

GUIDELINES FOR MATERNITY AND CHILDCARE LEAVE

Deciding on the amount of child care leave time best for your specific circumstances is a difficult decision, but ***MUST BE MADE NO LATER THAN NINETY(90) DAYS PRIOR TO YOUR ANTICIPATED DUE DATE.*** No later than ninety days prior to that date, you must submit a letter to the Personnel Office stating your leave intentions. Once this request has been submitted and approved, you are not entitled to more time (with the exception of the second year as described below).

1. In general, you are expected to work until the baby is born (unless a medical condition, which has been documented by your physician, dictates otherwise). Once the baby is born, you will begin a period of **PAID DISABILITY /MATERNITY LEAVE for a period of 6 or 8 weeks**, depending on the type of delivery that you have. During this 6 or 8 weeks, you will get a paycheck, provided that you have earned enough sick days to cover the 6 to 8 weeks of absence, and you will be charged sick days.
2. You have several options for **extending** the 6 or 8 weeks of disability/maternity leave for the purpose of childcare on an **UNPAID BASIS**.
 - a. You may extend your leave by 4 or 6 weeks under the provisions of FMLA for a **total of 12 weeks leave retroactive to the day the baby is born**. During this additional 4 or 6 weeks, YOU WILL NOT BE PAID, nor will you be charged sick days. You will, however, continue to be covered under the health insurance plan at this time and will be billed for your share of the premium cost provided you were enrolled in medical coverage prior to the start of your leave. *New fathers may also request 12 weeks of FMLA, but they will not be on payroll for any of that time.*
 - b. You may extend your leave past the 12 weeks for the remainder of the school year (*Article XI, Section F*). All of the time after the first 6 or 8 weeks will be unpaid, and all of the time past the first 12 weeks will be without medical coverage by the district. You would have the option to continue your medical coverage through COBRA and you would be billed by the district for premium payments.
 - c. Any BMUST member may take up to two consecutive school years after the end of the year in which the baby is born. This time will be unpaid and without medical coverage provided by the district. This option allows you to request one year and then the second year. *It is the only situation where you can ask for more time.* If you are out on this extended leave, you are required to inform the district, ***in writing***, of your intentions for the following September no later than the Monday after the February break (*Article XI, Section J*).
3. Please be aware that:
 - Upon returning from a childcare leave of absence, you are guaranteed a position in your certification area, but not necessarily in your current school building assignment.
 - Teachers who are on childcare or FMLA leave, and are on payroll for three months of a semester will receive salary credit for that semester (*Article XI, Section K*).
 - Your seniority date will be affected by the amount of unpaid leave that you take.

Sample letters for each of these situations are available through your Head Building Representative or through Ann Donaldson at Kennedy. The letter must be accompanied by a note from your physician verifying your due date.