

3 October 2021

University of Idaho SHRM Club

UI Paid Parental Leave Expression of Support

To the Associated Students of the University of Idaho,

As the President of the Society for Human Resources Management, I am writing to you expressing the support of the Athena Parental Leave Working Group White Paper regarding the resolution to revise FSH 3710 regarding Parental Leave.

Main reasons for support:

- Regional Competition – Current labor market environment
- Benefits of Paid Leave
- University of Idaho faculty First-hand impact stories

REGIONAL COMPETITION

Currently the University of Idaho is experiencing an intense labor market where the demand for workers far outweighs the availability of quality and experienced workers to fill these positions.

The location of the University of Idaho is unique. Moscow has been described as a family friendly, small-town, attracting a diverse group of individuals looking for a calm, safe place to live and work. This one unique factor to Moscow shrinks the already small talent pool the University has to pick from. Our closest competitors offer paid leave, and major industries in the region offer paid leave. Prospective faculty and staff have options for employment and for those where the current policy regarding paid leave in the event of an adoption or birth present an obstacle to accepting an offer, the University of Idaho is at a significant disadvantage.

Furthermore, for those already employed and who experience the birth or adoption of a child face a life changing event where suddenly the parents, are responsible for more than just their

career but for another life form (s). The policy revision would lessen the stress and financial burden put on new parents who are faculty and staff at the University of Idaho.

BENEFITS OF PAID LEAVE

U of I SHRM fully supports the benefits outlined in the Athena Parental Leave Working Group white paper. Supporting the family has numerous benefits not only to the family itself but to the University.

- Increased equity on campus across gender identity, income levels, age, race, and employee classification.
- Greater retention levels for talented employees.
- UI protects its role as an innovator in the region.

Additionally, according to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities and the National Society for Human Resource Management, “providing new parents with paid time off to care for newborns or recently adopted children contributes to the children’s healthy development, improves maternal health, supports fathers’ involvement in care, and enhances families’ economic security.” Providing parents time and pay to care for their newborns also helps promote the health, wellness and development of infants and toddlers. U of I faculty and staff feel supported by the University, in a town known to be a great place to have a family.

Supporting the family, supports the well-being of a new family member, and supports the long-term mental, physical and financial health of the Faculty and Staff within the University of Idaho.

FACULTY IMPACT STORIES

The Athena Parental Leave Working Group White Paper includes many firsthand impact stories directly attributed to the need for an improved Parental Leave Policy. The stories provided show

proof that there are many factors that impact a family who have adopted or are tending to the needs of a new baby. These include but are not limited to various health situations that arise during the early care of a young human, the need for recovery of a new mother beyond that of a short and limited break, job pressures of maintaining a high level of output upon return with even more complex circumstances at home, premature return to work due to financial strain and competitive pressure among peers, high levels of mental stress on the new family, and countless more factors, obstacles and circumstances that make the addition of Paid Parental Leave a necessity to promote a healthy Vandal Culture where Vandals look out for Vandals.

CONCLUSION

The Society for Human Resources Management strongly supports the resolution to revise FSH 3710 regarding Parental Leave for all the points mentioned above. University of Idaho SHRM, a student organization affiliated with the National Organization, SHRM, promotes SHRM's motto: "Better Workplaces, Better People" and we stand by this motto and encourage our University to embody this short but meaningful phrase.

Liability Statement

The University of Idaho SHRM Club is a student club affiliated with the National SHRM Organization but in no way is this document a direct statement on the behalf of the National SHRM Organization and its professional business representation. Instead, we represent the support of those in the Student Club itself and our support of the resolution introduced by ASUI and Athena, representing the Student Body of the University of Idaho.