

Parental Accommodation for Graduate Students on Assistantship

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Status Final

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Contact Office [Graduate and Post Doctoral Affairs \(Office of\)](#)

Oversight Executive

Executive Vice President and Provost

Applies To Academic Division.

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Reason for Policy

Recognizing the need for graduate students to fulfill parental obligations, this policy defines eligibility and accommodations available to graduate students who experience a Parental Accommodation Event while appointed as a graduate teaching assistant (GTA) or graduate research assistant (GRA).

Definition of Terms

Parental Accommodation

Description

Provision of continued financial support during a temporary absence related to a Parental Accommodation Event.

Parental Accommodation Event

Description

Either the birth, adoption, or placement of a child, or the assumption of legal guardianship for a child under 18 years of age.

Policy Statement

The University will offer eight consecutive weeks of parental accommodation to full-time degree-seeking graduate students who are appointed to service as a graduate teaching assistant (GTA), instructor of record, or graduate research assistant (GRA), who experience a Parental Accommodation Event, and who meet the eligibility criteria defined below. Individuals who meet the eligibility requirements will receive the full wages associated with their support for a period of up to eight weeks and release from the duties associated with such support. Individuals will maintain their status as a full-time student during the release period. Students who require additional unpaid release time should consult policy [PROV-027: Extensions to Time-to-Degree Limits for Graduate and Professional Students Who Experience Significant Life Events](#) and the Graduate Record.

Parental accommodation may begin one week prior to the Parental Accommodation Event, but no later than eight weeks following the Parental Accommodation Event. This policy provides accommodation to graduate students who are appointed to an assistantship or serving as an instructor of record, and it is therefore expected that Parental Accommodation will only be provided during the appointment associated with the Parental Accommodation Event; however, in instances when a student is appointed to back-to-back assistantships or instructorships, the Parental Accommodation may bridge appointments.

No more than two Graduate Assistants/Instructors of Record may be approved for Parental Accommodation related to the same Parental Accommodation Event. Although the utilization of the accommodation provided in this policy may not be unequivocally denied, if multiple Graduate Assistants/Instructors of Record requesting Parental Accommodation for a single Parental Accommodation Event are working in the same department, unit, or program, the Graduate Assistants may be required by their school or unit to stagger or otherwise coordinate their accommodation so as to minimize any disruptive effect(s) on the department or unit. Parental Accommodation may be utilized only once per eligible individual per appointment. Departments and faculty members will not take into account utilization of the accommodations in this policy in making assignments of future Graduate Assistantships, faculty wage hires, or fellowships.

1. Eligibility:

A student who experiences a Parental Accommodation Event, and who meets the following criteria, is eligible for the Parental Accommodation benefits associated with this policy:

- a. Is enrolled as a full-time student in a graduate degree program at the University of Virginia for a minimum of one academic semester (including summer);
- b. Is in good academic standing as defined by the policies in the school of enrollment; and
- c. Is earning financial support through a graduate assistantship (GTA or GRA), or as an instructor of record.

This policy does not apply to students who receive stipend support from internal or external fellowship sources (such as NSF or NIH); these students should consult the guidelines provided by those funding sources and/or agencies to determine the accommodations that may be available to them.

2. Sources of Support for Parental Accommodation:

The parental accommodation provided by this policy will be paid by institutional sources as outlined below.

- a. *Graduate Research Assistantships (GRA)*: Parental Accommodation funding, supplied in equal shares by the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs (GPA) and the school in which the student is enrolled, will be used to either (1) reimburse the grant for the financial support paid during the accommodation period, or (2) provide financial support for a temporary replacement. If the

sponsoring agency does not permit such Parental Accommodation benefits, the eligible student will receive financial support directly, and in equal shares, from GPA and the school in which the student is enrolled.

- b. *Graduate Teaching Assistantships (GTA) and advanced graduate students serving as an instructor of record*: Parental Accommodation benefits will be paid by the original school- or unit-based (e.g., department) funding source. In such cases, Parental Accommodation funding, supplied in equal shares by the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs (GPA) and the school in which the student is enrolled, will be used to either (1) reimburse the unit-based funding source for the financial support paid during the accommodation period, or (2) provide the financial support necessary to hire a temporary replacement.

Procedures

1. Eligible students who anticipate a need for Parental Accommodation funding as outlined in this policy should contact, in writing and at the earliest opportunity, their School Graduate Dean's or Director's Office (or equivalent) to confirm their eligibility and request approval for the terms of their accommodation. Students should copy the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs (gradstudies@virginia.edu) on this request.
2. Upon confirmation of eligibility, the School Graduate Dean's or Director's Office (or equivalent) will work with the faculty advisor to make plans for the requesting student's replacement/substitution and allocation of funds.
3. As soon as possible, but no more than ten days after receipt of the original request, the School Graduate Dean's or Director's Office (or equivalent), will inform the individual in writing of approval or denial of the terms of their accommodation, specifying the reasons for the decision, and copy the faculty advisor.
4. Following establishment of the dates for the accommodation, the School Graduate Dean's or Director's Office (or equivalent) and the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs (gradstudies@virginia.edu) will work together to arrange for financial support.

Students who have question or encounter obstacles in this process are encouraged to contact the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs or the University Ombuds.

Related Information

[PROV-001, Graduate Assistantships](#)

[PROV-027: Extensions to Time-to-Degree Limits for Graduate and Professional Students Who Experience Significant Life Events](#)

[Office of Equal Opportunity and Civil Rights \(EOCR\)](#)

[Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs](#)

[University Ombuds](#)

Major Category [Executive Vice President & Provost Policies](#)

Next Scheduled Review Monday, March 2, 2026

Revision History

Confirmed 3/2/23; Added "instructor of record" 7/6/21; Revised 10/14/19; Contact Ofc and reporting line change 8/3/17.

Approved By Executive Vice President and Provost

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