



Navigating Loss: Tools & Support

This toolkit is designed to provide the necessary support to employees who face the unimaginable loss of a child, whether during childbirth or due to a serious health condition. Additionally, this toolkit is to offer guidance and resources that ensure staff's well-being is prioritized during such an incredibly difficult time while maintaining a supportive, compassionate, and understanding workplace environment.

This toolkit is organized by entity and location, providing specific resources for each. Additional resources are also included in the toolkit.

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SupportLinc EAP – All Employees

SupportLinc Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

SupportLinc offers confidential guidance and valuable expert resources to help resolve concerns. The program is a mental health benefit offered by Penn State Health for employees, spouse, dependents and household members. All requests for information or assistance are free of charge and completely confidential. You can contact SupportLinc 24 hours a day, 365 days a year at 888-881-5462; visit <http://www.supportlinc.com> group code: psh or email support@curalinc.com.



- **In-the-moment support** from a licensed clinician at **888-881-5462**. EAP Care Advocates are available by phone 24/7/365.
- Program offers **short-term counseling** services with up to 10-sessions per concern at no cost should you feel you or your loved ones need to discuss these recent events with a licensed professional counselor. If you feel you could benefit from this, please call SupportLinc directly and consult with one of our care advocates to get started.
- SupportLinc has a specific **Grief and Loss Toolkit** (<https://www.griefandloss.tools/>) that provides guidance, videos, podcasts, books and many more resources.
- Resources including **Mindstream™** (A fitness studio for your mind with live and on-demand sessions to help you strengthen your emotional health); **Text Therapy**; **Digital Group Support**; **Mental Health Navigator** are also available and can be found on the **BeWell website**.

System-wide Resources

BeWell Employee Well-being Resources

Penn State Health's mission is to continually improve the health and well-being of the people of Pennsylvania, and beyond. To achieve this mission, we must support and empower our employees to be well by offering inclusive and engaging benefits. The Penn State Health BeWell program aims to foster a culture of well-being across the health system that supports and empowers employees, in all dimensions, to improve their quality of life. You will find more information on Penn State Health's well-being resources at <https://bewell.pennstatehealth.org>.

The Caring Place – Highmark

<https://www.highmarkcaringplace.com/cp2/index.shtml>

- The Caring Place works directly with Penn State Health in support of nurses. Their workshops are offered as an opportunity to unpack the feelings and stories they carry with them every day, allowing our nurses to continue to do their important work.. Those workshops are available on the nurse educator platform.
- The Caring Place also works with PSH teams needing support. They can facilitate a caring, supportive debrief with the delivery nurses (or those impacted who want and/or need support).
- The Caring Place will make referrals to therapists trained in grief/trauma when appropriate. They will assist in finding a fit based on need and insurance coverage.
- The Caring Place program based on a family model of support. If there are other children in the family, they would be an appropriate resource for them. While they currently do not have adult only options, they are able to make a referral for counseling or therapy if needed.

Postpartum Support International (PSI) - <https://postpartum.net/>

Postpartum Support International is dedicated to helping families suffering from postpartum depression, anxiety, and distress. PSI offers an app with great resources on counselors and peer support groups along with books and tools.

Sweet Grace Ministries – <https://sweetgraceministries.com/services/>

Support group for parent who experienced a loss of their child through ectopic pregnancy, miscarriage, stillbirth or neonatal death.

Adalyn Rose Foundation - [Adalyn Rose Foundation: Home Page](#)

Adalyn Rose Foundation helps families with infant & child loss up to the age of 5. They offer funeral service assistance & counseling for those parents of loss. They are located in Wyomissing, PA. They do have a variety of counseling services throughout different locations.

Shared Services, Hershey Medical Center, Community Medical Group, Academic Group and LifeLion

Bereavement Support Group - <https://www.pennstatehealth.org/support-groups>

- If an employee is under the care at HMC and experience such a loss, **Dr. Baweja** is a great resource and will host quarterly meetings for peer support for moms as well. For more information regarding the dates/times of the meetings, please contact your treating medical provider at HMC for more information.
- If you are grieving the loss of a child, you are not alone, there are others who can relate and understand what you are going through. Join us for an intimate six-week parent support group (spring and fall) that provides an opportunity to meet others who are going through a similar situation. Call 717-531-8521 ext. 282131 or email myoutz@pennstatehealth.psu.edu.

