



LITTLE CATS

a guide for parents and guardians who work at UK

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to ensure a smooth transition

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A NEW LITTLE WILDCAT!

There is a lot to plan, prepare for and do when welcoming a child into your family. We've created this guide to help make it easier for you to navigate the many programs, resources and offices available through UK in support of you and your growing family.

This guide provides information on things to do to prepare for your time away from work, help with finding child care, the programs in place to support you and your family, understanding Family Medical Leave (FML), and answers to the most frequently asked questions.

This isn't meant to be an exhaustive resource, though. We've listed contact information on page 12 for offices that can help you before, during and after your leave; please don't hesitate to reach out. We wish you and your family all the best and are here to support you.

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PREPARING FOR YOUR NEW ADDITION: A CHECKLIST

Determine the length and timing of your leave

If you are staff: Check your accrued TDL (sick time) and vacation leave in [myUK](#) to determine how much of your leave can be paid. You can use up to 12 weeks of accrued paid sick and vacation leave. Two of your 12 weeks can be paid parental leave. Learn more about family-friendly policies [here](#).

If you are faculty: Temporary Disability Leave (TDL) may be granted to faculty members by the Provost. For more information, please refer [here](#). In general, faculty are approved for 30 days or more of TDL with pay for the birth, adoption or placement/guardianship of a child. Check with your college dean or business officer for any college-specific policies.

Find child care

We've put this near the top of the list because many child care centers in Lexington (including UK's on-site centers) are on a waitlist. And, these waitlists can be anywhere from two months to two years. See more information on page six.

Talk with your department chair or supervisor and Family Medical Leave Administrator

Have a discussion as soon as possible to confirm your Family Medical Leave (FML) start date and fill out necessary FML paperwork. You will find more information about FML on page eight.

Make sure you understand your benefits coverage before your leave

While you are on approved FML, the university will continue to pay for your basic life insurance, long-term disability insurance, and for your own health insurance. Please call HR Benefits to ensure your coverage continues – especially if there's any possibility you will be in a no-pay status during all or some part of your FML. You can reach them at (859) 257-9519 (press 3 for Benefits) or [here](#).

Work accommodations

Employees who have pregnancy related limitations (ex. lifting restrictions), should contact Heather Roop at heather.roop@uky.edu or (859) 257-8927 to discuss accommodations. The university will ensure that the employee is able to continue working while under the limitations. Learn more [here](#).



TRANSITIONING TO AND FROM PARENTAL LEAVE

Consider how to successfully transition from work and back to work

Have a conversation with your supervisor regarding expectations about how you will transition back to work after FML. Will you begin full time? Reduced hours with increasing hours each week to full time?

Navigating a Return to Work after Parental Leave

Returning to work after parental leave is not just about the logistics of child care and catching up with work. The emotional transition needs planning as well to make a successful return. If you are feeling some trepidation regarding your own transition, here are some helpful hints and suggestions.

BEFORE YOU GO ON LEAVE

- Develop a parental leave transition plan with your supervisor.
- Think about what parts of your job will need someone to work on them while you are out and put together information they will need to do the job such as contact information, access to documents, etc. Talk with that person to make sure they understand.
- Put all your passwords in a safe place such as a password manager. Never share your passwords with anyone ([reg. AR10.1](#)).
- Create an "If I Go Into Labor In the Office" document with information about where you plan to deliver, phone number of your doctor, doula, midwife, etc., and emergency contact numbers.

SELF-CARE AND COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

- Consider purchasing post-partum clothes (or wear your maternity clothes).
- Look for new parent groups through Meetup, Teams, social media or through your OB-GYN or friends' recommendations.
- Talk with friends and family about what was most important (to them) to have for the baby. If they can share clothing or baby items, that can save a lot of money.
- If you plan to breastfeed or pump, do you know how to get the necessary supplies? You can find this information under [Lactation in the Workplace](#).

