MEMORANDUM

Date: August 13, 2021

From: Ron Hendrick, Provost and Senior Vice President
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              Genevieve Durham DeCesaro, Interim Dean, J.T. & Margaret Talkington College of Visual &
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To: TTU Faculty

Subject: Caregiver Support Resources Online Application Portal

Texas Tech University has adopted a Caregiver Support Resources program. This program aims to provide support to Texas Tech University faculty members who are primary caregivers to other individuals.

The following pages, also included in a memo sent to all faculty on April 15, 2021, provide more information about the Caregiver Support Resources program, including background information, existing Operating Policies supporting primary caregivers, procedures specific to faculty members who want to request status as primary caregivers, and information on available space resources for primary caregivers in the University Library. Please note that this program applies to faculty members only; information about staff caregiver resources can be found on the Human Resources website. Prior to applying for status as primary caregivers, faculty members are encouraged to discuss any questions with their department chairs, school directors, or area heads.

The online portal through which faculty members may submit applications for primary caregiver status is now live and accessible via the Caregiver Support Resources online application. The online application can also be found on the home page of the Human Resources website by clicking on the EMPLOYEE BENEFITS item in the top navigation menu, then selecting EMPLOYEE LEAVE. The Faculty Caregiver Resources link will be available in the EMPLOYEE LEAVE menu. Faculty applicants should route the online application to their department chair or school director.

The launch of the Caregiver Support Resources program affirms Texas Tech's commitment to our faculty and responds to the challenges and concerns faced by faculty members who serve as primary caregivers.

1. **Overview**
Texas Tech University is strongly committed to the success and well-being of its faculty who serve as a primary caregiver for another individual. A primary caregiver is anyone who provides unpaid care to a spouse, parent, child, other relative, or partner who has a chronic illness or disability and/or anyone who is solely or jointly responsible for providing care to a child or other relative under the age of 13[1].

   The Caregiver Support Resources Policy adds to the resources described in Operating Policies 32.11, 32.35, 40.04, 70.06, 70.32, and 70.44 and aligns with Texas Tech University's existing efforts toward achieving equity and creating an inclusive workplace.

2. **General Provisions**
   a. Working with Human Resources, the Office of the Provost will maintain and distribute information about caregiver support resources on a regular basis.
   b. All academic units will identify an employee or employees (e.g., IT staff member) who will facilitate virtual instruction by coordinating required equipment set up for courses taught via online or hybrid modality. This individual will be responsible for equipment set up in teaching spaces housed in the academic unit and will not be responsible for equipment set up in other buildings or Raider Rooms.
   c. The University Libraries will coordinate a reservation system for dedicated caregiver office spaces in the Library for the purpose of providing on-campus work options to caregivers whose current offices are not private or enclosable. These office spaces will be available by reservation (see attachment A) and will be scheduled in a way that allows for sufficient cleaning between reservations. Caregivers may bring the individuals in their care with them to caregiver offices provided that neither the caregiver nor the individuals in their care are sick.

3. **Eligibility**
Full-time faculty (all professorial and lecturer titles) are eligible to apply for status as a primary caregiver; this status is required for individuals to be eligible for caregiver support resources. While part-time faculty members and staff members with instructional appointments are not eligible for the resources described below, academic administrators should work with individuals in those groups to address and resolve challenges related to caregiving and the instructional appointment. More detailed information specific to full-time faculty caregiver support resources follows:

   Faculty members granted primary caregiver status:
   Faculty members who are primary caregivers may not have access to or their situations may not qualify for Sick Leave, Family Medical Leave (FML), or Modified Instructional Duties (MID). Even caregivers who qualify for these substantial sources of support may face challenges that may not be addressed by or covered under these policies. For example, a faculty member who wishes to continue working rather than taking time off may not find FML useful for their purposes. For these reasons, faculty members with primary caregiver status may apply for any or all of the following:

   a. **Prioritized teaching schedules**: department chairs and school directors will make every effort to accommodate faculty caregivers' teaching schedule requests. Chairs and directors will inform faculty caregivers when their requests cannot be met and will work with those caregivers to identify a solution that serves the needs of the caregiver and the unit. Examples of solutions follow here:
      i. Faculty caregivers whose requests cannot be accommodated will be given options of scheduling their F2F sections or synchronous online sections at off-peak times;

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[1] See https://family.findlaw.com/parental-rights-and-liability/when-can-you-leave-a-child-home-alone-.html for information on statutory minimum age requirements and recommendations concerning leaving children unsupervised.

ii. Faculty caregivers whose requests cannot be accommodated may be permitted to teach their assigned courses via hybrid or online synchronous or asynchronous modalities provided that doing so does not negatively impact students or the unit;

iii. Faculty caregivers whose requests cannot be accommodated may be asked to submit a Modified Instructional Duties application.

