

# OFFICE OF POSTDOCTORAL AFFAIRS

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**More Information:** <https://postdoc.case.edu>

The Office of Postdoctoral Affairs, located within the School of Graduate Studies, is responsible for the appointment of postdoctoral scholars and fellows, as well as the development, implementation and monitoring of all university policies applicable to these positions. Additional information is available on the Postdoctoral Affairs website.

## Services

The following are some of the services offered by the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs:

- Employment-related activities including letters of appointment
- Extension and termination of appointments for postdoctoral scholars and fellows
- Orientation
- Administration of the Postdoctoral Benefits Program
- Coordination of all grievance procedures

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## Definition of Postdoctoral Scholar

A postdoctoral scholar is defined as a special class of employee who:

- holds a PhD or equivalent
- works on scholarly projects funded by grants obtained by others at the University or is funded by department funds
- is engaged in a mentored training relationship with a member of the University faculty, and
- actively pursues fellowship/grant funding for their own research project in order to develop their future professional career.\*\*
- receives a salary directly from the institution (usually derived from the supervisor's grant or other funds)

\*\*If such funding is obtained, the postdoctoral scholar becomes a postdoctoral fellow.

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## Definition of Postdoctoral Fellow

A postdoctoral fellow is defined as a trainee (not an employee) who:

- holds a PhD or equivalent
- works on scholarly projects funded by training grants, fellowships, or grants they have applied for and obtained from outside sources
- is engaged in a mentored training relationship with a member of the University faculty, and
- actively pursues fellowship/grant funding for their own research project in order to develop their future professional career.
- receives a stipend from independent funding by a fellowship of some type

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## Criteria for Postdoctoral Scholars and Fellows

- The postdoctoral scholar/fellow was recently (normally within 5 years) awarded a PhD or equivalent degree in an appropriate field.
- The appointment is temporary and postdoctoral scholars/fellows are expected to complete their mentored training within 5 years.
- The time devoted to this appointment as well as the specific scholarly training activities will be decided in collaboration with the mentor and committed in writing in the form of a training plan. All postdoctoral scholars/fellows will be encouraged to pursue additional training and other opportunities in the respective areas up to 25% of their time.
- The appointee will train under the supervision of a senior scholar (faculty mentor).

## Salary/Stipend Guidelines

CWRU uses the current year NIH NRSA scale as the minimum salary/stipend guidelines for all Postdoctoral Scholar and Postdoctoral Fellow positions. These guidelines apply regardless of funding source.

## Postdoctoral Benefits Program

Postdoctoral scholars/fellows are eligible to participate in the Postdoctoral Benefits Program but are excluded from participating in all other CWRU benefits including employee retirement and benefit plans. The postdoctoral benefits program offers medical, dental, vision, and life insurance plans, in addition to an Employee Assistance Program.

## Postdoctoral Insurance Coverage Policy

In order to promote a supportive environment for postdoctoral research excellence, Case Western Reserve University (CWRU) is committed to ensuring our postdoctoral scholars and fellows receive fully funded, comprehensive, and quality healthcare coverage for themselves and their family members. Postdoctoral Scholars and Fellows appointed through the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs can enroll themselves and their dependents in the Postdoctoral Benefits Program, consisting of medical, dental, vision, and life insurance. It is the responsibility of the faculty mentor, department, and/or school/college to determine the funding source(s) to pay for one-hundred percent (100%) of the benefits program monthly premiums for postdocs and their dependents. Additional information is available on the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs' Policies and Procedures website

## Postgraduate Audit Program

A Postgraduate Audit Program allows registration for coursework and is available to individuals who hold a doctoral degree such as MD, DNP, DDS, or PhD and are in training positions (e.g., fellows, scholars, etc.) in research or clinical programs at Case Western Reserve University. Auditors pay only 10% of regular graduate tuition, plus the cost of books and materials. Additional information is available on the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs website.

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## Postdoc Parental Leave Policy, including Adoption and Foster Care Leave

Postdoc parents may receive Paid Parental Leave for up to a maximum of eight (8) weeks for the birth, adoption or foster care placement of a child.

All postdoc parents may apply for such leave by notifying the institution (Office of Postdoctoral Affairs) and their supervisor in advance. Eligible postdocs may receive up to twelve (12) weeks FMLA leave for parenting leave, depending on the amount of their available FMLA leave. Eligible postdocs with remaining FMLA leave time may combine the eight (8) weeks Paid Parental Leave with other available paid time off (i.e., accrued vacation time, paid sick time, if applicable, accrued vacation time), to achieve the maximum amount of paid time during FMLA parenting leave.

See the full Parental Leave Policy on the Postdoctoral Affairs website.

## Child Care Programs

Case Western Reserve University supports our working parents with several child care-related benefits and resources. Postdocs are eligible to receive a Child Care Subsidy to support the cost of child care for eligible dependents. The university has also established a fund to supplement a portion of the additional costs of Child Care During Travel. These resources can support care for a child who travels to the event or for the child at home while the adult travels. Additionally, CWRU has partnered with local child care facilities to offer discounted rates.

support mentoring of postdoctoral fellows and scholars by providing regular and timely feedback that will enhance their success at CWRU including their career goals and professional development, and ii) to evaluate training progress with the ultimate goal of transitioning to their next career position. To achieve these goals, the review should evaluate the previous year's progress, detail the trainee's strengths and areas that need improvement, and make recommendations for future action to promote progress towards achieving career goals.

See the full Annual Review Policy on the Postdoctoral Affairs website.

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## Unsatisfactory Performance and Corrective Action

In the event of unsatisfactory performance, postdoctoral trainees will have reasonable opportunity to improve their performance after being notified that their performance is not meeting the standards that have been established by the mentor and the School of Graduate Studies and Office of Postdoctoral Affairs. Corrective action is intended to provide the postdoctoral trainee an objective and consistent process for professional development while offering the mentor an unbiased and expeditious method for communicating expectations and performance standards.

See the full Unsatisfactory Performance and Corrective Action Policy on the Postdoctoral Affairs website.

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## Time Away from CWRU - Postdoc Sick and Vacation Time Policy

See the full Time Away from CWRU - Postdoc Sick and Vacation Time Policy on the Postdoctoral Affairs website.

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## Part-Time Postdoc Benefits and Leave Policies

See the full Part-Time Postdoc Benefits and Leave Policy on the Postdoctoral Affairs website.

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## Annual Review and Evaluation of Progress

In order to achieve excellence in postdoctoral training and mentoring within the School of Graduate Studies at Case Western Reserve University, an annual review of progress is required for every postdoctoral fellow and postdoctoral scholar. This review has two purposes: i) to