

# Family and Medical Accommodation Policy for Graduate Students

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## 4. Family and Medical Accommodation Policy for Graduate Students

The Graduate College at NDSU is committed to supporting students in balancing their academic pursuits with their family responsibilities. This policy outlines provisions for:

4.1. Extensions for Completing Academic Requirements (p. 1)

4.2. Modified Duties for Graduate Assistants (p. 1)

### 4.1. Extensions for Completing Academic Requirements

#### Eligibility

Graduate students in good academic standing making progress towards their degree may be eligible for extensions on:

- Preliminary/Qualifying Examinations
- Final Defense
- Publication Review Process

#### Qualifying Circumstances:

- Childbirth, adoption, or foster placement of a child
- Caring for a newborn child
- Caring for a child with a serious medical condition
- Experiencing a serious medical condition
- Caring for a seriously ill spouse/partner or parent (may require medical documentation)

#### Extension Lengths:

- Childbirth, adoption, foster placement: Up to one extra year
- Serious medical conditions (student, child, spouse/partner, parent): Up to six extra months

#### Application Process:

- Students must submit the extension request form to their academic unit before the desired extension start date.
- Retroactive requests will not be considered.
- The academic unit and the Graduate College will review the request and determine eligibility.
- While each extension granted under this policy will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, absent extraordinary circumstances, the additional time granted by this policy will not exceed two years.
- International students require approval from the Global Programs and Services.

#### Leave of Absence:

- Students may also consider a leave of absence from their program.
- International students should consult with the Global Programs and Services regarding leave of absence eligibility.

### 4.2. Modified Duties

#### Eligibility:

Graduate assistants who have served at least one academic term may be eligible for modified duties in the following circumstances:

- Childbirth, adoption, or foster placement of a child
- A health condition preventing the performance of regular duties (without workload reduction)
- Caring for a child, spouse/partner, or parent with a serious health condition

## **Definition and Length of Modified Duties:**

“Modified Duties” means a change to duties and goals without stipend reduction for a limited period. A graduate assistant taking modified duties will still be at a 100% workload and 100% stipend; however, the nature of the responsibilities for this time period will be adjusted.

- Childbirth or adoption of a child under 6.: Up to six weeks
- Serious medical conditions (student, child, spouse/partner, parent): Up to six weeks of excused absences (with appropriate documentation).
- Modified duties agreements must conclude within 12 months.

## **Application Process:**

- Graduate assistants submit a Modified Duties Request to be sent to their supervisor and department chair/head.
- The graduate assistant and department engage in an interactive process to determine modified duties and duration.
- The dean of the Graduate College will help resolve any disagreements.
- Performance evaluations will be based on the agreed-upon modified duties