

Compassionate Care and Emergency Leave (CCEL) Overview

Revised July 1, 2026

The Compassionate Care and Emergency Leave (CCEL) benefit has three elements;

1. Provision for time off (either paid or unpaid) to attend to emergency situations covered by this overview.
2. Provision for continuation of employer paid benefit coverage in select circumstances.
3. Reimbursement to the Department for incremental costs where a paid leave is approved.

The intention of this leave is to provide **Eligible Employees** with a period of up to six calendar months to deal with an emergency situation, or to make alternative arrangements (e.g., long term care) where the need will exist for longer than a six month period. The maximum duration of a CCEL is 6 months regardless if the employee is fully off work or continuing with partial hours.

General Provisions

1. CCEL only applies in cases of **Catastrophic Illness** or where a **Family Emergency** places primary responsibility for **Care or Support** on the staff member.
2. An Eligible Employee may request this leave for the purpose of providing care or support to another individual in the following circumstances.
 - a. A leave with pay equivalent to a maximum of six months of full salary and benefits may be requested in the event of a catastrophic illness or urgent domestic situation involving a member of their **Immediate Family**.
 - b. A leave with pay equivalent to a maximum of six months of full salary and benefits may be requested in the event of a catastrophic illness or urgent domestic situation involving a member of the **Extended Family** or an **Associated Individual**, where the Eligible Employee has been designated a primary caregiver, a guardian or a trustee of this individual.



- c. A leave without pay may be requested in the event of a Catastrophic Illness or Urgent Domestic Situation involving a member of the Eligible Employee's extended family or an Associated Individual where paragraph 2(a) does not apply; if the period of paid leave in paragraph 2(a) or 2(b) has been exhausted; or if the Eligible Employee has a term appointment and is not otherwise eligible for any paid leave.
3. The request for CCEL must specify the nature of the relationship with the Eligible Employee and, where applicable, be accompanied by medical proof that the specified family member or Associated Individual is ill or injured, and/or in need of care or support. The medical certificate must be completed and signed by a medical physician authorized to treat the immediate/extended family member or Associated Individual.
4. The authority for approval is the Associate Vice-President (AVP), College Dean, Dean. Chair or Director. Each case will be considered according to the circumstances of the individual concerned. Requests for such leave will be considered in confidence, and a leave shall not be unreasonably withheld. Factors taken into account when determining whether, and if so how much leave will be granted, include the urgency of the situation and the personal circumstances of the individual (e.g., whether responsibility of care can be shared, travel requirements, etc.). Leaves will be tracked and monitored by Human Resources, Health, Safety and Environment.
5. The CCEL benefit will be centrally funded by the applicable Disability Leave Program.

Application Process

1. The Eligible Employee is responsible for completing the application form and discussing the request with their AVP, College Dean, Dean. Chair or Director. The AVP, College Dean, Dean. Chair or Director is responsible for sending a copy of the CCEL Approval Letter to Benefits and Wellbeing at recovery@ualberta.ca.
2. The Eligible Employee also forwards a copy of the application form directly to Benefits and Wellbeing by the staff member. Where the reason for the CCEL is the result of a medical emergency, the Medical Certificate to Support the Staff Member Application is to be sent directly to Benefits and Wellbeing.
3. Benefits and Wellbeing will verify the receipt of appropriate supporting medical information with the AVP, College Dean, Dean. Chair or Director.

4. Where applicable, the department can request financial assistance where a CCEL has been approved. The application form is to be forwarded to Health Recovery and Return to Work Services. The central benefit fund will only cover reasonable incremental costs incurred as a result of the leave.
5. Examples of costs that could be reimbursed include: the cost of a sessional instructor hired to teaching a specific course(s) during the CCEL; cost of responsibility pay if an existing staff member is being compensated for additional duties he/she has been asked to perform during a CCEL leave; or cost of hiring a research assistant.

Paid Leave Provisions

1. The duration of the leave can be any combination of full or partial leave provided the total period of paid leave does not exceed six (6) calendar months.
2. During a paid CCEL, employer benefit premium and pension contributions will continue to be made by the University of Alberta for a maximum of six (6) months. Shared Services is responsible for administration of this provision.

Unpaid Leave Provisions

1. During an unpaid CCEL, employer benefit premium contributions will continue to be made by the University of Alberta for a maximum of six (6) months. Shared Services is responsible for administration of this provision.
2. If the period of approved unpaid leave is an extension of a previous six month's paid leave, the staff member will be responsible for all benefit premium contributions where the staff member elects to continue benefit coverage.

During an unpaid CCEL an Eligible Employee may be eligible to apply for the Employment Insurance (EI) Compassionate Leave benefit. This is a responsibility of the Eligible Employee to initiate.

Definitions

Any definitions listed in the following table apply to this document only with no implied or intended institution-wide use.



Eligible Employee	A University staff member who is governed by the following Collective Agreement or Handbook: • Academic Faculty Members (Schedule A) • Faculty Service Officers (Schedule B) • Librarians (Schedule C) • Academic Teaching Staff – appointed >1 year (Schedule D) • Trust Research Academic Staff - full time appointments > 8 months (Schedule E) • Administrative and Professional Officers (Schedule F) • Temporary Librarian, Administrative and Professional Officer – appointed >1 year (Schedule G) • Non-Union Employees (NUE) - (Academic Administrators, Continuing and Temporary)
Immediate Family	A spouse or common law partner as defined by the Supplementary Health Care Plan for Academic Staff, or a child, step-child, adopted child or child for whom you are a legal guardian and who is under 21 years of age.
Extended Family	A parent, sibling, grandparent, equivalent in-laws, child over the age of 21, or other dependent adult for whom the staff member has been designated a guardian or trustee.
Associated Individual	A person involved in the life of a staff member and who either functions as an economic or domestic unit for a continuous period of at least 24 months, or who has been emotionally connected to the staff member for a continuous period of at least 24 months.
Care or Support	Care or support means providing psychological or emotional support, arranging for the care by a third party or directly providing or participating in the care of the individual.
Catastrophic illness	A severe condition or combination of conditions that affects the physical or mental health of the employee or eligible family member, requires treatment by a licensed practitioner for a prolonged period, and has resulted in a life threatening condition and/or has a major impact on life functions. Such conditions



	generally require in-patient, hospice or residential health care. For example, cancer, major surgery, or heart attack.
Family Emergency	An unforeseen urgent family crisis that requires the presence of the staff member (e.g., death of a parent, settling an estate in a jurisdiction where significant prolonged travel and a prolonged stay are required).