

## Leave of Absence - Frequently Asked Questions – Team Members

### What is a leave of absence (LOA)?

A leave of absence is an approved absence for a team member to be away from work for an extended amount of time due to medical, family or personal reasons.

### Who can take a leave of absence?

Team members who meet all eligibility requirements, including length of service, may request a leave of absence. Team members who have been employed with Advocate Health Care for at least 12 months and worked at least 1,250 hours may request a Family Medical Leave.

### How do I know what type of leave to request?

The online system team members use to request a leave will ask you to provide information and prompt you with questions to determine the type of leave and your eligibility.

Advocate recognizes that team members may, occasionally, need to be away from work. As a destination employer, we understand that providing this time away from work to care for your personal and family needs is important. With that in mind, Advocate provides various types of leaves of absence to meet your needs. Please review the Leave of Absence Policies for further information.

### How far in advance should I request a leave of absence?

Team members should request a leave of absence no earlier than 30 days before the anticipated start date of your leave.

### How do I request a leave of absence?

- Notify your manager or supervisor.
- Log in to [advocatebenefits.com](http://advocatebenefits.com) > Leave of Absence, then complete and submit a request for leave of absence using the MetLife MyBenefits system. Alternatively, you can also contact MetLife at 1.888.294.1988, M-F, 7am-10pm CT.

### How do I access the online system to request a leave of absence?

- **[advocatebenefits.com](http://advocatebenefits.com)**  
*Single sign on to all benefits information*
- **[www.mybenefits.metlife.com](http://www.mybenefits.metlife.com)**  
*Requires first-time user login*
- **Mobile App**  
*Non-transactional*  
*Download MetLife US App via your Smartphone or Tablet from the App Store or Google Play*

### What information do I need to complete a request for leave?

- The estimated or known start date of your leave.
- Reason for leave.
- Estimated end date and return to work date.
- “Continuous” or “Intermittent” leave period
- Physician contact information, if necessary.

## What happens after a team member submits the online request for leave?

### Submission

- The team member and manager can each view that request was submitted on *advocatebenefits.com > Login > Leave of Absence* file.
- The Manager will receive an email notification regarding the leave request.
- The team member will receive a claim number once the claim has been submitted online and will receive a letter mailed to their home (confirming the request for leave) and any applicable paperwork to be completed.

### Review

- MetLife begins review and may request team member submission of additional documents.
- The team member and manager can track current status of request on *advocatebenefits.com > Login > Leave of Absence* file.

### Decision

- The team member will receive a follow up phone call and letter to their home regarding any claim decision.
- The manager will receive an email with a copy of the decision letter.

### Ongoing

- The team member should provide updated information and return to work date, as needed.
- The manager can review status of leave and return to work date on *advocatebenefits.com > Login > Leave of Absence* file.
- Team members are required to report **Intermittent FMLA absence to MetLife within two business days\***.

## How long does the REVIEW process take?

The time required to review is based on the type of leave requested and receipt of required documentation. Team members can view the current status of their leave on *advocatebenefits.com > Login > Leave of Absence* or they can contact MetLife at 1.888.294.1988.

## How will I receive information about my leave? What if I am not at work?

You can view the current status of your leave on *advocatebenefits.com > Login > Leave of Absence* or contact MetLife at 1.888.294.1988.

## Am I still eligible for my insurance coverage with Advocate while on leave of absence?

Yes, team members are responsible for maintaining their insurance coverage while on leave of absence.

## What is the job guarantee for my position while I am out on a leave of absence?

Job guarantee is based on the type of leave of absence. Team members eligible for the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) or Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act (VESSA) have up to a 12-week job guarantee. Team members may have up to 26 weeks in a single 12-month period to care for a covered service member with a serious illness or injury. Short-term disability (STD) and Personal Medical Leaves each provide a 30-day job guarantee, which are extended for maternity to either 6 weeks (normal delivery) or 8 weeks (C-section).

## Who coordinates the Return to Work notice?

- Team members are no longer required to submit a Health Care Provider (HCP) approved *Return to Work Full Duty* notice\*\* for medical release to return to work. Managers will no longer be notified by the Advocate Disability Council or MetLife when team members have been medically cleared to return. Instead, MetLife will work directly with team members and HCP's to determine disability/leave approval and ability to Return to Work.
- MetLife will send decision notifications to managers electronically informing them of leave *approved through* and *return to work* dates. *MyBenefits* provides an estimated Return to Work date that should be used by managers as a guide for planning a team member's return to work. The *Weekly MyBenefits Return to Work Report*\*\*\* will also alert managers to any team members scheduled to return from leave in the coming week.
- Prior to their scheduled return date, MetLife will contact team members to confirm their ability to return. If a team member cannot yet return, MetLife will contact their HCP to obtain further medical information to support additional leave time. A new decision letter would then be communicated and *MyBenefits* updated to reflect an extended estimated return to work date. That revised date becomes the new target date for the manager when planning their team member's return to work.

\*Intermittent FMLA absences (scheduled or unscheduled) that are not reported to MetLife within two business days will not be approved and will be considered unexcused per Advocate's Attendance Policy.

\*\*Team members returning to work with restrictions will be required to have their Provider complete a *Return to Work with Restrictions* form sent to them by MetLife at the beginning of their leave. The Disability Council will contact the supervisor/manager and team member to discuss the feasibility of returning to work with the identified restrictions.

\*\*\*Managers must elect to receive the weekly *Return to Work* and other reports in *MyBenefits* and can do so via the *Manager Reports* tab. After subscribing, the report(s) will be emailed weekly to managers on the day and in the format selected.