PREPARING TO RETURN TO WORK

- Expect to feel a variety of emotions. Studies estimate that about 10% of women experience mild or severe depression as hormones drop. When symptoms such as excessive crying, difficulty bonding with your baby, thoughts of harm and anger interfere with taking care of your baby please consider talking to your OB-GYN. New fathers can also experience post-partum depression. Fatigue can increase any emotion, often leading to increased sensitivity and irritability as well as difficulty with focus and concentration. This is to be expected, so prepare yourself emotionally not to be at the top of your game when you transition back to work. You will bounce back, but that will take time.

If you are breastfeeding your baby

- If you have been breastfeeding your baby, experts suggest you begin pumping and freezing your milk about a month before your planned return. Doing so will build an emergency supply as well as help you get used to pumping and the amount of time you will need. With this information, you can have a discussion with your supervisor about your pumping schedule and expectations related to this necessary time BEFORE you return.
- If you have been breastfeeding or exclusively pumping, you may want to consider allowing

someone else to bottle feed your baby to help them adjust to a different person feeding them and using a bottle. You will want to bring extra clothes to work if breastfeeding to allow for leakage or mishaps while pumping.

Practicing your new routine

- Try a practice run or two the week before you return that includes getting yourself ready for work, getting the baby ready, having everything the baby needs, making sure your work bag is ready, dropping off baby at child care, parking and walking into work. Whew!
- On a practice run, leave the baby with the caregiver and practice self-care.
- Practice an evening routine as well.

A quick stop by the office

- Remember to thank those who covered your work while you were out.
- Think about returning to work mid-week to break up the return, give yourself time to adjust and get more rest before returning to a full week. It helps to see what awaits you in the week ahead.
- Acknowledge your new learning curve. While you may be returning to a job you know how to do, you are now learning how to be a working parent.

Emotions

- Allow yourself to acknowledge the range of emotions you experience. Some of the emotions will be related to hormone changes and some will be related to changes that come with being a new parent. You may miss out on lunches or going out after work. Think about other ways to make connections with your co-workers, if this is something you are concerned about.
- A therapist can help you sort through your feelings, schedule an appointment with a [Health and Wellness therapist](#) in Human Resources.

FINDING CHILD CARE

Finding care for your child is an important decision, and one you need to consider well in advance of your child's arrival. We've provided the guidelines below to help you make an informed decision. Overall, a great child care provider or center has: advanced training; consistent caregivers; a setting that keeps your child safe and healthy; and an environment that enhances your child's physical, mental, emotional, and social growth. For more information, visit [this page](#) to learn about child care options, or look up Kentucky child care related programs at [kynect benefits](#).

The Childcare Council of Kentucky recommends visiting at least three child care centers and doing the following:

Look

- Are the surroundings safe, clean and attractive?
- Are the caregivers talking and playing with the children?
- Are there a variety of toys and learning materials available?
- Count the number of children in a group. A small number of children per adult is very important for babies (3 or 4:1) and young children.

Listen

- What does the child care setting sound like? A place that is too quiet may mean not enough activity. If it is too noisy, there may be a lack of control.
- Are the caregivers' voices relaxed and reassuring?

Ask

- It is very important that adults who care for your children have early childhood knowledge and experience.
- Ask about the background of all staff who will have contact with your child.
- Ask about the training the staff have and will receive.
- Ask about the state license or certification. Ask to see their statement of deficiencies.
- Ask about closure practices for weather, holidays, etc.

Backup or alternative care

- Sometimes your regular child care may not be available, so we recommend you look into backup options in advance such as local child care options or family and friends. [Big Blue Family Care](#) may be an option for planned occasional part-time care such as after school, nights and weekends.



CHILD CARE CENTERS NEAR UK'S CAMPUS

Early Childhood Lab

The UK Early Childhood Laboratory (ECL) is located on campus and provides early childhood education to children from six weeks of age through pre-school. This program is operated by the College of Education.