Hummingbird Program - <https://www.pennstatehealth.org/childrens/services-treatments/hummingbird-program/patient-education-and-resources>. Call 717-531-3558 for support.

Find bereavement resources, including grief and loss support groups for children and adults, through Penn State Health Children's Hospital Hummingbird Program.

- The death of a child is devastating, and the grief journey for bereaved parents is long and many times lonely. The Hummingbird Program provides grief and bereavement support to parents and families in various settings. We offer:
 - Short term Individual, couple or family grief counseling.
 - Telephone call support related to your grief journey.
 - Specialized grief workshops and groups held throughout the year.
 - Support for Grandparents or other family impacted by the loss.
 - Annual Commemorative Events for the whole family including:
 - Spring Remembrance Event the first Saturday in May
 - Bereaved Parent Awareness Month Ice Cream Social in July
 - Worldwide Candle Lighting Memorial Service the 2nd Sunday evening in December
 - Referrals to local bereavement resources upon request.

Chaplain Services - Chaplains are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to support patients and their families. To request a Chaplain, please call 717-531-8177.

<https://www.pennstatehealth.org/locations/milton-s-hershey-medical-center/support-coping-services/pastoral-services>

Chaplains provide:

- Spiritual, emotional, and sacramental support
- Pastoral care and counseling
- Empathic listening
- Consultations on difficult decisions

The Pastoral Services department ensures that patients of all faiths have their spiritual needs met in accordance with their faith tradition.

Holy Spirit/PPI

Pastoral Care Services

The Pastoral Care Services department provides spiritual and emotional support to patients and their families upon request. Patients may also invite their own spiritual leaders to provide for their spiritual and emotional needs.

Chaplains are available Monday through Friday. To contact the chaplain on call, contact the switchboard operator at 717-763-2100.

Hamden Medical Center

Pastoral Care Services

The Pastoral Care Services department provides spiritual and emotional support to patients and their families upon request. Patients may also invite their own spiritual leaders to provide for their spiritual and emotional needs.

Chaplains are available Monday through Friday. To request a Chaplain, please call Pastoral Services at 717-981-8131.

St. Joseph's Regional Medical Center

Support Group – <https://www.pennstatehealth.org/support-groups>

Bereavement Support

The Bereavement Support Group is for anyone experiencing grief due to the death of a loved one. The support group will assist you in understanding how to cope with grief, as well as how to begin turning your mourning into cherished memories of your loved one.

Please register by calling the Spiritual Care Office, Penn State Health St. Joseph at [610-378-2297](tel:610-378-2297). Please leave your name, phone number and if you have questions, ask for the staff chaplain.

Meeting time (*subject to change, please refer to support group website using the link above):
Wednesday evenings, 7:00 to 8:30 pm, at St. Joseph Medical Center, Bern Campus. The bereavement support group meets once a week for seven weeks. There are three sessions offered throughout the year. January-February, May-June, September-October.

Lancaster Medical Center

Pastoral Care

The Pastoral Care Services department at Lancaster Medical Center provides spiritual and emotional support to patients and their families upon request. Patients may also invite their own

spiritual leaders to provide for their spiritual and emotional needs. Chaplains are available Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. TigerText Cheryl Hudson, Chaplain for support.

Additional Community Resources

- [Pathway's Center for Grief and Loss](#) -Monthly drop-in groups for parents, as well as general loss of a loved one 717-391-2413
- [Grief Share](#) - A Christian-based support group with many locations throughout PA 800-395-5755
- [Compassionate Friends](#) - A self-help group of bereaved parents with many local chapters. This group is for families who have lost a child at any age, from any cause 630-990-0010
- [Share of Lancaster](#) -Support for perinatal loss 717-533-7857
- [Common Bond Ministry Grief Support Group](#) -For mothers who have lost a child. Small group setting and prayer support

