



POLICY NAME: U.S. Leaves of Absence

DEPARTMENT: Human Resources

Policy

It is the policy of Young Life to provide leaves of absences to eligible staff members. This policy applies to all US-based Young Life staff, including American expatriates.

A leave of absence is an authorized time away from work for special life circumstances and typically requiring care and coordination with Human Resources. It is typically an extended time away, longer than two weeks, for needs that are beyond the scope of typical paid time off (PTO). PTO is not intended for use with long-term leave or as a paid long-term care solution and, unless otherwise required by applicable law, cannot be used in conjunction with any type of paid or unpaid leave. Young Life provides a number of leaves, both paid and unpaid, in addition to federally protected and state protected leaves. All Young Life paid leave is provided by the mission unit.

Leave provided under this policy may be subject to Young Life's rights as a religious organization to treat certain staff members as exempt. No express or implied contractual rights should be inferred from this policy.

This policy is merely a supplemental pay policy and all underlying leave will be under FMLA, state law, and/or personal leave of absence policy. Nothing in this policy provides staff members any greater leave benefits than provided under applicable law.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to define approved leave of absence types, determine eligibility for each leave type and to outline the process by which leave is administered.

I. Leave Types

A. Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

It is the policy of Young Life to grant staff members time away from work under certain conditions in accordance with the federal Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA). Please see the [FMLA policy](#) for further details and to determine eligibility.

B. State Paid Leave Plans

Young Life will comply with applicable state laws relating to various forms of protected absences. Employees may be legally entitled to additional time off under various state laws. State leave plans run concurrently with FMLA for those that qualify for both. For staff living in states where there is no state paid leave system, the Young Life mission unit will provide

staff with paid leave as set forth in this policy. If a staff person resides in a state with a paid leave system but the paid leave system provides less than the amount of paid leave set forth in this policy, then the Young Life mission unit will make up the difference so that the staff person receives the same amount of pay provided to all staff while on leave for a qualifying reason. Staff persons are required to apply for any available paid benefit under state law. Under no circumstance will a staff member be entitled to more than the amount of pay provided for by this policy or more than 100% pay for any single day of absence. For more information, please contact Human Resources.

C. Reasonable Accommodation Medical Leave

For staff who do not qualify for FMLA or after it is exhausted, Young Life will engage in the interactive process to discuss an unpaid leave of absence as a reasonable accommodation with staff persons who are unable to perform the essential functions of their job due to a physical or mental disability. Leave under this policy is at the discretion of leadership and will be considered in accordance with the reasonable accommodation obligations of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). A reasonable accommodation medical leave of absence may be provided to staff persons who are unable to perform the essential functions of their job due to physical or mental disability. Leaves of absence under this policy will be handled on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the ADA. The duration of any leave of absence under this policy will vary depending on the particular circumstances of each staff person's need and whether additional leave is reasonable under the circumstances and/or would create an undue hardship for Young Life.

Before commencing a reasonable accommodation medical leave of absence taken because of the medical condition of a staff member, the staff member must submit a certification completed by a health care provider to Human Resources. A staff member may be required to submit a recertification to support a continuing personal leave for medical reasons every 30 days. A staff member returning from a medical leave taken because of the staff member's own disability must submit a medical certification from a health care provider stating that the staff member is fit to return to work and can perform the essential functions of the job with or without reasonable accommodation.

D. Young Life Family and Medical Leave

Young Life provides staff the provision of paid and/or unpaid family and medical leave of absence for qualifying reasons. If eligible, staff should claim FMLA for the full duration of family and medical leave up to 12 weeks. Young Life family and medical leave will run concurrently with FMLA. For details on FMLA, please view the FMLA Policy. Pay for Young Life Family and Medical leave is provided by the staff person's mission unit through regular payroll; provided, however, that this may vary depending on state leave laws. In states with mandated family and medical leave programs or plans, Young Life family and medical leave will only be available to supplement the applicable state paid leave as necessary so that the staff person receives up to 12 weeks of paid leave. A staff person may not, except as otherwise required by applicable law, receive more than 12 weeks of pay under this policy. The full duration of a family and medical leave may include both paid and unpaid leave. The paid leave portion will be paid at the staff person's regular rate of pay. Young Life's flexible paid time off is not intended for use with long-term leave and may not be used in conjunction with unpaid Young Life family and medical leave unless required by applicable law.