**641 Maxwelton Court,
Lexington, KY 40508
(859) 257-7732**

Child Development Center of the Bluegrass

The center offers a full-day early childhood program for children both with and without disabilities from six weeks of age until a child is eligible for kindergarten. In addition, physical and occupational therapists are available for outpatient therapy services.

**290 Alumni Drive,
Lexington, KY 40503
(859) 218-2322**

Woodland Early Learning Center

This proprietary educational program provides unlimited opportunities for the development of the whole child. It offers a unique curriculum for every age level, centered around developmentally appropriate and fun activities encouraging children to develop physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially. UK employees receive a 15% discount.

**575 Woodland Avenue,
Lexington, KY 40508
(859) 255-3444**

PROGRAMS TO SUPPORT YOU AND YOUR FAMILY

Free or low-cost breast pumps

The preventive care provision of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) states that health plans must cover one breast pump per pregnancy with no cost sharing for pregnant and nursing women (i.e. there is no cost to UK employees covered by a UK health insurance plan). [Learn more here.](#)

Lactation spaces

There are several designated lactation spaces on and off campus. Other temporary spaces may be available or offered to accommodate an employee's needs. Employees are also welcome to use their personal office space if it is private and meets their needs. [Find more information here.](#)

Building Healthy Families

Anthem is offering the new Building Healthy Families (formerly Future Mom) comprehensive resource through the UK health insurance plan. It offers 24/7 access to personalized prenatal through post pregnancy content including digital tools, live health coaches, a library of educational articles and videos, access to a maternity nurse and lactation support through the SydneySM Health mobile app or on [anthem.com](#). This convenient hub offers an extensive collection of tools and information to help you navigate your family's unique journey. For additional information, contact Anthem at 1-855-634-3383.

Mommy & Me breastfeeding clinic

This clinic is available to all moms who would like to breastfeed and are interested in having a breastfeeding assessment performed by Kentucky Children's Hospital providers. During the visit, the baby will be weighed and examined, and a physician and lactation consultant will work with the new mom to develop a plan to meet her breastfeeding needs. Information can be found on [this page](#).

Nursing your infant class

This class focuses on the advantages of breastfeeding, proper positioning and latch-on, guidelines for adequate breastfeeding and how to prevent and resolve discomfort. Fathers or support persons are encouraged to attend. This class is taught by a certified lactation consultant. Locations and dates are at the bottom of [this page](#).

[Additional lactation resources can be found here.](#)

[Join the Working Parents Network to connect with other parents for ongoing support.](#)



THE FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT (FMLA)

for the birth, adoption or placement/guardianship of a child

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) is a federal law which allows an eligible employee to take unpaid, job-protected leave for up to 12 work weeks in a 12-month period for a qualifying event (such as the birth, adoption or placement/guardianship of a child).

As an employee, you are eligible to take FML if you have been a university employee (regular, temporary, faculty or student) for 12 months (not necessarily consecutive months, but within the last seven years) and have worked at least 1,250 hours during the previous 12-month period.

Paid leave

Employees have three options for remaining in a paid status while utilizing the job-protected FML — using their available accruals such as TDL, vacation, holiday and paid parental leave. Family Medical Leave, in this case, is unpaid leave for the birth, adoption or placement/guardianship of a child. However, staff members must use available paid leave, such as two weeks of paid parental leave and accrued vacation or sick leave. If there are not enough accrued hours to cover the length of the leave, part of the leave will be without pay. Faculty employees should refer to appropriate faculty regulations regarding sick leave pay. For details, review [this document](#).

Employee benefits

During FML, UK will continue your health insurance plan at the same level and conditions of coverage as if you had not taken leave. UK will also continue to cover the cost of the employer's credit portion of your health insurance plan, your basic life insurance and enrollment in a long-term disability plan.

We highly recommend, though, that you meet with HR Benefits to understand what benefits or other costs you will be responsible for during any period of paid or unpaid leave. Please see their contact information on the last page of this guide. Please note that if you decide not to return to work after leave, the university's obligation to provide any benefits stops at the time you give notice.

