

## Sabbatical Leave FAQs

**Q. How far in advance of the actual leave do I need to begin to prepare for my sabbatical?**

**A.** In some cases, up to a year in advance. If your sabbatical involves a visiting professorship at another institution (or a similar situation), a letter of invitation from that university will be required as a part of your sabbatical application.

The chancellor announces sabbatical leave awards in January. Before you depart for your leave activities, be sure to complete your Sabbatical Leave Funding Form and to go over it in as much detail as is required with your PPA.

**Q. How does being on sabbatical affect my salary?**

**A.** If taking a semester-only sabbatical leave, you will receive the full amount of your normal base salary.

If taking an academic year (or academic year plus extension) sabbatical leave, you will receive 2/3 (approx 66%) of your normal base salary. You will continue to receive paychecks each pay period; each paycheck will reflect the 2/3 proportion.\*

*(\*If you have secured grant funding and wish to use it to supplement your salary, you can apply these funds to your salary up to the amount of your normal academic year base salary, if approved. However, there are some grants that may not be used for sabbatical leave purposes; check with Rosemary Madnick, executive director of Grants and Contracts, well in advance of your travel plans, to make sure that the grant you would like use will allow the use of funds for sabbatical purposes. Supplemental use of external and grant funds may not result in compensation that exceeds your 9-month base academic year salary had you not been on sabbatical leave.)*

**Q. How does sabbatical leave pay affect my health benefits, retirement, and pension?**

**A.** Semester sabbatical leaves are funded at the normal rate and thus have no affect on benefits, retirement, or pension.

For academic year or academic year plus extension sabbatical leaves:

- If you have TRS, you get a full year's credit; as a result, the amount you contribute is inflated per pay period because your overall contribution is based on a full salary.
- If you have ORP, you contribute a flat percentage of your earnings (this ranges from 8.65% for Tier 1 and 8.0% for Tier 3).
- If you have a pension plan (tied to ORP), a flat percentage rate of your earnings (7.65%) is contributed.

Health benefits stay the same, and you're covered the entire calendar year.

**Q. Are living and/or travel expenses claimed as salary?**

**A.** Living and/or travel expenses will not be considered salary income if documentation is submitted by the payer of the funds clearly stating both the exact amount and that the funds were given for living and/or travel expense reimbursement only, and not for any other type

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of compensation. This document should be signed and printed on letterhead. If the funding is directly paid to the recipient (rather than indirectly providing paid services, for example), the recipient should keep a record of expenditures, including receipts, to document the use of the living and/or travel expense funding.

**Q. What kinds of funding do I have to report?**

**A.** All of them. Please use the Sabbatical Leave Funding Form available on the Provost's website. This form is to be completed and signed prior to the start of your sabbatical leave.

**Q. I have been approved for sabbatical leave, but the timing is not going to work out – can I postpone for a year?**

**A.** As soon as you realize you need to postpone your leave, write a memo detailing your change in plans for approval by your dean and/or director and the provost. You will need to submit an updated sabbatical application the following year. If you do not submit an updated application, you will not be able to take your sabbatical the following year.

**Q. Do I need to prepare an annual activity report the year I return from sabbatical?**

**A.** Yes. You will need to prepare an annual activity report, via Faculty180, in addition to the sabbatical leave report. Annual activity reports are due annually on October 2 from all faculty.

**Q. When is my sabbatical leave report due?**

**A.** Everyone who participated in a sabbatical leave must submit a sabbatical leave report within three months of returning from leave (summer months excluded). If you took a fall semester sabbatical leave, your sabbatical leave report is due the following May 1 upon your return from leave. If you took a spring semester or an academic year sabbatical leave, your sabbatical leave report is due December 1 of the year you return from leave.

**Q. What if I have a change in plans, funding or location before department on sabbatical leave?**

**A.** Many sabbatical applications are a work in progress, and things may change following approval of the leave. If this is the case revise your sabbatical leave statement, and route it through your dean and/or director and the provost for approval.

**Q. Can I change my academic-year sabbatical to a semester, or end my sabbatical early?**

**A.** It is important to identify major changes to your sabbatical plan prior to beginning your leave. Prior to beginning your sabbatical leave, any changes to your plan – such as changing from a year to a semester -- can be made by documenting the proposed change in a memo and routing it through your dean and/or director to the provost for approval.

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Typically, we do not allow faculty to stop their leave before the time is up. These will be addressed on a case-by-case basis, depending on the situation. If you are considering early termination of your leave, route a written request through your dean to the provost.

### **Q. Can I stand for promotion while on sabbatical leave?**

**A.** While it is not necessarily recommended, faculty are not prohibited from standing for promotion during the same year that they are on sabbatical leave, as long as the promotion file is turned in on or prior to the deadline listed in the appropriate collective bargaining agreement. Should a faculty member choose to stand for promotion during sabbatical leave, they should make themselves familiar with the process; check their email regularly/arrange for alternate communication; be aware of recommendation letter dates; and be aware of candidate response deadlines.

### **Q. I am due to stand for post-tenure review during my sabbatical year. Do I still have to turn in a file?**

**A.** Yes. Annual Activity Reports and post-tenure review files are to be completed and submitted prior to going on sabbatical leave. These reporting activities cover the years prior to the sabbatical year.

### **Q. If I spend my sabbatical leave out-of-state, is my Permanent Fund Dividend eligibility affected?**

**A.** Maybe. Approved sabbatical leave by employees of the University of Alaska is an allowable absence for the purposes of qualifying for a Permanent Fund Dividend under a provision in 15 AAC 23.993(a)(14). This provision states that for the purposes of the dividend program, University of Alaska employees are “serving as an employee of the state of Alaska” with active compensation, which allows employees to be absent for more than 180 days (AS 43.23.008(a)(11)). It is very important for people considering taking sabbatical leave to note that the **combined** (sabbatical leave plus personal time) absence from the state cannot exceed the UAF-approved dates of leave plus 45 additional days (AS 43.23.008(a)(16)(C)). This is calculated on a calendar year.

The Office of the Provost will write verification of leave letters for faculty if requested by the PFD Division.

### **Q. Can I arrange an overload, additional assignment, or adjunct teaching assignment while on sabbatical?**

**A.** No. Overloads, additional assignments, and adjunct assignments for any of the University of Alaska branches are prohibited while on sabbatical leave. However, UNAC faculty who have received prior approval for a non-teaching overload or reported consulting activities that are not a part of their regular academic year workload are exempt from this restriction provided the conditions of their sabbatical plan are honored.