

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: PREGNANT AND PARENTING STUDENTS

MUSC recognizes the unique challenges of pregnancy and parenting and is committed to supporting students who have children while completing their degrees.

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## **WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I BECOME PREGNANT?**

If you become pregnant or anticipate becoming a parent while you are a student at MUSC, we recommend contacting the Office of Equity ([titleix@muscd.edu](mailto:titleix@muscd.edu) or [ada-support@muscd.edu](mailto:ada-support@muscd.edu)). Our office will work with you and your College to develop a detailed plan to help accommodate the demands of having a baby while continuing to make progress toward completing your degree. Because we are a medical university, you are also encouraged to consult with your physician regarding prevention of potentially harmful exposures in the clinical or lab setting.

## **WILL MUSC EXCUSE MY ABSENCE DUE TO PREGNANCY?**

Yes, MUSC will excuse your absence because of pregnancy or other related conditions for as long as is medically necessary. