

SHORT TERM DISABILITY

SUMMARY

The purpose of short term disability is to protect the incomes of regular staff employees during periods of prolonged (more than 5 consecutive workdays) illness or injury that is not work related by providing **salary continuation** at 60% of base pay. Any STD payments will coordinate with any other benefits provided under other insurance programs to a maximum of 60% of base pay.

ELIGIBILITY

All regular full-time staff (budgeted to work 1400 or more hours per year) who have completed at least one year of regular full-time employment prior to an absence covered by this policy are eligible for short term disability.

EFFECTS ON FMLA

An illness or injury that qualifies for short term disability will also be a qualifying event under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA). Short term disability will run concurrently with the time period allotted under the FMLA.

After a staff member has been out of work for 5 consecutive work days, the University will then continue the employee's salary based on the following schedule:

WORK DAYS	COMPENSATION
1 st – 5 th workday	Paid Time Off or Sick Leave (Reserve) or Leave Without Pay
6 th – 130 th workday	Salary Continuation at 60% of Base Pay
131 st workday or 181 st calendar day	Begin Long Term Disability if eligible, otherwise terminate employment

NOTE: If the employee receives a settlement resulting from accidents and injuries, the employee is responsible for reimbursing the University for the amount paid as short term disability, to the extent of that portion of the settlement that represents lost earnings/wages.

PROCEDURE

Once it is determined that a staff member will be out of work beyond the 5 days to be covered by paid time off (PTO), sick leave from a sick leave reserve (SLR) account, or leave without pay, the staff member should immediately contact Human Resources and complete a Request for Short Term Disability form. Doctors' certification will be required prior to approval of short term disability.

A staff member must use PTO during the five day waiting period, if there is a PTO balance greater than five days. Staff will be required to use any accrued Sick Leave Reserve (if

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applicable and authorized) and Paid Time Off (minus 5 days of PTO if the employee wishes to retain it) while on Short Term Disability (STD) and before being placed on unpaid leave. All paid leaves run concurrently (including Worker's Compensation Leave, Short Term Disability, and Paid Parental Leave) and do not extend the time the employee is entitled to under STD. During paid leave, staff will continue to accrue PTO. During any unpaid leave, staff will not accrue PTO.

Staff members are not eligible for holiday pay or administrative leave pay while on short term disability.

It is important to complete the Request for Short Term Disability [form](#) in a timely manner to ensure there is no interruption of pay. The University reserves the right, on a monthly basis, to require an employee on salary continuation to recertify that the health condition exists. Further, the University in its discretion reserves the right to request more frequent re-certification. If a staff member has an illness or condition that requires, with physician certification, an approved intermittent time off for the same illness, the time taken is accumulated and charged against the total period allowed under the short term disability plan (130 workdays). If the employee returns to work on a regular schedule for two continuous months and then goes on leave again for the same illness or condition, a new short term disability period begins.

Although the University self-administers the benefits granted under this policy for short term disability to staff who are temporarily disabled, the University applies the same policies and principles as an insurance carrier would apply to determine Return to Work status. The University reserves the right to request a medical exam from an independent physician of its choice to determine functional capacity. In the event there is no concurrence by the independent physician with the opinion of the staff member's physician, the University may request a third opinion or accept the second opinion. The University will pay the cost of the independent (and third) physician examinations.

Failure to comply with the independent or third physician medical exams will result in termination of short term disability benefits and could result in dismissal from the University.

RETURN TO WORK

Staff members are responsible for informing the University of their return to work status. This may be accomplished through periodic documentation from the staff member's attending physician. The nature of the illness or injury may determine the frequency of documentation.

Staff who are determined to be "fit for duty" and fail to return to work at the end of their period of short term disability will be required to reimburse the University for the costs of maintaining their medical and dental insurance and other benefits. Reimbursement for benefit costs from staff who do not return to work is a debt to the University and will be collected from the staff

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member or deducted from monies owed the staff member at the time of separation from the University.

RESTRICTED DUTY

A basic principle of any disability plan is to return the person to active employment as quickly as possible, and to provide a level of salary remuneration that will encourage a return to a full schedule. An employee may be placed on a light duty restriction or an abbreviated schedule by a physician.

If an employee returns to work on an abbreviated schedule, the following illustrates the protection of the amount of short term disability salary continuation for which the employee is eligible.

If the employee returns to work on an abbreviated schedule, the employee will receive normal full pay for hours worked, but will receive additional pay to make up any shortfall to insure at least 60% of the base pay is received. The department's budget will be charged for the actual hours worked plus the difference needed to pay the employee 60% of the base pay.

STATUS OF BENEFITS WHILE ON SHORT TERM DISABILITY

Health Plans and Retirement Accounts

1. The staff member will receive pay through regular payroll checks. Therefore, contributions that are the responsibility of the employee will continue to be automatically deducted from the paycheck.
2. Programs that do not require employee contributions (Life Insurance / Long Term Disability / Retirement) will continue to be provided by the University.

Tuition Programs

If the spouse, same-sex domestic partner, or dependent children of the disabled employee are receiving benefits under any of the Tuition Concession programs, the recipient may continue in the program during the period of short term disability.

SHORT TERM DISABILITY AND LONG TERM DISABILITY

When appropriate, Human Resources will assist with the potential transfer of employees from Short Term Disability to Long Term Disability (if eligible). If approved for Long Term Disability, employment may cease if unable to return to work within six months.