The amount of paid Young Life family and medical leave provided for each staff person should fall within the ranges listed below. Decisions on the amount of paid leave within these ranges is to be determined in conjunction by the supervisor and Human Resources. Unless required by applicable law, staff shall not receive more than 12 weeks of paid Young Life family and medical leave per year.

E. Qualifying reasons:

1. Leave for Pregnancy and/or Bonding

For the staff member's incapacity due to pregnancy, or for prenatal medical care, or for the birth of a child of the staff member and the care for and bonding with the child after birth, or placement of a child for adoption or foster care with a staff member, and care for and bonding with the child after placement.

a. Maternity:

- i. 10–12 weeks for full-time staff.
- ii. 4–6 weeks for part-time staff.

b. Paternity:

- i. 4 - 6 weeks for full-time staff.
- ii. 1 – 3 weeks for part-time staff.

In some circumstances, when both spouses are staff of Young Life in a location with limited staff resources, and both wish to take time off to bond with a new child, Young Life may limit the amount of leave which can be taken concurrently and/or within the same year, as permitted by applicable law, out of concern for Young Life's capacity to maintain its ministry programs.

Multiple births or adoptions at the same time do not increase the length of parental leave under this policy or the amount of pay provided for leave.

Young Life family and medical leave must be commenced within twelve months of the birth of child or placement of child adoption.

2. Leave for Medical Reasons

To care for a staff member's spouse, parent or child with a serious health condition, or because of a serious health condition that makes the staff member unable to perform one or more of the essential functions of the staff member's job

- a. 10–12 weeks for full-time staff.
- b. 4–6 weeks for part-time staff.

3. Leave for Military Reasons

Because of a "qualifying exigency" as defined in Department of Labor regulations, arising out of the fact that the spouse, son, daughter or parent of the staff member is a "covered military member" on active duty (or has been notified of an impending call or order to active duty) in support of a contingency operation, or to care for the staff member's spouse, son, daughter, parent or next of kin who is a "covered service

member” with a serious injury or illness incurred in the line of duty while on active duty for which he or she is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation or therapy (“military caregiver leave”).

- a. 10–12 weeks for full-time staff.
- b. 4–6 weeks for part-time staff.

Staff may be entitled to additional family and medical leave under FMLA, or state leave plan. Any leave in excess of the amounts listed above will generally be unpaid unless medically necessary or provided under a state leave plan.

F. Sabbatical

It is the policy of Young Life to grant a sabbatical leave to full-time field staff under certain conditions. Please see the [sabbatical policy](#) for further details.

G. Military Leave of Absence

Young Life has a statement about [Military Leave](#) that you can find here.

H. International Home Leave

Young Life provides home leave for International Staff on an Expatriate Assignment. For more information please see the [International Home Leave Policy](#).

I. Personal Leave of Absence

There may be situations where staff are asked or allowed to take an unpaid personal leave of absence. A personal leave of absence is time away from work for any reason other than those related to a Family and Medical Leave of Absence or a Military Leave of Absence. A personal leave of absence is not available for a staff member’s own medical condition. Examples of personal leave might include educational pursuits, family leave beyond 12 weeks or personal situations when warranted and beneficial to the staff person and Young Life if other leave is not available. Young Life’s Flexible PTO is not intended for use with long-term leave and may not be used in conjunction with Unpaid Personal leave.

