

SHORT-TERM DISABILITY

Policy Number: H.05.03

SCOPE

Benefit-eligible staff.

PURPOSE

To provide salary continuation to benefit-eligible staff employees who are unable to work for medical reasons for an extended period of time.

POLICY/PROCEDURE

Benefit-eligible employees who are unable to work for medical reasons (not Workers' Compensation) may have a percentage of their current salary continued for a specific period under the terms of the short-term disability policy. Employees will keep all other benefits, except for sick and vacation accrual, while receiving short-term disability benefits. Short-term disability benefits will begin on the next working day following ten continuous working days of absence (equivalent to two work weeks) and will continue for up to 10 weeks for a total absence period of 12 weeks.

Employees must complete six months of continuous service in order to be eligible for Short-Term Disability benefits. The amount of Short-Term Disability is dependent on an employee's overall length of service. See the chart below.

Years of service	3 – 12 weeks of absence*
Less than 6 months	No benefits
6 months but less than 5 years	50% of base pay
5 years but less than 10 years	75% of base pay
10 years of more	100% of base pay

**The first ten working days of absence (two working weeks) are paid to the extent the employee has available sick day benefits. Vacation benefits, if necessary, may be used to bridge this period after all sick day benefits have been used.*

Short-term disability benefits will cease at the end of the 12th week of continuous absence. See Long-Term Disability Policy.

Employees may utilize available accrued sick days first and then vacation benefits, to the extent possible, to bridge the gap in pay in relation to the above chart.

Multiple periods of disability.

If the same or related medical issue causes the need for additional short-term disability benefits, the benefits due to the individual are calculated by the original benefit schedule, and the total hours or days covered are reduced by the amount of time already used for that medical issue. Each period of disability resulting from a new illness or injury will be considered separately, and short-term disability benefits may be used for more than one unrelated disability per service year.

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Partial absences.

Short-term disability benefits may be paid in increments of less than a whole work day if the employee is only approved to work a partial day by their primary care physician. The hours not actually worked may be paid for by short-term disability benefits up to the maximum length of time stated in this policy.

Short-Term Disability Policy Administration.

Employees requesting short-term disability benefits must complete all required forms and have the primary care physician provide a statement and other required documentation confirming the disability and the anticipated duration. The forms and documentation are to be sent to Human Resources. Short-term disability benefits will be paid out to eligible employees starting at the beginning of the third week of absence and upon receipt of the required forms, medical documentation and the approval by the short-term disability administrator. The amount of short-term disability benefits paid is in accordance with the above schedule.

Employees anticipating the need for Short-Term Disability benefits should consult with the HR Benefits Coordinator as soon as possible. Employees who do not return to work when released by their primary care physician or at the expiration of the short-term disability period are considered to have voluntarily resigned their position.

The University utilizes a third-party administrator to administer the short-term disability benefits policy. The third party-administrator is solely responsible for the approval or denial of short-term disability benefits. The third-party administrator reserves the right to appoint an independent physician to verify the medical condition of the employee. The third-party administrator may request updated medical information from the employee's physician at their discretion.

At the end of the period of absence approved by the third-party administrator and the employee has not returned to work, short-term disability payments will be withheld by the University until updated medical information is received and a new determination is made by the third-party administrator.

All appeals of the decisions made by the third-party administrator will be referred to them for consideration and review.

The employee must provide a physician's statement releasing the patient to return to work, detailing any work-related restrictions, before he or she may resume work at the University.

The benefit levels described in this policy apply to benefit-eligible staff employees. They do not apply to faculty members who are employed on a full-time faculty and/or administrator contract basis. Faculty members, however, who anticipate being away for an extended period of time due to medical reasons, are to contact the HR Benefits Coordinator as soon as possible in order to ensure the proper documentation is obtained and there is proper coordination of benefits.

APPROVED: Dr. Richard Ludwick

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