
Council Policy

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| Policy Name | Leave Policy Applications for Relief from Membership Requirements Due to Medical, Compassionate, or Family Leave or Other Circumstances. |
| Issue Date | March 18, 2003 |
| Revision Dates | July 12, 2022 May 12, 2022 January 27, 2022 September 20, 2018 January 25, 2018 March 8, 2012 February 13, 2025 |

Council has adopted a policy that the Executive Director may grant a leave of absence from membership requirements at a reduced fee for:

- medical reasons
- maternity or parental leave
- compassionate or family leave,
- extended unemployment, or
- return to school

The maximum leave of absence that will be granted will be one year, or the maximum federal entitlement for parental leave. Relief under this policy may be granted a maximum of three times within a ten-year period.

A leave of absence is available to:

1. Architects and Licensed Technologists who are unable to complete Continuing Education requirements, and at the same time are unable to practise architecture (as set out in the terms, conditions and limitations of their licence, as applicable) or to work in a related field in Ontario during the leave period;
2. Architects and Licensed Technologists responsible for personal supervision and direction of the practice who are unable to complete Continuing Education requirements, and at the same time are unable to practise architecture during the leave period;
3. Intern Architects who are unable to complete the requirements of the Internship in Architecture Program, and at the same time are unable to work in architecture or a related field;
4. Non-Practising Architects who are unable to complete Continuing Education requirements and at the same time who are unable to work;

5. Intern Technologists who are unable to complete the requirements of the OAA Technology Program and at the same time are unable to work in an architecturally related field.

The policy requires that all individuals making a request for a leave of absence have fulfilled and/or met the following criteria:

- a. The reason for the leave of absence, which may include medical, parental, compassionate or family reasons, extended unemployment or return to school;
- b. Supporting documentation that may include a doctor's letter, application for family leave, Workers' Compensation or Employment Insurance benefits;
- c. Confirmation of the start date of the leave period;
- d. Confirmation of the estimated length of time that the member will be unable to meet the requirements of membership and/or practise, where possible;
- e. Where the Architect, Non-Practising Architect, or Licensed Technologist is not working in architecture or a related field during a parental leave period, that leave period will not extend beyond the maximum federal entitlement. The individual must confirm the length of the parental leave period and provide documentation to support that time-period; and
- f. Signing a declaration that the applicant will not be employed in architecture or a related field during the leave period.

Certain OAA classes of persons must also meet further requirements, which include the following:

Architect or Licensed Technologist Responsible for Personally Supervising and Directing the Practice:

- a. Assign another Architect or Licensed Technologist as a locum to personally supervise and direct the practice during the leave period when the Architect responsible for the personal supervision and direction of the practice is incapacitated or unable to practice. The locum Architect/Licensed Technologist must not be an Architect/Licensed Technologist who is also responsible for personally supervising and directing another practice.
- b. Notify the Registrar of the name of the locum Architect/Licensed Technologist at the time that the leave of absence is requested.

Intern Architect must:

- a. Comply with the applicable architectural experience requirements of the *Internship in Architecture Program (IAP)*.

Note that although Intern Architects do pay full member fees after a five-year period, time spent on leave does not contribute to the five-year period. As such, accounting for the five-year period pauses at the time that leave begins and starts again when the leave period ends.

Intern Technologist must:

- a. Comply with the applicable architectural experience requirements of the *OAA Technology Program*.

The terms of the fee payable for the leave period are as follows:



1. To be considered for a leave of absence and reduced fee, individuals must be in good standing and must not owe any monies to the Association.
2. A reduced annual leave fee, equivalent to the annual fee charged to Retired Members, will apply to the one-year leave period to cover administration costs.
3. Any leave period that starts within the first two months of the calendar year would be invoiced for the full annual reduced fee for that year.
4. For a leave period that starts part of the way through the calendar year, where the full annual fee for the year has already been paid, the fees would be calculated to be consistent with the existing Council Refund Policy where the leave period starts as follows:
 - January 1 until March 31 – Full membership fee refunded minus the annual leave fee
 - April 1 until September 30 – ½ of the membership fee minus the annual leave fee
 - October 1 until December 31 – no refund but the annual fee for the next calendar year would be based on the full one-year annual leave period fee.

Refunds will be calculated based on when the application is made for leave and granted. Refunds will not be granted for leave retroactively and are based on the latter of the application or leave date.

5. Where the leave period is less than one year, or the one-year leave period ends at some point during the calendar year, the full annual fee for the remainder of the year would be calculated proportionately as outlined below:
 - January 1 until March 31 – Full membership fee will be invoiced at the beginning of the year
 - April 1 until September 30 – ½ of the membership fee
 - October 1 until December 31 – ¼ of the membership fee

Where a leave of absence is granted, the following will be communicated to the individual in writing:

1. The individual may re-apply to extend the leave of absence beyond the initial period on an annual basis for up to one year at a time, with appropriate supporting documentation. The maximum number of requests regardless of length are three (3) times in a 10-year period.
2. For an Architect, Non-Practising Architect, or Licensed Technologist who chooses to surrender their licence or retires during their leave period, the policy, *Continuing Education Requirements for New Members, Re-application, Re-instated Members and Members Under Suspension*, applies.
3. For an Architect or Licensed Technologist who extends the leave of absence beyond three years the same currency requirements on re-application or re-instatement to full member status must be met as an Architect who resigns their licence or who retires. It is the responsibility of the member to understand and monitor the three-year currency requirement, particularly those availing themselves of the maximum period available for parental leave.
4. For an Intern Architect who allows their status to lapse during the leave period, the policy for *Experience Submission Requirements and Retroactive Entry Charges* for any experience recorded during that period applies on re-appointment.
5. For an Architect, Non-Practising Architect, or Licensed Technologist who has applied for parental leave or other non-



medical leave, the individual should be encouraged to comply with Continuing Education requirements during the leave period.

6. Architects or Licensed Technologists who are responsible for personally supervising and directing a practice will be subject to the Complaints and Discipline process if a violation of the terms of the leave occurs.

Where the individual has been able to complete at least 50% of the requirements of the current Continuing Education cycle, and substantiates incapacity for the rest of the cycle, the cycle is deemed complete.

Where the individual returns in the last six months of the two-year cycle, there are no requirements to complete the cycle.

Requirements for the subsequent Continuing Education cycle will have to be fully satisfied.

Questions regarding this Policy should be directed to OAA Executive Assistant, Executive Services, Tina Carfa at tinac@oaa.on.ca

