



Postdoctoral Fellows

Policy: PDOC001
 Responsible Executive: Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs
 Responsible Office: Office of the Provost
 Approved by: Senior Planning Group
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Policy Statement

The Johns Hopkins University (“University” or “JHU”), was founded in 1876 as the first research university in the United States. Because of this focus on research, the University acknowledges the contributions made by postdoctoral fellows to the research community and is supportive of their continued academic growth. Postdoctoral fellows shall be financially supported based on state and federal regulations, and program-specific funding source guidelines. Each postdoctoral fellow across the University shall receive the same standard University benefits, leave, and/or accommodations regardless of discipline. No postdoctoral fellow may receive financial support from the University that is not specified in this Policy.

No school, department, or center shall discriminate on the basis of sex, gender, marital status, pregnancy, race, color, ethnicity, national origin, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, veteran status or other legally protected characteristic.

Who Is Governed By This Policy

All units of the University are governed by the policy, excluding the JHU Applied Physics Laboratory. This policy does not apply to JHU School of Medicine residents and subspecialty clinical fellows in Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (“ACGME”)-accredited or ACGME-equivalent programs. Individuals in the ACGME accredited or ACGME-

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equivalent programs should consult resident and clinical fellow policies (<http://gme.med.jhmi.edu/fellows/gmec-contracts-policies/>), including the Healthcare and Sick Leave Policy for Postdoctoral Trainees, JHU School of Medicine House Staff Summary of All Benefits, and JHU School of Medicine Summary of All Benefits for Full-Time Postdoctoral Fellows policies for information on respective benefits.

Policy Purpose

The Postdoctoral Fellows Policy (“Policy”) sets forth the minimum requirements for the official appointment of postdoctoral fellows and the minimum salary, benefits, leave, and accommodation requirements for postdoctoral fellows.

Definitions

Term	A Postdoctoral Fellow (PDF), commonly referred to as a postdoctoral trainee or postdoctoral scholar, is “[a]n individual who has received a doctoral degree (or equivalent) and is engaged in a temporary and defined period of mentored advanced training to enhance the professional skills and research independence needed to pursue his or her chosen career path.” This definition is derived from the National Institute of Health and National Science Foundation definition, January 29, 2007.
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Policy**I. General Considerations****A. Formal Letter of Appointment**

Every Postdoctoral Fellow (“PDF”) shall be issued a formal letter of appointment or offer letter by the University (via the relevant school/entity) that sets forth the financial support, terms, and expectations of the appointment. The appointment must be issued before the University issues any other documentation, such as immigration documentation. Any reappointment must also be accompanied by a formal letter that covers the same items as the initial appointment letter.

B. Appointment Titles

Every PDF shall receive an appointment title as a “postdoctoral fellow” regardless of funding source.

II. Financial Support

Financial support for all full-time PDFs must be paid on a salary or stipend basis as dictated by the guidelines of the PDF’s funding source. Part-time PDFs shall be paid on an hourly basis, as discussed below. It is sometimes the case that partial or full support for a PDF is from a source outside the University.¹ If the outside funding is insufficient to cover the full support noted above, the difference must be made up by the department or school. In all cases, it is the school’s responsibility to review and approve the hiring and funding sources of PDFs

A. Full-time Postdoctoral Fellows

Except in the case of full-time teaching postdocs, all full-time PDFs must be paid, at a minimum, the salary equivalent to the [stipend](#) for 0 years of experience PDF under the National Institutes of Health (“NIH”) National Research Service Award (“NRSA”). The salary scales for PDFs including annual increases must follow the stated policy or procedures of the department, program or school, and be documented in reappointment letters.

