

LInQS Parental/Family Leave and Make-Up Time Policy

Purpose: This policy outlines expectations and options for QI Fellows who take parental or family leave during the two-year fellowship. The goal is to support fellows during family leave while ensuring completion of core fellowship learning, project requirements, and program competencies.

Eligibility: All fellows enrolled in the QI Fellowship Program are eligible for family leave in accordance with institutional and applicable state/federal policies (e.g., FMLA, university leave policies). This policy applies specifically to how fellowship educational requirements are managed during and after leave.

General Principles:

1. **Supportive and Flexible:** The program is committed to accommodating family leave in a supportive and flexible manner while ensuring fellows can meet fellowship graduation requirements.
2. **Competency-Based Completion:** Fellows are expected to complete the core educational components of the fellowship.
3. **Make-Up Time:** As a baseline, the amount of structured fellowship time missed (didactics, project work, presentations, or required activities) will need to be made up, with specific approaches determined in collaboration with program leadership.
4. **Individualized Plan:** Make-up plans will be tailored based on:
 - The fellow's year in training
 - Amount and type of content missed
 - Progress to date on QI projects
 - Institutional policies

Leave During Year 1 (Didactic Year)

Because Year 1 includes regularly scheduled every-other-week didactics and foundational QI training, fellows who take leave will work with program leadership to create a tailored plan that may include:

- **Asynchronous Learning:** Completing missed sessions via recorded lectures, readings, assignments, or online modules when available.
- **Supplemental Mentorship:** Additional meetings with faculty mentors to reinforce key concepts missed during leave.
- **Adjusted Project Timelines:** Extending deadlines for project development, aims formulation, stakeholder mapping, or data acquisition if these were interrupted.

- **Make-Up Participation:** Attending additional didactic sessions the following year (if appropriate and schedules allow).

General expectation: The total amount of instructional time missed will be made up through a combination of asynchronous work and adjusted meeting schedules.

Leave During Year 2 (Project/Presentation Year)

Year 2 focuses on implementation, project leadership, and quarterly presentations. Fellows who take leave during Year 2 will work with program leadership to develop a customized plan that may include:

- **Rescheduling Presentations:** Completing postponed quarterly presentations later in the year or during an extended fellowship period and will be aligned with existing quarterly update schedules.
- **Modified Deliverables:** Adjusting project milestones, timelines, or scope while still demonstrating competency in QI methodologies.
- **Extended Fellowship End Date:** fellows will extend their fellowship end date to complete required project work, analyses, or dissemination activities.
- **Supplemental Check-Ins:** Extra mentoring sessions or work-in-progress reviews after returning from leave.

General expectation: Fellows will complete all required quarterly presentations and project milestones, with flexibility in timing and format.

Process for Developing a Make-Up Plan

1. **Notification:** Fellows should notify program leadership as early as feasible once leave plans are known.
2. **Planning Meeting:** The fellow, program director, and faculty mentor(s) will meet to:
 - Review the expected duration of leave
 - Identify which fellowship activities will be missed
 - Create a preliminary Make-Up Plan
3. **Make-Up Plan Components:**
 - Dates of planned leave
 - Components expected to be missed (didactics, meetings, presentations, project work)
 - Specific methods for making up missed time
 - Any adjustments to project milestones or fellowship timelines

4. Documentation: Program leadership will provide written confirmation of the Make-Up Plan.
5. Revisions: The plan may be modified as needed based on changes in leave duration, fellow needs, or project demands.

Continued Division Support

Time taken for family leave will not count towards the divisional support fellows receive for participating in LInQS. Thus, any extended time in LInQS will be covered by the fellows' division.

Activity While on Leave

Fellows on approved leave are not required or expected to engage in LInQS fellowship activities and should prioritize their leave without obligation to fellowship responsibilities.

Voluntary Withdrawal from the Fellowship

Fellows may choose to voluntarily withdraw from the LInQS Fellowship at any time. Such decisions should be made in discussion with the Fellowship Director and the Division Head to ensure appropriate planning and forfeiture of divisional compensation for LInQS participation.

Completion of Fellowship

To graduate, fellows must complete all core requirements:

- Participation in required didactics or approved make-up activities
- Completion of a longitudinal QI project demonstrating application of QI methodology
- Delivery of required presentations
- Attendance or equivalent engagement aligned with the amount of time missed

Most fellows will extend time in the fellowship to ensure completion, in alignment with institutional policies.

Confidentiality

All discussions and documentation related to family leave will be handled confidentially and in accordance with institutional policies.