovery following childbirth.
- Employees must take paid parental leave in one continuous period of leave and must use all paid parental leave during the 12-week time frame indicated above. Any unused paid parental leave will be forfeited at the end of the 12-week time frame.
- Upon termination of the individual's employment at the college, he or she will not be paid for any unused paid parental leave for which he or she was eligible.

### **Exclusions and Other Circumstances**

- Eligible employees will continue to accrue paid leave for which they are eligible during the parental leave period.
- Employees on academic year, or less than 12-month appointments, may not request or receive paid parental leave for periods not in a paid status.
- Eligible employees receiving Workers' Compensation pay are not eligible for parental leave.
- Paid Parental Leave under this policy is not transferable and cannot be donated through a shared leave program or in any other way.

### **Coordination with Other Policies**

- Paid parental leave taken under this policy will run concurrently with leave under the FMLA; thus, any leave taken under this policy that falls under the definition of circumstances qualifying for leave due to the birth or placement of a child due to adoption or foster care, the leave will be counted toward the 12 weeks of available FMLA leave per a 12-month period. All other requirements and provisions under the FMLA will apply. In no case will the total amount of leave—whether paid or unpaid—granted to the employee under the FMLA exceed 12 weeks during the 12-month FMLA period. Please refer to the Family and Medical Leave Policy for further guidance on the FMLA.
- After the paid parental leave (and any short-term disability leave for employees giving birth) is exhausted, the balance of FMLA leave (if applicable) will be compensated through employees' accrued sick, vacation and personal time. Upon exhaustion of accrued sick, vacation and personal time, any remaining leave will be unpaid leave. Please refer to the Family and Medical Leave Policy for further guidance on the FMLA.
- The college will maintain all benefits for employees during the paid parental leave period just as if they were taking any other college paid leave such as paid vacation leave or paid sick leave.
- If a college holiday occurs while the employee is on paid parental leave, such day will be charged to holiday pay; however, such holiday pay will not extend the total paid parental leave entitlement.

- If the employee is on paid parental leave when the college offers administrative leave, that time will be recorded as paid parental leave. Administrative leave will not extend the paid parental leave entitlement.
- An employee who takes paid parental leave that does not qualify for FMLA leave will be afforded the same level of job protection for the period of time that the employee is on paid parental leave as if the employee was on FMLA-qualifying leave.

#### **Requests for Paid Parental Leave**

- The employee will provide his or her supervisor and the human resource department with notice of the request for leave at least 30 days prior to the proposed date of the leave (or if the leave was not foreseeable, as soon as possible). The employee must complete the necessary HR forms and provide all documentation as required by the HR department to substantiate the request.
- As is the case with all college policies, the organization has the exclusive right to interpret this policy.