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B. Part-time Postdoctoral Fellows

1. Under extraordinary circumstances, a PDF may be appointed as part-time. Such circumstances include medical or family issues that preclude full time employment. Insufficient funding is not an allowable justification for part-time appointment. The PDF initiates the written request for part-time appointment and the request must be approved in writing by the PDF's home departmental chair and/or appropriate school leader for postdoctoral training, as dictated by school policy. Details of the appointment including weekly hours or percent effort must be documented in the offer and/or appointment letter and in all reappointment letters.
2. Part-time PDFs will be paid based on an hourly rate. Part-time PDFs must be paid for all hours worked.
3. The hourly rate for a part-time PDFs must be referenced to a full-time level, and expressed as a percentage of a full-time level (e.g., a 60% position). Support must be benchmarked against a 37.5-hour work-week.
4. All hours worked by part-time PDFs must be reported using timesheets, and must accurately reflect actual hours of work performed. The reported hours will form the basis for the paycheck-by-paycheck salary support that part-time PDFs receive.
5. J-1 and H-1B foreign nationals sponsored by the University may not work part-time.

C. Supplemental Financial Support

PDFs are eligible to receive supplemental financial support for extra duties, which must be over-and-above the roles and responsibilities of their PDF appointment, as outlined in the offer and/or appointment letter. Such additional financial support, and the extra duties on which that additional support is based, require prior approval by the PDF's home department chair (and others as required by the PDF's school policy). PDFs on visas can only receive supplemental financial support if their visa permits it, as determined in advance of performing any such proposed activities by the Office of International Services.

III. Prohibition Against Self-Funding

No postdoctoral fellow may be supported by self or family; self-funding is prohibited. In this regard, the University will not accept funding from entities solely to fund a given PDF, nor gifts from the PDF or their family that are earmarked for or intended to support the fellow. Departments and their respective schools bear the primary responsibility to vet outside funding sources.

IV. Administrative Fees

No administrative fees can be charged for PDF appointments.

V. J-1 exchange Visitors

All changes in funding for J-1 exchange visitors will require an advance request to amend Form DS-2019. More information may be found in the "Departmental and Divisional Administrators Section" of the Office of International Services [webpage](#). Please contact the [Office of International Services](#) ("OIS") with questions.

VI. Benefits. All PDFs are eligible for benefits; they are not discretionary.**A. Insurance**

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All full-time PDFs regardless of funding source are eligible for paid health insurance, as are part-time PDFs.

B. Vacation

All PDFs are eligible for ten (10) business days per fiscal year (beginning July 1st) of paid vacation leave. For new hires, the leave will be prorated based on the month in which the postdoctoral training begins. Unused vacation time does not carry-over beyond the end of the fiscal year, and will not be paid out if not used. Vacation for part-time PDFs will be prorated.

C. Sick and Safe Leave

The University is supportive of accommodating PDFs who must take time away from training to care for or treat a mental or physical illness, injury, or condition or if the absence from work is necessary due to domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking. The University provides a paid sick and safe leave (“SSL”) benefit for PDFs that is consistent with the minimum provisions of the Maryland Healthy Working Families Act (MHWFA), the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA),² and the Maryland Flexible Leave Act (MFLA).³ The University grants fifteen (15) paid business days at the beginning of each division’s academic year (July 1st). For new hires, the leave will be prorated based on the month in which the postdoctoral training begins. Sick and safe leave will be prorated appropriately for part-time PDFs.

1. Permissible Use

A PDF is permitted to use their allocated SSL under the following qualifying events:

- a. To care for or treat the PDF’s mental or physical illness, injury or condition;
- b. To obtain preventative medical care for the PDF or the PDF’s family member;⁴
- c. To care for a family member with a mental or physical illness, injury or condition;
- d. For maternity or paternity leave; or
- e. The absence from training is necessary due to domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking committed against the PDF or the PDF’s family member and the leave is being used: (1) to obtain medical or mental health attention; (2) to obtain services from a victim services organization; (3) for legal services or proceedings; or (4) because the PDF has temporarily relocated as a result of the domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking.

PDFs may only use SSL leave for one of the above-listed authorized reasons. PDFs using SSL for unauthorized purposes or who have demonstrated a pattern of abusing SSL may be denied the right to use SSL safe leave in the future. However, proper use of SSL used in accordance with this Policy will not be subject to a division or department’s attendance management policy or practice.

