

## **Maternity Leave at NKCH/Meritas**

This overview is intended for employees who are expecting a baby (women and men), and employees who are adopting or fostering a child. The information provides a general understanding of the Leave of Absence process. This document cannot cover all leave questions, benefit plan details, federal/state leave laws, and NKCH/Meritas policies. Please refer to actual Plan documents and Policies for further information.

### **When do I request leave?**

About 30 days prior to your due date. You should access LeaveLink directly and request your leave online. Refer to login instructions for LeaveLink at the end of this communication.

### **How much leave time can I take?**

The answer depends on several variables and can vary from person-to-person. Generally, the length of leave depends on which leave law applies to you.

### **FMLA Leave**

If you are eligible for FMLA\*, you are entitled to be absent up to 12 work weeks for a 12-month period from the date of birth. Typically, mothers will be absent 6 to 8 weeks for the maternity portion of the leave (recovery from birth). The number of weeks depends on whether the delivery is c-section or natural birth.

After the maternity leave, mothers may wish to take additional time off, usually 4 to 6 weeks, as Care of Newborn Leave.

Fathers, foster and adoptive parents are also entitled to up to 12 work weeks during the 12-month period from the date of birth.

FMLA leave for the birth of a child applies to both women and men equally.

\*To be eligible for a leave under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), an employee must meet both of the following requirements:

1. Work for NKCH/Meritas for 12 months.
2. Work at least 1250 hours in the 12 months preceding the leave date.

### **Non-FMLA Leave**

If you are not eligible for FMLA, mothers are entitled to either 6 or 8 weeks of leave time. The number of weeks depends on whether the delivery is a c-section or natural birth.

Any additional leave time beyond the 6 – 8 weeks is considered Personal leave, approved at management discretion.

Leave to care for a newborn for fathers is considered a Personal leave, approved at management discretion.

Non-FMLA Leave for the birth of a child applies to both women and men equally.

**What medical support does NKCH/Meritas need from my doctor?**

If you are having a routine, uncomplicated pregnancy, no medical support is needed for your leave request.

If complications do arise which necessitate an early leave start date or causes you to be absent intermittently, medical certification will be needed from the treating doctor.

**How will I be paid while on leave?**

**NKCH Employees**

The first 40 hours of leave will be paid with available PTO. If PTO hours are unavailable, you will be unpaid until after 40 hours of leave. After 40 hours, Medical leave (ML) will be paid (NKCH employees only). Once ML hours are exhausted any remaining PTO will be used, if available. If all absence benefit hours are exhausted, you will be unpaid for the remainder of the leave. If you are in an unpaid status, you will no longer accrue PTO or ML hours.

**Meritas Employees**

You will be paid with available PTO. If you exhaust PTO hours, you will be unpaid for the remainder of the leave. If you are in an unpaid status, you will no longer accrue PTO or ML hours.

See below for Voluntary Short-Term Disability benefit information.

**What happens if I exhaust PTO, ML, and other pay benefits?**

You will be placed in an unpaid status and will no longer accrue PTO or ML (if available). If you are enrolled in benefit coverages, an invoice for benefit premiums due will be mailed to you on a monthly basis. Premiums are payable to NKCH and may be paid by cash, check, or credit card directly to the LOA Administrator or Patient Accounts.

**Voluntary Short-Term Disability**

**This section applies to employees who have enrolled in NKCH's/Meritas's Voluntary Short-Term Disability benefit.**

**How do I file a claim?**

Contact the Leave Administrator for assistance in starting the claim process. An application will be provided to you with employer verification information completed. You'll need to complete the employee section of the claim and ask your doctor to complete the physician statement. Once completed, you are responsible for forwarding the entire claim to the Claims Administrator. The claim should be filed with the Claims Administrator *after* the birth of the baby.

**What is the benefit?**

60% of your pre-disability weekly earnings. This is an actual paper check, mailed to your home address. There are no employer deductions pulled from these earnings.

**Am I allowed to collect Voluntary STD benefits and PTO at the same time?**

Yes, you may receive benefits while still being paid PTO. You are limited to 100% of pre-disability earnings between the two sources of income, meaning you can supplement your Voluntary STD up to a maximum of 40% of pay. You can also elect to not use PTO. Employee is responsible for contacting the Payroll Editor with pay preferences.

NKCH employees only: you will need to exhaust available ML hours prior to receiving Voluntary STD pay benefits.

**How do I add my new baby to benefits?**

You can add, change or remove benefit coverage outside of annual enrollment if these qualifying events occur to you:

- Birth of a new child
- Adopt a child
- Assume legal obligation for total or partial support of a child in anticipation of adoption
- Addition of a child through marriage
- When your child becomes eligible as an extended dependent through assumption of legal custody or legal guardianship

**How do I make changes to my benefit elections?**

<http://nkch.resourcecenter247.com>

1. Review the benefits you can change. To see the details of the benefits, click on the benefit to the right
2. Review the documents required listed below
3. Download and fill out **Enrollment Form**
4. Bring supporting documents and completed enrollment form to Human Resources
5. **All forms must be received within 30 days of the date of the event and will take affect the 1st of the month following the event.**

**Am I required to provide a medical release when I return from maternity leave?**

A medical release is usually not required but there are exceptions. If you wish to return to work before you have recovered from the birth of the baby (less than 6 weeks), you will need to provide HR with a medical release. Discuss specific questions with your Leave Administrator.

**How Do I Request Leave of Absence?**

Click the link below to access LeaveLink and follow the instructions to request a leave.

<http://nkch.resourcecenter247.com/leave-of-absence>