

Leave of Absence



The first step in taking ANY leave is to contact the Benefits Department at 806-791-0220.

A leave of absence is a period of time a team member must be away from work while maintaining the status as an employee. A leave of absence differs from vacation and personal time; however, the team member may use their accrued vacation or personal time while out. Team Members who are out due to personal medical reasons may be eligible for Short-Term and Long-Term Disability. * **

Benefit premiums must be maintained while out on a leave of absence. Team Members are allowed to let their premiums go into arrears, *but only up to 4 weeks*. If a Team Member's premiums get 5 weeks into arrears, their benefits will be cancelled.

Family and Medical Leave (FMLA)

Eligibility Requirements:

- Have worked for the employer for at least 12 months prior to the start date of the leave
- Have worked at least 1,250 hours for the employer within the 12 months prior to the start date of the leave (this can apply to part-time members as well)
- Works at a location where the employer has at least 50 employees within 75 miles

Advantages of FMLA:

- Up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave in a rolling 12 month period (26 weeks to care for a service member) – runs concurrently with paid time off and work injury
- Job-protection for approved FMLA leave
- Continuation of group health insurance coverage – *Team Member portion of premiums must be paid. After 12 weeks, the team member will also be responsible for paying the employer cost of benefit premiums.*

Specified family / medical reasons for FMLA:

- Birth and care of the newborn child of a Team Member
- Placement with the Team Member of a child for adoption or foster care
- Care for an immediate family member (spouse, child, or parent) with a serious health condition
- Having a serious health condition that makes a Team Member unable to work
- Qualifying exigency on covered military active duty
- To care for an injured service member (26 weeks)
- *Team Member must provide a physician's return to work verification prior to returning to work- EXCEPT when out to care for a family member*

Intermittent FMLA

Specifications:

- Reduced schedule FMLA leave
- **May** accommodate by temporarily transferring to another position with equivalent pay and benefits
- Team Member should make reasonable efforts to schedule absence to minimize disruption of the business
- Obligated to Report Intermittent Leave on a Weekly Basis
 - fax or e-mail the Intermittent Leave Reporting form to the Benefits Department
 - deadline to report time - noon on the Monday after the end of the work week
 - failure to provide qualifying document of FMLA absences can result in corrective action
- *Team Member must provide a physician's return to work verification prior to returning to work*

Medical General Leave of Absence

Eligibility Requirements:

- Full-time Team Members only

Specifications:

- Personal medical reasons that do not qualify for FMLA
- Apply for leave up to 6 months - reapply for additional periods in 6-month increments.
- Continuation of benefits for 6 months (premiums must be paid weekly)
- COBRA continuation coverage after the initial 6-month leave
- *Team Member is responsible for both employee and employer portion of benefits premiums*
- *Team Member must provide a physician's return to work verification prior to returning to work*

Personal General Leave of Absence

Eligibility Requirements:

- Full-time - at least 12 months of consecutive service

Specifications:

- Not a paid leave
- Does not provide job protection
- Covers leave for personal reasons not covered by another leave of absence
- Initial period up to 90 days
- Re-apply for an additional 90 day period, not to exceed a total of 180 days
- Must be approved by the Executive Vice President of Talent Management
- *Team Member is responsible for both employee and employer portion of benefits premiums*

Military Leave of Absence

Specifications:

- Governed by the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA)
- Protects Team Members who serve in the military
- Leave for active duty or inactive duty in the National Guard or as a Reserve of the Armed Forces
- Includes Team Members who have voluntarily joined the military
- **Protects the Team Member's job for up to 5 years**
- Service member must provide documentation for leave approval and upon return

**Short-Term Disability (STD) is a United Family-paid benefit available to team members with a full-time status of at least 1 year and averaging at least 35 hours a week. STD pays 60% of your base salary when you are unable to work due to a covered illness, injury, or maternity leave that result in an absence from work for up to 26 weeks. STD contains pre-existing condition limitations including any sickness or injury for which you received medical treatment, consultation, care or services, including diagnostic procedures or took prescribed drugs or medicines during the 3 months immediately prior to the effective date of insurance. Some Part-Time Team Members may qualify for this benefit. Contact the Benefits Department for details.*

***Long-Term Disability (LTD) is a Team Member-paid benefit. Team Members MUST enroll in this plan, be full-time at least 1 year, and averaging at least 35 hours a week. LTD pays 60% of your covered monthly earnings after you have been disabled for 180 consecutive days, up to age 65 or your retirement age defined by the Social Security Normal Retirement Age legislation. LTD contains pre-existing condition limitations including any sickness or injury for which you received medical treatment, consultation, care or services, including diagnostic procedures or took prescribed drugs or medicines during the 3 months immediately prior to the effective date of insurance.*