

Policy Name:	Student Parental Leave Policy
Originating/Responsible Department:	Vice-President (Students and Enrolment)
Approval Authority:	Senior Management Policy Committee
Date of Original Policy:	March 2021
Last Updated:	February 2026
Mandatory Revision Date:	February 2031
Contact:	Associate University Registrar

Policy Statement:

Carleton University is committed to supporting students who require time away from their studies to fulfill parental responsibilities, including pregnancy, childbirth, adoption or the welcoming of a new child. The University recognizes that some students may require formal approval and documentation of parental leave for academic, legal, employment or immigration purposes.

This policy provides a clear and consistent framework through which eligible students may request and obtain parental leave from their academic program. Carleton University is dedicated to ensuring that such requests are treated with compassion, fairness and respect, and that students on approved parental leave are able to access key University services to support their wellbeing and ongoing connection to the Carleton community.

Purpose:

The purpose of this Policy is to establish a clear and consistent process for students who require official recognition of a parental leave from their academic program. While informal absences are governed by existing academic regulations, this Policy provides a formal mechanism for documenting approved parental leave in situations where students may need official acknowledgement for academic, legal, employment or immigration requirements. The Policy ensures that students taking parental leave are treated equitably, supported appropriately and able to maintain access to designated University services during their approved absence.

Scope:

This Policy applies to all Carleton University students including undergraduate, graduate and special students who request official parental leave from their academic program and have been approved by the relevant office. It outlines access to services during an approved leave for those who have received approved parental leave from their academic program.

This Policy does not apply to professional services staff and faculty, including contract instructors and visiting professors, seeking parental leave from employment duties. Such requests are governed by separate policies and collective agreements.

Procedure:

Students seeking to obtain parental leave must apply and be approved for leave from the relevant Office. Undergraduate and Special Students apply through the Registrar's Office; Graduate Students apply through Graduate Studies. Requests for parental leave will not be unreasonably denied.

Approved applicants will be placed on parental leave for a period not to exceed 18 months in duration.

During the academic term(s) of the approved parental leave, the student may choose to retain access to any of the following University services without enrolling in courses subject to applicable per-term fees. These services include:

- Health and Counselling Services; and/or
- MacOdrum Library Resources; and/or
- Athletics.

International students seeking parental leave must meet with the Global Opportunities and International Student Service Office (GO-ISSO) to review immigration considerations and determine eligibility for a Leave of Absence. International students must obtain an approved Leave of Absence from the GO-ISSO prior to submitting their parental leave application to the Registrar's Office. International students are subject to additional immigration requirements, laws, rules and regulations that may be restrictive. Where applicable, those laws, rules and regulations supersede this Policy.

For immigration purposes, an authorized break from studies, including a Leave of Absence (LOA), cannot exceed 150 days in duration. Longer LOAs, as may be approved for graduate students, will invalidate a study permit. International students must consult the GO-ISSO about their options and immigration implications for longer parental leaves.

Students on official parental leave who require written confirmation of the approved leave may request a Certificate of Enrolment from the Registrar's Office indicating that the student is on 'Approved Parental Leave'.

Students who are also employees of the University must apply separately for parental leave from their employment duties. Employee leave is governed by the relevant employment policies and, where applicable, collective agreement.

Exceptions or variances to this policy may be made only with the express permission of the University Registrar.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Registrar's Office

Responsible for receiving, reviewing and approving parental leave requests from Undergraduate and Special Students, and for issuing formal documentation confirming approved parental leave.

Graduate Studies

Responsible for receiving, reviewing and approving parental leave requests from Graduate Students.

Global Opportunities and International Student Service Office (GO-ISSO)

Responsible for meeting with international student applicants to review immigration implications, ensuring compliance with federal requirements, and approving Leave of Absence requests for international students prior to submission to the Registrar's Office.

Athletics, Health and Counselling Services and MacOdrum Library

Responsible for providing continued access to designated services for students on approved parental leave, consistent with the fees paid by the student during the leave period.

Student Accounts

Responsible for assessing and applying the appropriate part-time miscellaneous fees to the student account based on the services selected during the approved leave.

University Registrar

Holds authority to grant exceptions or variances to this Policy in exceptional circumstances.

Contacts:

Associate University Registrar

Assistant Registrar, Central Academic Records and Undergraduate Appeals Secretariat

Links to related Policies:

[Academic Consideration Policy for Students in Medical or Other Extenuating Circumstances Policy](#)

[Student Accounts with an Outstanding Balance Policy](#)

[Students Rights and Responsibilities Policy](#)