Additionally, you may be obligated to repay UK any health insurance premium for which the university paid during your FML.

NEW two weeks paid parental leave

You are eligible for parental leave if you:

- Are a regular staff employee.
- Are working at least 0.5 FTE.
- Have a new addition through childbirth or adoption.

If you are not eligible for Family Medical Leave, you may still qualify for paid parental leave. Fill out the [paid parental leave form](#).

For more information, visit our [FAQ](#).



FMLA TIMELINE

As soon as you are aware of need for leave (for birth, adoption, or placement/guardianship):

**60-90 days
prior to
delivery**



Complete FML application

You will complete the first page of the application; your physician will complete the second part. For the birth of a child, list the estimated delivery date as the start date on page 1. Make sure you've signed the first page.

**15 days
later**



Turn in FML application

No later than 15 days after you become aware you will need to take leave, submit your application to your FML Administrator by faxing it to (859) 257-1679 (campus) or (859) 257-2010 (UK HealthCare). This will serve as your notice to take leave. The FML Administrator will process your application within five business days and will reply to you by email with an approval or denial letter.



Paid leave and benefits

Review your accrued TDL (sick leave), vacation and holiday time in myUK to understand how much of your leave can be paid. You may be eligible for two weeks of paid parental leave. You must use your accrued TDL, vacation and holiday for the remainder of your leave. Also, meet with HR Benefits to discuss health insurance coverage during your leave.



Begin leave

Send an email to your FML Administrator when the baby is born including the actual date of birth so your FML paperwork can be updated.

**1-2 weeks
prior to
return**



Return to work

Check in with your supervisor approximately one to two weeks before you will return to work to confirm your return date and schedule.

Additional to-dos

- Update your health benefits. Within 30 days from the date of a qualifying event (e.g. adoption or birth of a child) submit a new enrollment form, along with the required documentation.
- Update your beneficiaries on your life insurance and retirement account (if needed).
- Enroll in Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account (within 30 days of qualifying event. Re-enroll during the Open Enrollment period each spring).

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the definition of child under Family Medical Leave?

It is your biological, adopted, or foster son or daughter, a stepson or stepdaughter, a legal ward or a son or daughter of a person standing in loco parentis who is either under 18 years of age or who is 18 or over but is incapable of self care due to a mental or physical disability as defined under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

What is the definition of parent under Family Medical Leave?

Parent means a biological, adoptive, step or foster father or mother, or any other individual who stood in loco parentis to the employee when the employee was a son or daughter (as defined above). This term does not include parents "in law."

What is paid parental leave?

The university offers [two weeks of paid leave](#) to eligible employees for the birth or adoption of a child.

What is intermittent leave?

Intermittent leave is Family Medical Leave taken in separate blocks of time due to a single qualifying event. An FML application must be submitted every six months for intermittent leave.

May an employee take intermittent or reduced schedule leave for prenatal care?

Yes, because prenatal care is determined to be a serious health condition under the FML definition. In fact, all prenatal physician visits taken during working hours must be reported as FML.

May an employee take intermittent leave for postnatal care?

Yes, but only if the child has a serious health condition. There must be a separate FML form filled out for the child's illness.

May an employee take reduced schedule leave for postnatal care?

Possibly. Leave taken for childbirth or placement/guardianship may be taken on a reduced schedule, with the approval of the department head and FML Administrator. Leave for childbirth, foster care or adoption must be taken within 12 months of the date of the birth or placement/guardianship of the child.

May an employee take intermittent or reduced schedule leave for foster or adoption appointments?

Possibly. Leave taken for childbirth or placement/guardianship may be taken on a reduced schedule with approval by the department head and FML Administrator. Leave for childbirth, foster care or adoption must be taken within 12 months of the date of birth or placement/guardianship of the child.

May a father/other parent take Family Medical Leave too?

Yes. The father/other parent may take FML for the birth of a child and to care for that child.