- In order for consideration of a personal leave of absence, the staff person must have 12 months of continuous service and plan to return to Young Life.
- A personal leave of absence may be denied for various reasons including, but not limited to, the staff member being under a performance improvement plan or failing to meet all job requirements.
- Any request for a personal leave of absence must receive approval in advance of the start of the leave by two levels of supervision and Human Resources. Young Life will maintain health insurance for staff on leave as required by law. A specific amount of time, normally not more than three months, may be granted for the personal leave of absence. If the staff person does not return at the end of this three-month period, his or her employment with Young Life can be terminated.
- At the end of a personal leave of absence Young Life cannot, in all instances, assure that the staff person will be able to return to the original position. This will depend on a number of factors, such as the ability to fill the vacant position or to reassign

the staff person's duties to other staff. Staff members are not guaranteed job restoration rights while on personal leave of absence.

- If the staff person's former position is not available, the staff should contact their former supervisor to review available openings. If a position is available for which the returning staff person would like to be considered, he or she should seek a transfer. At all times the hiring supervisor should seek to hire the best qualified and most suitable candidate for that position, and the fact that an applicant is returning from leave does not give priority. If a position suitable to the staff person's abilities cannot be secured, the staff person may resign or will be terminated.

J. Administrative/Investigative Leave

During the investigation of allegations against a staff person, he or she will be placed on paid administrative leave with medical benefits. Staff who are unable to report for work because of arrest and incarceration will be placed on a special personal leave of absence. If the staff person is unable to secure bail, the leave of absence will continue until final disposition of the charges. If the staff person is freed on bail, a decision whether to allow the resumption of active employment pending disposition of the charges will be made by the staff person's supervisor and the vice president of Human Resources. They will determine whether reinstatement would be consistent with Young Life's needs and requirements.

K. Paid Time Off

Paid Time off is any paid absence from work for a short duration of time, typically two weeks or less, and is not intended for long-term leave, as a paid long-term care solution and cannot be used in conjunction with any type of paid or unpaid leave. For information regarding any paid time off: Paid Time Off, Holidays, Jury Duty, Bereavement, Assignment Days and Camp Volunteer Benefit, please see the Paid Time Off Policy.

L. Subject to the Deficit Policy

This policy, as other Young Life policies, is subject to the Young Life Deficit Policy. Staff going on paid leave during periods of reduced salary, will be paid at the rate he or she would receive if he or she were actually on-the-job during those days.

M. At Will Employment

Nothing in this policy alters or changes the employment at-will relationship.

II. Process

Process for Requesting a Leave of Absence

- A. Employee reaches out to HRsupport@sc.younglife.org regarding a leave request.
- B. HR Generalist helps determine eligibility
 1. If the employee is not eligible under YL policies, HR can help support the supervisor with other options available.
- C. HR will work directly with the employee or the supervisor (depending on leave type) to determine dates and compensation changes (if applicable).
- D. Decisions are documented
- E. Employee submits leave request in Workday, attaching documentation.

- F. Absence Partner (in HR) approves request in Workday
- G. Employee sets up a [Workday delegate](#) for their time out.
- H. Employee goes on leave.
- I. When the leave of absence is completed, if needed employee or Absence partner submitted required documentation in Workday
- J. Absence Partner initiates return to work for the employee in Workday.
- K. Employee returns to work.

For more information, please see this Knowledge Article on how to [Request an Absence in Workday](#).

*There was a previous version of the Leaves of Absence policy (HR-016) that was in place from 1998-2018. HR-016 was retired in 2018 when it was combined with the PTO policy (HR-045). In 2025 this policy (HR-051) was implemented and separated the U.S. Leaves of Absences policy from the PTO policy.

Distribution

USFLTX, MSLT, CLT, HRLT

This policy is available on the Staff Resources website.

Initial Pathway Approvals: Legal, Director of HR, VP of Human Resources, MLT

Policy Owner (position not person): VP of Human Resources

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