2. Use of SSL Benefits

If the need to use sick and safe leave is foreseeable (for example a scheduled doctor’s appointment), the PDF must provide notice 7 days prior to leave use. If a PDF uses SSL for more than five (5) consecutive business days, the PDF must provide verification that the leave use was appropriate (e.g., a formal note from a qualified healthcare provider).

PDFs are not permitted to carry over any unused leave at the end of the year. PDFs will not be paid for any unused sick and safe leave upon the termination of a fellowship or training program. If a PDF leaves the University and is rehired within 37 weeks of leaving, any earned and unused sick and safe leave that the PDF had at the time of separation will be reinstated. PDFs will not have their

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salaries reduced nor will they be subject to any adverse employment action for taking entitled sick and safe leave.

In compliance with MHWFA, PDFs must record SSL and submit to their faculty mentor, Program Director or Human Resources Representative a [PDF Attendance Management Event Form](#) or equivalent document according to program or school procedures.

3. Required Notice

In Maryland, an employer is required to notify its employees that the employee is entitled to earned sick and safe leave along with an explanation of how earned sick and safe leave accrue and the purposes for which the leave may be used. Maryland law prohibits an employer from taking adverse action against an employee for exercising their rights under this law as well as prohibits an employee from making a complaint, bringing an action or testifying in an action in bad faith.

The Maryland Commissioner of Labor and Industry has oversight of issues related to earned sick and safe leave. The Commissioner may be contacted at ssl.assistance@maryland.gov.

D. University Holidays

All PDFs are eligible to take off on all University holidays.

E. Parental Accommodations

All full-time PDFs are eligible to take 8 weeks of fully-paid New Child Accommodations in accordance with university policy. See the [New Child Accommodations Policy for Full-time Graduate Students and Postdoctoral Fellows](#) for details and eligibility requirements.

¹Examples of legitimate outside funding sources include (domestic or foreign) universities, colleges, teaching hospitals, recognized research funding agencies, local, state, and federal government agencies, established corporate partners and foundations, scholarship councils, or other academic funding organizations. Outside funding sources are subject to verification prior to PDF appointment

²If a PDF takes leave for an approved reason under FMLA, any paid time during such leave will run concurrent to the PDF's SSL if the FMLA is for a qualifying event, as defined above and subject to certain restrictions. PDFs may request that leave is extended for up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave as per FMLA. Such leave is subject to applicable University and school policies. For more information on FMLA, please consult the Human Resources [Required Notices](#) webpage.

³Under MFLA, eligible employees are permitted to use accrued paid leave for qualifying reasons, however JHU is not required to provide paid leave.

⁴A family member includes a spouse, child, parent, grandparent, grandchild, sibling or legal guardian. For a complete list of family members included under the law, please see [§3-1301\(G\)](#) of the Labor and Employment Article of the Maryland Annotated Code. Johns Hopkins University includes domestic partners in the definition of "family member". Domestic partners will be required to provide the University with documentation confirming the existence of the partnership (e.g., JHU Affidavit of Marriage/Domestic Partnership).

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Procedures

Postdoctoral Fellows Requesting Leave	<p>Eligible PDFs who plan to utilize any leave (including vacation, sick and safe leave, or new child accommodations) are expected to notify their designated divisional faculty member or Training Program Director* as soon as the PDF is aware of the need to use leave to facilitate appropriate scheduling.</p> <p>* For any questions you have about this process at your school or division, we have provided a list of useful divisional or school contacts below.</p>
International Postdoctoral Fellows Requesting Parental Accommodations	<p>In addition to following the Procedures outlined above, International PDFs should consult with the Office of International Services.</p>