May a father/other parent of an adopted/foster child take Family Medical Leave too?

Yes. The father/other parent may take FML for the adoption or foster of a child and to care for that child.

If both parents are UK employees, are they each eligible for 12 weeks of FML per 12 month period?

Usually, but not always. When it is for their own serious health condition or for the serious health condition of their spouse or child, they may each take 12 weeks of FML. However, in cases where both parents are employees and employed in the same department, they may be required to share, at the discretion of the department, the 12-week FMLA entitlement for purposes of childbirth and/or adoption/fostercare. Additional documentation may need to be completed for these requests.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (CONT'D)

If I am on Family and Medical Leave on a holiday, will I be paid for that holiday?

If you are in a paid status on both the day before and the day after the holiday, you will be paid FML-Holiday pay. If not, you will not be paid for the holiday.

In what way does Family and Medical Leave protect me?

Family and Medical Leave protects your job. In most cases, your same job will be held for you up to a maximum of 12 weeks in 12 months. If not the identical job, an equivalent job with the same pay, benefits, and other terms and conditions of employment will be provided. In addition, FML absences cannot be held against you for corrective action purposes regarding absenteeism. Also, while you are on approved FML, the university will continue to pay for your basic life insurance, long-term disability insurance, and for your own health insurance (not for the family plan portion though) even if you are in a no-pay status.

Are faculty eligible for FML for child birth, fostering or adoption?

Faculty employees are eligible for leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act as outlined in UK Human Resources Policy 88.0, Family Medical Leave (FML), but a faculty employee's balances of paid TDL and paid vacation, if any, must be used concurrently with FML before a faculty employee is placed on unpaid leave.

Who grants faculty FML?

In order to make the granting of TDL and FML more efficient, the Provost has delegated the authority of granting TDL and FML to deans and unit administrators, as described below, for short-term situations (up to four weeks). In order to make the granting of TDL and FML consistent among colleges and to ensure that approved leave is appropriately documented, the requirements for eligibility under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) will be applied to faculty TDL. For details, [review this document](#).

Unlike staff employees, UK faculty employees do not accrue sick days as a function of time served. Instead, under the terms of the University's Governing Regulations, the Provost may grant paid temporary disability leave to faculty employees who are totally disabled for up to six months: Temporary Disability Leave (TDL) may be granted to faculty members by the Provost. Eligible faculty members who are totally disabled are entitled to six months' TDL with pay. TDL with pay for more than six months requires approval by the Board of Trustees. (See [G.R. 10, page 12 on Temporary Disability Leave for Faculty](#)). It is important that faculty report their periods of illness and have TDL officially approved in the manner established in these policies and procedures to ensure that they are eligible for Long-Term Disability in the event that an illness, however mild at its onset, proves catastrophic. Reporting illness and requesting leave to care for qualified family members also ensures that faculty responsibilities, notably teaching, advising and patient care, are covered.

contact information

FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE

hr.uky.edu/employee-relations/family-medical-leave
Christopher Dudley
HR Manager, Leave Administration
(859) 257-8804
christopheradudley@uky.edu
Lindsey Powell
FML Administrator
(859) 323-0256
lindseyhpowell@uky.edu
Fax: (859) 257-2010
Elaine Adams
FML Administrator
(859) 323-4259
elaine.adams@uky.edu
Fax: (859) 257-1679

HR WORK-LIFE

For general questions, flexible work requests and the Working Parents Network,
email worklife@uky.edu or call (859) 257-2648 or (859) 257-8763.
hr.uky.edu/work-life-and-well-being/working-parents/working-parents-network
Azetta Beatty
HR Manager, Work-Life
azetta.beatty@uky.edu
(859) 257-2648

HR BENEFITS

benefits@email.uky.edu
(859) 257-9519, option 3
hr.uky.edu/benefits

Office for Faculty Advancement

facultyadv@uky.edu
Phone: (859) 323-6589
www.uky.edu/ofa