General Policy

Leaves of absence, which are not to exceed six months in duration, may be granted to regular employees at the sole discretion of the university.

Biola will continue to pay for cafeteria plan benefits (cafeteria plan dollars for insurance and/or taxable cash) and for life and long-term disability insurance for the first 30 calendar days of an authorized leave of absence. The university will continue to pay for such benefits beyond the 30th day of absence, up to the 90th day of absence, for authorized family care leaves of absence. The university will continue to pay for such benefits beyond the 30th day of absence, up to the 180th day of absence, for approved medical/maternity leaves of absence.

Should an employee wish for cafeteria plan insurance benefits to continue during the leave of absence, beyond the Biola-paid benefits portion of the leave, the cost of such benefits must be paid by the employee and received by the Human Resources department on or before the first day of the month to which the coverage applies.

During any leave of absence, an employee must continue to make emergency loan payments or any other payments normally made through payroll deduction.

Upon returning from a leave of absence, if an employee is able to perform the essential functions of his or her original position, the employee will be returned to that position unless, for business reasons, that position has to be either eliminated or filled with another regular employee.

If an employee is unable to return to his/her original position because of any of the above reasons, then the employee will be offered, if qualified, a substantially similar position or another position, unless doing so would substantially undermine the university's ability to operate safely and efficiently, or unless there are no such positions available. The rate of pay for any offered position will be appropriate for the position and may or may not be the same as the rate of pay the employee received prior to the leave.

Unpaid Leave

Personal Leave

Leaves of absence of up to 20 workdays in duration are granted at the discretion of the department supervisor in conformance to the provisions of this policy. Leaves of absence of over 20 workdays in duration are granted at the discretion of the department director or vice president and the Sr. Director of Human Resources, jointly, in conformance to the provisions of the policy. Requests must be in writing, directed to the employee's supervisor, and copied to the Sr. Director of Human Resources at least two weeks prior to the beginning of the requested leave.

Medical Leave

The Sr. Director of Human Resources may grant leaves of absence for a period of disability up to a maximum of six months. A physician's written verification of disability is required. The university reserves the right to require a second opinion, at its own expense, from a physician of its choosing, and to base its decision on the determination made by that doctor. During a medical leave of absence, an employee may use accrued sick, vacation, or personal business leave. A doctor's
certification of ability to work must be presented to the Human Resources department upon return to work.

Maternity Leave
With regard to leaves of absence, disability related to pregnancy is treated the same as any other medical disability. Maternity leave may only be taken for the period of time the employee is actually disabled due to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions, for a maximum of six months. An employee may use accrued sick, vacation, or personal business leave for unpaid maternity leave time.

Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)
If the need to care for a newborn child, newly-adopted child, seriously ill child, spouse, parent, or for one's own serious health condition arises, employees who have completed one year of service (and 1,250 hours of work in the last 12 months) may be granted a leave of absence for up to 12 weeks during a 12-month period. In the case of a serious health condition, medical certification is required. The leave is unpaid; however, an employee may use accrued vacation, sick leave, or personal business leave as appropriate. If a husband and wife are both employed by Biola, the total leave allowed for a specific instance is 12 weeks. During this leave, employees will continue to be eligible for health insurance with the cafeteria dollars continuing. In most cases, an employee returning from a FMLA leave is entitled to be reinstated into the same or an equivalent/comparable position.

In circumstances where the need for the leave is foreseeable, the employee is required to give 30 days of notice to their supervisor and Human Resources. In cases where the need is not foreseeable 30 days in advance, as much notice as possible is required. For more information on the Family Medical Leave Act, please contact Human Resources.

Paid Leave

Military Reserve Duty Leave
Members of an active Armed Forces Reserve or National Guard training unit who are required to serve a two-week annual tour of active duty, will be granted a leave of absence for that period, with full pay. Since a regular university paycheck will be issued for that period, the check for military reserve duty must be photocopied, and the photocopy must be turned in to the Human Resources office. The employee’s next paycheck will be reduced by the amount that he/she was paid for his/her service (not to exceed the amount of his/her Biola base pay). If a military leave that exceeds two weeks is requested, the portion of the leave beyond the second week will be unpaid.

Jury/Witness Duty Leave
Employees called for jury or witness duty will be granted a leave of absence with full pay to serve a maximum of 10 days during any consecutive 24-month period. On any given day, if 1 half-day or more of work time remains after the employees are excused from service, they will be expected to return to work.

In order to authorize salary payment during the service period, the employees must notify their supervisors when they receive their notice or summons. Employees must also record jury/witness leave on their time record forms and must submit to Human Resources the certification of service
receipt issued by the court at the end of their service period. The employee may keep the minimal reimbursement by the court of approximately $15/day.

The granting of jury duty leave pay is subject to the proper scheduling of the service period. Since the courts will generally honor one request to reschedule jury duty to a later date to accommodate work needs, the employee wishing to receive jury duty pay will be expected to request a new service date, should his or her supervisor determine that department work needs necessitate that the employee work during the originally-assigned jury duty period. The employee may, however, choose to serve during the originally assigned period without jury duty pay.