Policy Enforcement

Violations	<p>Johns Hopkins University prohibits discrimination and harassment based on any protected characteristic, which includes sex, gender, marital status, pregnancy, race, color, ethnicity, national origin, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, veteran status or other legally protected characteristic.</p> <p>A faculty member, Principal Investigator, Training Program Director or other designated divisional contacts may not deny a request to utilize a University Benefit without the express authorization of the Provost or their designee.</p> <p>Any postdoctoral fellow who believes that he or she has not been treated equitably under the provisions of this Policy, or has experienced retaliation because of seeking or obtaining financial support or a benefit under this Policy, may contact the appropriate divisional Dean.</p> <p>Failure of University faculty, staff, agents or offices responsible for providing financial support or benefits in accordance with this Policy and other applicable University, divisional, and unit policies, procedures, and applicable federal, state, and local laws or otherwise failing to follow the procedures outlined in this Policy is an explicit violation of this Policy.</p>
Enforcement	<p>The Office of the Provost will investigate suspected violations, and may recommend disciplinary action in accordance with University codes of conduct, policies, or applicable laws.</p> <p>University sanctions may include one or more of the following: permanent suspension or termination of access to facilities and campus resources; disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment and/or expulsion under applicable University policies. Violations may result in civil and/or criminal penalties.</p>
Reporting Violations	<p>Members of the University who have actual knowledge of violations of laws and/or policies are required to report to the Office of the Provost or via the University's Compliance Hotline.</p>

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Related Resources

University Policies and Documents
Bloomberg School of Public Health Guidebook for Postdoctoral Fellows
Homewood Postdoctoral Fellows Handbook (KSAS & WSE)
New Child Accommodations for Full-Time Graduate Students and Postdoctoral Trainees
JHU School of Medicine Policies for non-ACGME and Research Fellows
JHU School of Medicine Office of Postdoctoral Affairs Web site https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/som/offices/pda/index.html

Contacts

Subject Matter	Office Name	Telephone Number	E-mail/Web Address
Policy Clarification and Interpretation	Office of the Provost	(410) 516-8070	https://provost.jhu.edu provost@ju.edu
Anonymous Reporting/ EthicsLine	Johns Hopkins University and Health System Compliance Line	1-844- SPEAK2US	https://johnshopkinspeak2us.tnwreports.com/
Reporting violations of civil or criminal law	Office of the Vice President and General Counsel	(410) 516-8128	http://web.jhu.edu/administration/general_counsel/

Useful Divisional or School Contacts

Division	Contact/Title	Telephone Number	E-mail/Web Address
Bloomberg School of Public Health	Valeria Culotta, Director of Postdoctoral Training	(410) 955-3029	https://www.jhsph.edu/academics/postdoctoral-training/index.html vculotta@jhsph.edu
G.W.C. Whiting School of Engineering	Christine Kavanagh, Assistant Dean for Graduate and Postdoctoral Academic Affairs	(410) 516-5938	http://homewoodgrad.jhu.edu/student-services/family-resources-for-students-and-postdoctoral-fellows/ christinekavanagh@ju.edu

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Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies	Kent Calder, Vice Dean for Faculty Affairs and International Research	(202) 663-5889	kcalder@jhu.edu
The Carey Business School	Valerie Suslow, Vice Dean for Faculty & Research	(410) 234-9258	vsuslow@jhu.edu
Zanyvl Krieger School of Arts and Sciences	Renee Eastwood, Director of Graduate and Postdoctoral Academic Affairs	(410) 516-8477	http://homewoodgrad.jhu.edu rseitz5@jhu.edu
School of Nursing	Marie Nolan, Associate Dean of Academic Affairs	(410) 614-1684	mnolan3@jhu.edu
School of Medicine	Dana Boatman, Associate Dean for Postdoctoral Affairs	(443) 287-4863	postdocaffairs@jhmi.edu dboatma@jhmi.edu

Other Useful Contacts

Subject Matter	Office Name	Telephone Number	E-mail/Web Address
Policy Clarification and Interpretation	Office of the Provost	(410) 516-8070	provost@jhu.edu http://web.jhu.edu/administration/provost
Eligibility for Family and Medical Leave	Occupational Health Services	(410) 516-0450	http://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/hse/ occupational_health/
Visa/Immigration Issues	Office of International Services	(667) 208-7001	http://ois.jhu.edu/contact_us