Grief Support programs for siblings

- [Camp Dragonfly](#) (Central PA), 717-732-1000
 - [Camp Koala](#) (Danville, Carlisle, PA), 717-258-1122
 - [Drew's Hope](#) (Shippensburg and Greencastle, PA), 717-532-8922
 - [Pathway's Center for Grief and Loss](#) (Lancaster area), 717-391-2413
 - [Olivia's House](#) (York and Gettysburg area), 717-699-1133
 - [Highmark Caring Place](#) (Harrisburg area), 717-302-8411
 - [The Healing Patch](#) (Altoona area), 800-445-6262
 - [Tides](#) (State College area), 814-692-2233
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Leave of Absence Options

Losing a child, especially in such tragic circumstances, requires time for grieving and healing. PSH offers a wide range of leave options, paid and unpaid, to employees so they can take time off to care for themselves. Please note - not every option listed may be available in every situation.

It is best to review policies to determine the best leave option that is available in your given situation.

For leave of absence-related questions or to discuss options, please reach out to a member of the Penn State Health Absence Management Team at PSH_AbsenceMgmt@pennstatehealth.psu.edu, or you may reach out to the HR Solutions Center at 717-531-8440 to speak with a representative.

FMLA – for up to 12 weeks for eligible employees to care for a family member or employee’s own serious health condition. Employees must contact AbsenceOne at 866-296-7860 to begin this process. For more information, please refer to policy [HR40 – FMLA](#).

Personal Leave of Absence – Medical – for employees not eligible for FMLA. Employees must contact AbsenceOne at 866-296-7860 to begin this process. For more information, please refer to policy [HR19-Leaves of Absence](#).

Personal Leave of Absence-Other – for employees not eligible for FMLA who do not have their own serious health condition. For more information, please refer to policy [HR19-Leaves of Absence](#).

Pregnant Workers’ Fairness Act (PWFA) - is a federal law that requires employers to provide reasonable accommodations to qualified workers with known limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions, unless doing so would cause the employer undue hardship. Managers, please reach out to your assigned Employee Relations Specialist for more information and options available.

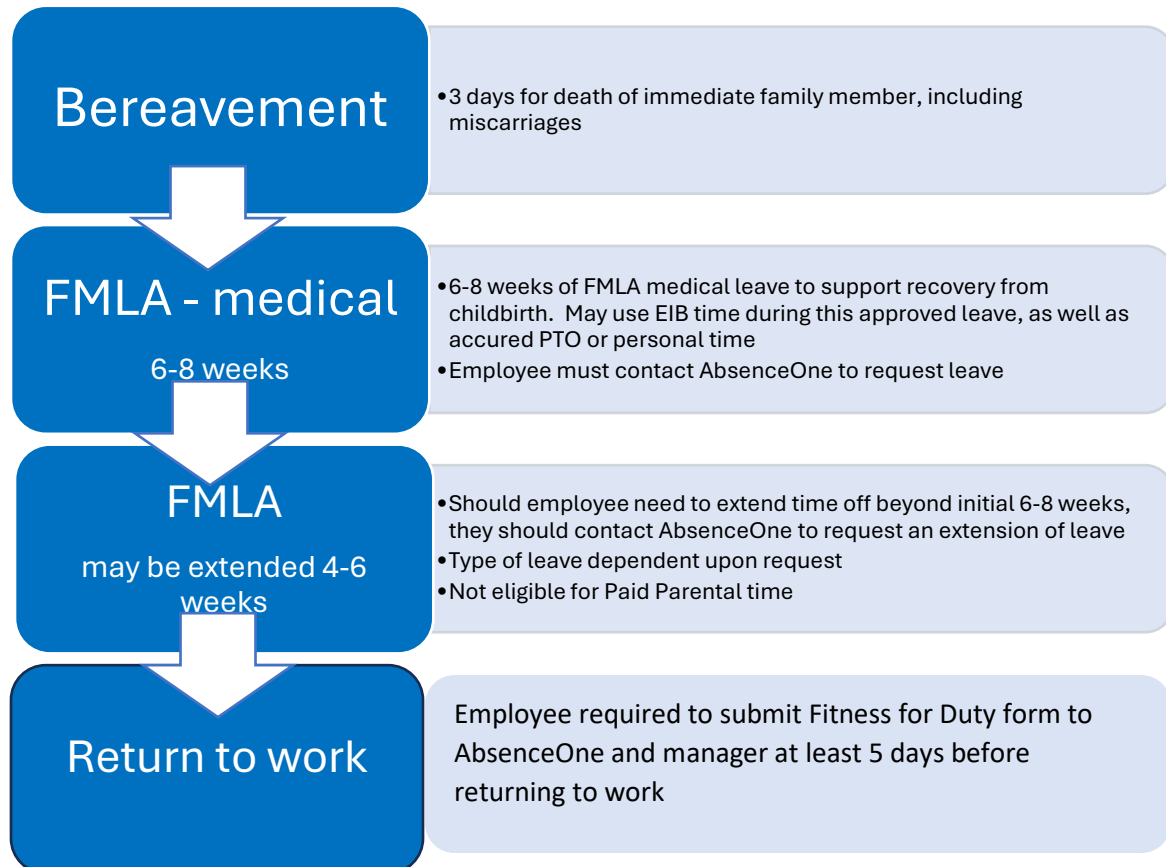
Bereavement Leave – Full-time employees are eligible for up to three (3) days of bereavement time off for a death in the immediate family, including the loss of a pregnancy. For more information, please refer to policy [HR 17 - Bereavement Leave](#).

