



PHOENICIA UNIVERSITY

Maternity, Paternity and Family Care Leave Policy

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Maternity, Paternity and Family Care Leave Policy

1. Principle

Phoenicia University (PU) is committed to promoting gender equality, work–life balance, and an inclusive work environment that supports the wellbeing of its faculty and staff. The University recognizes the importance of family life and seeks to provide equitable parental leave provisions that align with Lebanese Labor Law and international best practices.

PU upholds its responsibility as an academic institution to foster supportive policies that enable both women and men to actively participate in the workforce without compromising family responsibilities.

2. Objectives

- To support all employees in balancing professional and family responsibilities.
- To promote gender equality and equal opportunities in the workplace.
- To ensure compliance with applicable Lebanese Labor Law and institutional regulations.
- To enhance employee wellbeing, job satisfaction, and retention.
- To provide a family-friendly working environment that supports academic and operational continuity.
- To encourage shared parental responsibility between parents.

3. Accountability:

PU ensures accountability in the implementation of maternity and paternity policies through clear governance and monitoring mechanisms.

Accountable/Responsible Officer	Accountable Officer
Accountable Officers	Quality Assurance and Accreditation Office
Responsible Officer	Human Resources Director

4. Responsibilities

The following outlines the key responsibilities of all stakeholders involved in the implementation of the maternity and paternity policy to ensure its effective and consistent application.

Human Resources Department

- Ensure the implementation and monitoring of maternity and paternity policies.
- Communicate leave entitlements and procedures to all employees.
- Maintain accurate records of leave and ensure compliance with regulations.
- Review and update policies in line with legal and institutional requirements.

Quality Assurance and Accreditation Office

- Monitor the alignment of the maternity and paternity policy with institutional quality standards and accreditation requirements.
- Ensure that the policy is documented, implemented, and periodically reviewed as part of quality assurance processes.
- Collect and analyze relevant data to assess the effectiveness and impact of the policy.
- Support continuous improvement by providing recommendations based on internal evaluations and external accreditation standards.

Faculty and Staff

- Inform their direct supervisor and Human Resources in a timely manner regarding planned parental leave.
- Submit required documentation (e.g., medical reports, official certificates).
- Coordinate with their department to ensure smooth transition of responsibilities during leave.

Supervisors / Department Heads

- Approve leave requests in coordination with HR and according to operational needs.
- Ensure continuity of academic and administrative activities during employee absence.
- Support employees in planning flexible work arrangements upon return where applicable.

5. Maternity Leave

5.1 Purpose and Principle

PU recognizes maternity as an important period requiring adequate physical recovery, emotional wellbeing, and family bonding. The University provides maternity leave to support female employees during pregnancy, childbirth, and the postnatal period.

Maternity leave ensures that employees have sufficient time for recovery and childcare while maintaining their employment rights, salary, benefits, and professional status.

Pregnancy and childbirth shall not result in discrimination, career disadvantage, loss of employment benefits, or negative impact on professional progression.

5.2 Duration of Maternity Leave

All full-time female faculty and staff members are entitled to:

- 70 consecutive calendar days of fully paid maternity leave, in accordance with the Lebanese Labor Law.

Maternity leave may be taken before and/or after childbirth based on medical recommendations and institutional procedures.

PU also provides additional flexibility to support returning parents, including extended unpaid leave beyond the statutory period (up to 6 additional weeks), granted on a case-by-case basis in coordination with HR

and the employee's department. Returning faculty may also request adjusted teaching load, phased return, remote/hybrid arrangements to support reintegration.

Maternity leave does not reduce an employee's entitlement to annual leave.

5.3 Employment Protection During Maternity Leave

During maternity leave:

- Employees retain their position, rank, salary, benefits, and employment status.
- Employees shall not be subject to discrimination, dismissal, or adverse treatment due to pregnancy, childbirth, or maternity leave.
- Faculty members retain their academic status and accumulated professional rights.
- Tenure-track faculty may receive appropriate academic adjustments to support continuity and career progression.
- Upon return, employees shall be reinstated to their previous or equivalent position without loss of rights or benefits.

5.4 Flexible Work Arrangements and Reintegration

Following maternity leave, PU may provide reasonable flexible arrangements where feasible and compatible with institutional requirements, including:

- Adjusted work schedules.
- Temporary workload adjustments.
- Flexible working arrangements.
- Academic planning support for faculty members.

Upon return, employees may receive reintegration support, including:

- Coordination with supervisors regarding workload resumption.
- Assistance in adapting to workplace responsibilities.
- Access to employee support services where available.

6. Paternity Leave

6.1 Purpose and Principles

PU recognizes that fathers play an important role in childcare, family wellbeing, and early child development. Paternity leave promotes gender equality by encouraging shared parental responsibility and enabling fathers to participate actively during childbirth and early childcare periods. Employees using paternity leave shall not experience discrimination, retaliation, or professional disadvantage.

6.2 Duration of Paternity Leave

All full-time male faculty and staff members are entitled to:

- Three consecutive calendar days of fully paid paternity leave.

Paternity leave may be taken following childbirth in accordance with University procedures.

As Lebanese Labor Law does not currently mandate paternity leave, this benefit is provided at PU's discretion to support fathers' involvement in early childcare. Paternity leave must be taken within 30

calendar days of the child's birth and is subject to submission of an official birth certificate or equivalent documentation.

6.3 Flexible Arrangements Following Paternity Leave

Where appropriate and operationally feasible, PU may consider:

- Adjusted schedules.
- Temporary flexibility in work arrangements.
- Coordination of responsibilities to support family obligations.

These arrangements aim to support employees while ensuring academic and operational continuity.

7. Family Care Leave

7.1 Purpose and Principles

PU recognizes that employees may require time and flexibility to care for immediate family members experiencing serious medical conditions or significant care needs.

Family Care Leave supports employees in fulfilling caregiving responsibilities while maintaining professional stability.

7.2 Scope and Arrangements

Full-time faculty and staff may request Family Care Leave to support an immediate family member.

For purposes of this section, an immediate family member refers to an employee's spouse, child, parent, or sibling.

Where Family Care Leave involves time away from work, such leave shall not exceed 7 working days within any rolling 12-month period, unless extended at the University's discretion.

Depending on the circumstances and institutional requirements, support may include:

- Temporary leave.
- Adjusted working arrangements.
- Other reasonable accommodations.

Approval is subject to review by Human Resources and the relevant supervisor based on supporting documentation and operational considerations.

8. Protection Against Discrimination and Retaliation

PU prohibits discrimination, harassment, or retaliation against employees based on:

- Pregnancy.
- Childbirth.
- Parental status.
- Use of approved maternity, paternity, or family care leave.

Employees cannot be dismissed or receive termination notice during approved maternity, paternity, or family care leave except where permitted by applicable law.

All leave requests and supporting documentation shall be handled confidentially.

Disputes regarding leave requests, denials, or alleged discrimination under this Policy shall be addressed through the Staff Grievance Policy.

9. Additional Provisions

The following provisions apply to all maternity, paternity, and family care leave arrangements to ensure fair implementation, employee protection, and compliance with applicable regulations:

- All parental leave entitlements are aligned with applicable Lebanese Labor Law.
- The University may request medical or official documentation when necessary.

10. Conclusion

PU reaffirms its commitment to fostering a supportive, inclusive, and equitable work environment through its maternity and paternity policies. These policies promote gender equality, employee wellbeing, and family support, while ensuring alignment with legal standards and institutional priorities. Through these measures, PU contributes to a sustainable and family-friendly academic environment.



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