b. **Service reduction**: faculty caregivers may request to reduce, though not eliminate, service assignments temporarily. Such reduction will be noted as a consideration of their caregiver status on any evaluations. Reduced service loads noted as being related to their caregiver status will not result in repercussions to merit/performance, tenure and/or promotion evaluation. Possible service reduction requests could include:

i. Requesting to step down as chair of a committee but stay on as a member;

ii. Requesting to temporarily vacate membership on a committee with the specific intent to rejoin the committee as soon as possible;

iii. Requesting to modify assigned service so that assignments do not include committee or group work, thus enabling the faculty caregiver to complete the work according to her/his needed schedule.

c. **Modified participation**: faculty caregivers may be excused from departmental and other business/committee meetings (excluding tenure and promotion committee meetings) if those meetings conflict with caregiving responsibilities and provided that the faculty member: 1) has communicated those conflicts to the department chair or school director as close to the start of the academic term as possible (excluding extenuating or unanticipated circumstances), and; 2) rearranging the meeting time is not possible. Faculty caregivers who are excused from meetings forfeit their right to vote on matters discussed at those meetings unless prior arrangements have been made with the appropriate committee or unit leadership.

d. **Modified evaluation**: faculty caregivers may work with their department chairs or school directors to identify which, if any, components of their performance were negatively affected by caregiving burdens. Such information will be documented by the faculty member on the annual faculty evaluation. In her/his evaluation of the faculty member, the chair or director will respond to any documentation of performance-affecting caregiving burdens.

A faculty caregiver will have the right to request any of the supports listed above without retaliation.

4. **Application Submission and Review**
To apply for status as a primary caregiver and thus be eligible to request caregiver support resources, a faculty member must apply for Primary Caregiver Status and request resources via the Caregiver Support Resources online application. The online application can be found on the home page of the Human Resources website; please click on the EMPLOYEE BENEFITS item in the top navigation menu, then select EMPLOYEE LEAVE. The Faculty Caregiver Resources link will be available under the EMPLOYEE LEAVE menu. Faculty applicants should submit the form to their department chair or school director.

The chair or director will issue a decision on the application and communicate that decision to the faculty member and the academic dean. In cases where the faculty member disagrees with the chair's or director's decision and a resolution cannot be reached, the case will be reviewed by the academic dean. The dean will review the decision and, if the dean approves the decision, will submit the form to the PSVP. If the dean disagrees with the initial decision, the dean will meet with the chair or director to review the decision and resolve the disagreement. If a resolution cannot be reached, the dean will contact the PSVP and the PSVP will make the final decision on the faculty member's request.

Caregiver Study Use Policy

PURPOSE: This policy is to provide individual study carrels to Texas Tech University Faculty who have Primary Caregiver status and who are in need of temporary, enclosed office space.

POLICY

These are the parameters that govern the use of the group study rooms for caregivers:

1. Room usage is intended to be of a temporary nature and not a permanent work relocation.
2. Rooms will only be made available for caregiver use when the library is open.
3. Faculty members will not be allowed to check out a room more than three (3) times a week without written approval from their immediate supervisor and the Head of Access Services in the Library.
4. The Caregiver will be allowed to check out any of the west group study rooms for up to four hours in a workday and be allowed one renewal for that workday.
    a. West Group Study Rooms:
        i. Stacks 1: 1W1, 1W2, 1W3, 1W4, 1W5, 1W6
        ii. Stacks 2: 2W1, 2W2, 2W3, 2W4, 2W5, 2W6
        iii. Stacks 3: 3W1, 3W2, 3W3, 3W4, 3W5, 3W6
5. If the Caregiver is working in the room with an individual under their care, the Caregiver must be present at all times.
6. The Caregiver is responsible for any and all incidents that happen in the room.
7. The Caregiver and individual needing supervision will follow the guidelines put in place by Access Services for Semester Study Carrels:
    a. Personal Property:
        i. The Library does not accept responsibility for belongings and/or equipment left in the study room.
        ii. Personal computers, calculators, books, or any other items of value should not be left unattended in the study room.
        iii. Any personal items left in the study room past the time of expiration will be retained in the Access Services Department for two weeks. Any item(s) not claimed within that time will be taken to the TTU Police Department.
        iv. All Library materials used in the study room MUST be checked out at the service desk.
    b. Keys:
        i. Assigned study rooms have a key lock. Assigned keys must be returned to the Access Services Department at the end of the loan period.
        ii. A $60 fee will be charged to the caregiver for each lost key.
    c. Safety:
        i. No electrical appliances of any kind (printers, microwaves, coffee makers, crockpots, heaters, etc.)
        ii. No tobacco products or e-cigarettes of any kind (TTU OP 60.15)
        iii. Do not cover the glass in the door at any time
        iv. Do not place objects (i.e. wood boards, metal planks) above or below the carrel door
        v. Use headphones when listening to audio devices