

November 2026 Web Submission

I was hoping that USAC would explore the current inequities in policies related to supporting staff vs faculty particularly in short term and long term disability. It has been an on-going conversation for years. Currently, staff are paid at 66 2/3% earnings while faculty are paid 100% (for short-term disability) or max of 10,000 monthly (long-term disability). Additionally, when it comes to parental leave, staff are offered 8 weeks of paid leave, while faculty are provided 1 full semester. Previously, I have been told the rationale behind this is that the university does not want to have to replace a professor part of the way through a semester due to the impact on their classes, however it seems that staff roles and the impact of their positions is not being considered (think about health care providers with established relationships with students or other direct student support roles along with many others I am sure). Please discuss and review these specific policies but also, I would hope that all benefits, pay, etc. would be reviewed for.

Response:

Human Resources has closely reviewed our benefits and leave policies to ensure they remain competitive and responsive to the needs of UR employees. Insights from the Great Colleges to Work For (GCTWF) survey have further underscored what we've learned from employee feedback.

Paired with a comprehensive comparison to peers in both higher education and the regional market, these insights have guided our discussions with the University's Benefits Committee. We have been focused on finding ways to enhance our offerings for UR employees while remaining responsible stewards of the University's resources.

We recognize that everyone values different aspects of our benefits, depending on individual circumstances. In all our discussions, our goal is to provide meaningful benefits for every employee.

Today, we are pleased to share a few updates that will take effect in the new year:

Parental Leave Policy	• Eligibility for parental leave will be available after one year of full-time service for staff; one full academic year for faculty; and within 12 months of the birth or adoption. • For staff, birth mothers may take short-term disability first (typically 6-8 weeks) while on medical leave, followed by 8 weeks of paid Parental Leave for bonding. This change increases the total paid benefit allowance for staff to 14-16 weeks. Birth mothers may also choose to take parental leave later, as long as it's within the first 12 months of the birth. This provides additional flexibility to new parents. • As a reminder, this past July we amended the policy so that if both parents are employed by the University each employee will be entitled to parental leave and the time does not need to be shared. Read the full policy.
Holiday Leave Policy	• Starting in July 2025, the University will offer two (2) floating holidays each calendar year, in addition to the 15 observed holidays. • Floating holidays offer added flexibility for religious holidays, personal observances, family birthdays, volunteering, or well-being needs. • These floating holidays can be used in full or half-day increments and must be used by December 31 each year, as they will not carry over. • For calendar year 2025 only, as we manage the technical transition to Workday, these two (2) floating holidays will be available beginning July 1, 2025 and must be used by December 31, 2025. In subsequent years, they will be available in January of each year. Read the full policy.