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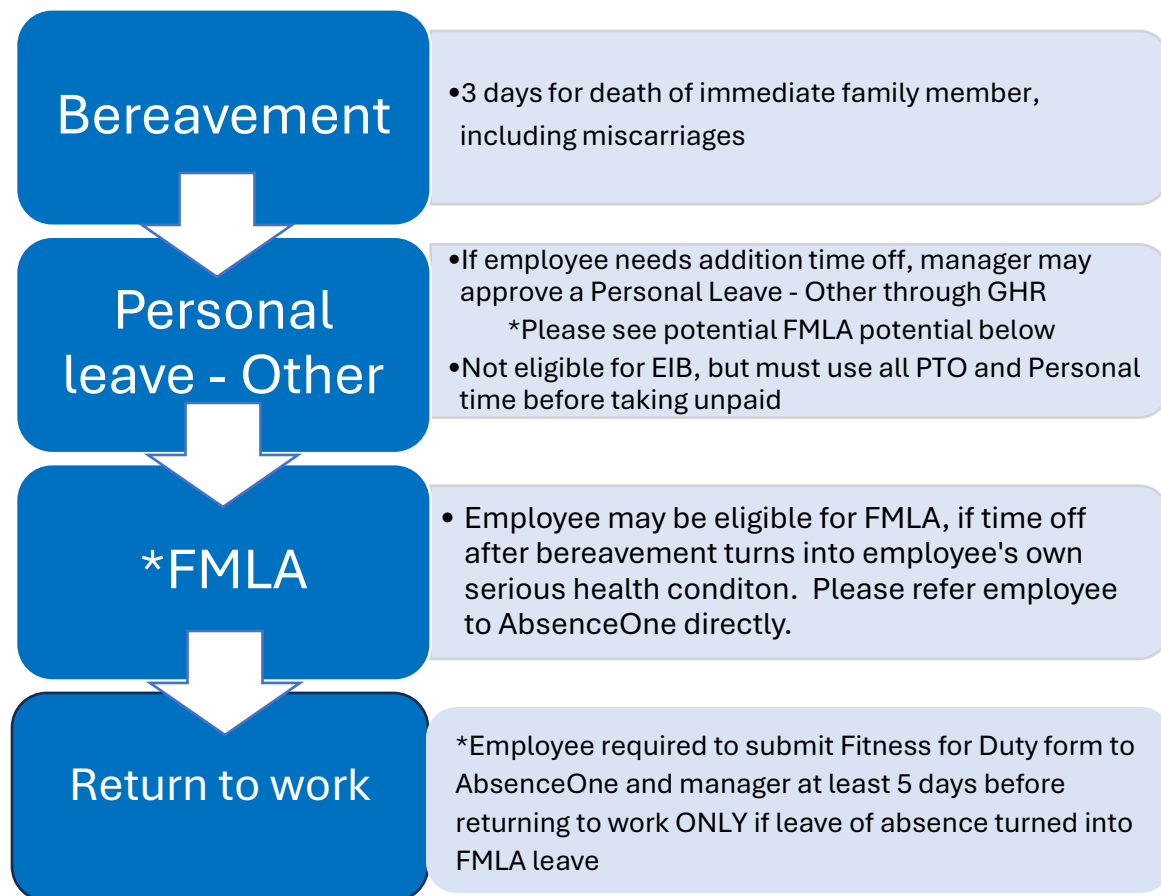
Leave of Absence Scenarios

