

2002 Statewide Family Leave Survey

Who responded?

236 UUP members across SUNY who had already needed to take time off for birth, adoption, elder care, or care of sick relative or domestic partners.

Characteristics of Respondents:

- 162 (69%) Professionals; 74 (31%) Academics
- 45 (19%) males; 191 (81%) females
- 205 (87%) full-time employees; 31 (13%) part-time employees

Reasons for Family Leave:

- Birth – 51%
- Adoption – 7%
- Elder Care – 22%
- Illness of Family Member – 18%
- Other – 8%

Note: some respondents had more than one reason for a single leave.

Arrangements made to accommodate need for time off:

- 6% could not get needed time off
- 25% took a leave of absence (46% unpaid; 31% partially paid; 23% paid)
- 12% took a workload reduction
- 75% used sick time, vacation time, compensatory time
- 7% used other means such as flexible work arrangements

Note: Percentages total more than 100 because some used more than one arrangement for a single family leave.

Income lost during family leave

Professionals

Average Salary Reduction

- \$5,025 for leave of absence
- \$4,430 for work reduction

Academics

Average Salary Reduction

- \$ 6,450 for partially paid leave of absence
- \$16,741 for unpaid leave of absence
- \$ 12,250 for work reduction

KEY FINDINGS:

UUP members often are unable to get sufficient time off for birth, adoption, care of elderly parents, or care of sick relatives.

Reasons:

- Insufficient accruals
- Insufficient number of family sick days
- Can't afford time off without pay

There is inconsistency within and across SUNY institutions with regard to the policies and practices that govern leave arrangements.

A broad spectrum of UUP members reported family leave.

- 58% were tenured; 42% untenured
- 87% were full-time; 13% were part-time
- 58% involved birth/adoption; 40% involved elder care or family member illness

Many respondents reported negative repercussions due to unsupportive colleagues and supervisors.

Many respondents reported substantial financial hardship from loss of salary and benefits as a result of inadequate provision for family leave needs.

SUNY institutions often are not providing adequate replacements for many people who take time off for family care reasons. Co-workers are expected to “pick up the slack,” resulting in resentment and work overload.

Women without permanent appointment/continuing appointment emerge as a group with a particular set of dilemmas:

The pre-tenure/permanent appointment years tend to coincide with primary childbearing years, putting considerable pressure on newer women employees who need to establish themselves professionally and face the “biological clock” that affects fertility. The absence of an adequate and consistent family leave policy places such women in a vulnerable position vis-a-vis their tenured colleagues and supervisors.

United University Professions is the nation's largest higher education union

William E. Scheuerman, President

www.uupinfo.org