

Steps Towards Family Care @ the University of Hamburg

Under the caregiving leave act (Gesetz über die Pflegezeit, PflegeZG) and the act on family caregiving leave (Gesetz über die Familienpflegezeit, FPfZG), University of Hamburg staff may choose from 3 options if they need to care for a close relative.

- I. A **short-term absence from work** is an option when an employee's relative is in a critical situation and needs care. The employee may then be absent **for up to 10 workdays**. In this case, complete the following steps:
 - You should first immediately notify your supervisor and your HR officer that you will be unable to come to work and the expected duration.
 - Submit a doctor's note to the Department of Human Resources confirming that the person is in need of care and requires assistance from the relative. (The employer may not reject the leave of absence.)
 - You may be able to apply for a support allowance from the care insurance fund of the relative receiving care, known as a wage replacement benefit, as you are not entitled to remuneration from your employer during short-term care.
- II. Alternatively, the caregiving leave act (Gesetz über die Pflegezeit, **PflegeZG**), allows you to take care leave with a partial or complete leave of absence from work for **up to 6 months**. During this period of absence you will not receive any remuneration, but will continue to be covered by the German social security scheme. In this case, complete the following steps:
 - Notify your supervisor in writing no later than 10 days before the date you intend to commence care leave, explaining the duration and scope of the absence of leave from your work duties.
 - You must also inform the Department of Human Resources, no later than 10 days before the date you intend to commence care leave. You must provide written confirmation from the care insurance fund (*Pflegekasse*) or the health insurance medical service (*Medizinischer Dienst der Krankenversicherung*). If the person in need of care is privately insured, relevant proof must be provided.
 - You are legally entitled to an interest-free loan to cover your living costs during the period of care leave. You can apply for this at the Bundesamt für Familie und zivilgesellschaftliche Aufgaben (Federal Office for Family and Civic Duties, BAFzA). The loan is paid out in monthly installments and later paid back in installments.
- III. The third option, provided in the **FPfZG**, is to take care leave with a partial leave of absence from work for **up to 24 months**. During this period of leave your remuneration is reduced proportionate to the reduction in your work hours and you continue to be covered by the German social security scheme. In this case, complete the following steps:
 - Notify your supervisor in writing no later than 8 weeks before the date you intend to commence care leave, explaining the duration and scope of the leave of absence as well as your preferred work schedule.
 - Also inform the Human Resources Department no later than 8 weeks before the date you intend to commence care leave. You must provide written confirmation from the care insurance fund (*Pflegekasse*) or the health insurance medical service (*Medizinischer Dienst der Krankenversicherung*). If the person in need of care is privately insured, relevant proof must be provided. The family care leave agreement forms to be completed can be found [here](https://www.uni-hamburg.de/en/familienbuero/pflege/familienpflegezeit.html): <https://www.uni-hamburg.de/en/familienbuero/pflege/familienpflegezeit.html>
 - You are legally entitled to an interest-free loan to cover your living costs during the care leave period. You can apply for this at the Bundesamt für Familie und zivilgesellschaftliche Aufgaben (Federal Office for Family and Civic Duties, BAFzA). The loan is paid out in monthly installments and later paid back in installments.

Combining work and family care—new statutory provisions since 2015

Act for better reconciliation of family, care and work (Gesetz zur besseren Vereinbarkeit von Familie, Pflege und Beruf) — legal entitlements as per the caregiving leave act (Gesetz über die Pflegezeit, PflegeZG) and the act on family caregiving leave (Gesetz über die Familienpflegezeit, FPfZG)

What should I do if a relative is in a critical situation and needs care?	What should I do if I would like to reduce working hours or stop work completely for a longer period of time?	What should I do if 6 months is not sufficient?
 <p>Short-term inability to work</p> <p>LEAVE OF ABSENCE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • up to 10 workdays of short-term and complete leave of absence in a critical situation to care for a relative or to organize a new care situation • entitlement to a care allowance (earnings compensation benefit) • Job Protection 	 <p>Medium-term care</p> <p>CARE LEAVE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • up to 6 months of partial or complete leave of absence for the care of a close relative (at home) • up to 3 months for tending a close relative in the last phase of life • Entitlement to Interest-free loan • Job protection 	 <p>Long-term care</p> <p>FAMILY-CARE LEAVE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • up to 24 months of partial leave of absence for the care of a close relative at home • minimum working hours: 15 hours/week • entitlement to return to regular working hours • entitlement to an interest-free loan • Job Protection
Without notice	Notice period of 10 days	Notice period of 8 weeks
Applies to companies of all sizes	Provision for small companies: does not apply to companies with 15 or fewer employees	Provision for small companies: does not apply to companies with 25 or fewer employees
What's new?		
<p>Tighter integration of the PflegeZG with the FPfZG: combination of the 2 is possible up to a total duration of 24 months.</p>		
<p>Legal entitlement to a reduction in your working hours.</p>		
<p>Extension of the term "close relative" to include step-parents, sisters-/brothers-in-law, and life partners.</p>		
<p>Care allowance for a max. of 10 days your wages are paid to the amount of 70% of your gross salary or 90% of your net salary. Applications must be submitted to the care insurance fund (<i>Pflegekasse</i>) of the person receiving care.</p>		
<p>Interest-free loan for care leave and family care leave that covers up to half of the net salary you do not receive. Applications are submitted directly to the Bundesamt für Familie und zivilgesellschaftliche Aufgaben (Federal Office for Family and Civic Duties).</p>		
<p>Job protection valid from the time you give notice until the end of your leave of absence.</p>		
<p>Source of illustration: Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ): Brochure entitled <i>Bessere Vereinbarkeit von Familie, Pflege und work. Neue gesetzliche Regelungen seit 1. Januar 2015</i> (Better Reconciliation of Family, Care and Work. New legal regulations in force since 1 January 2015), 2014, page 11</p>		