The scenarios below are intended to help guide you through various leave scenarios. However, every leave is unique to each individual employee.

Scenario #1 – I gave birth and experienced an unfortunate loss of my child during delivery or suffered a loss of my child shortly thereafter delivery:



Scenario #2 –My child passed away at a young age:



Pay Programs/Options during Leave of Absence

Penn State Health offers a wide range of pay programs/options to employees to take time off to care for themselves. Pay programs are listed below; however, not every option may be available in every situation.

It is best to review policies to determine what options are available given your immediate situation. If you need assistance or have questions, please contact the HR Solutions Center at 717-531-8440 for guidance.

Bereavement Leave – Full-time employees are eligible for up to three (3) days of bereavement time off for a death in the immediate family, including the loss of a pregnancy. For more information, please refer to policy [HR 17 - Bereavement Leave](#).

Extended Illness Bank (EIB)- Extended Illness Time Off (EIB) is intended to provide income for an employee when the need arises to be out due to the employee's scheduled or unscheduled illness or injury. Medical documentation is required to support the usage of EIB. For more information, please refer to policy [HR98-Extended Illness Bank](#).

Short term Disability (STD)- This short term disability plan provides financial protection by paying a portion of your income while you are disabled. The amount you receive is based on the amount you earned before your disability began. In some cases, you can receive disability payments even if you work while you are disabled. Benefits start after the 45 day elimination period and exhaustion of EIB bank.

Short term disability is a voluntary benefit, meaning employees must have elected to participate. Not all employees are enrolled in short term disability. Employees must contact AbsenceOne at 866-296-7860 to request disability. If you are unsure if you elected to enroll in this benefit, you may review your benefits through the employee self-service portal in GHR or reach out to the HR Solution Center at 717-531-8440.

Paid Time Off (PTO)- Paid Time Off (PTO) is provided for any scheduled and unscheduled time off. For more information, please refer to policy [HR13 - Paid Time Off](#).

PTO Donation – Eligible employees may donate a portion of their primary paid time off or vacation time ("PTO") to another employee who is suffering a personal or family emergency medical situation that results in the depletion of the employee's time off balances thereby creating a financial hardship for the employee.

This policy is intended to comply, and will be administered consistent, with IRS guidance regarding bona fide employer-sponsored medical leave-sharing arrangements as described in Rev. Rul. 90-29 and related guidance.

Employee Special Assistance Fund (ESAF)- To provide criteria regarding the Penn State Health Employee Special Assistance Fund (ESAF), which has been established to support staff who are experiencing temporary hardship as a result of unforeseen circumstances.

The fund provides limited financial assistance for employees who are unable to meet immediate, essential expenses. Funding from this program is received via trust funds and charitable donations.

For more information to determine if you may be eligible for this program, please refer to policy [HR84 - Employee Special Assistance Fund](#).

Preparing for an Employee's Return to Work

Prior to reinstatement, an employee returning from leave taken because of his/her own serious health condition must submit a Fitness for Duty Certificate to their manager upon receipt and no later than five (5) business days of the return to work date. A copy of this form is included in the leave packet provided by AbsenceOne. A copy of this form may also be found on mySolutions, [Fitness for Duty Form](#).

Immediately upon receipt, the manager must forward the Fitness for Duty Certificate to Human Resources via secure email to the PSH_AbsenceMgmt@pennstatehealth.psu.edu mailbox. Human Resources will place a copy in the employee leave of absence record in GHR for documentation purposes. Failure to provide a Release to Return to Work may delay reinstatement.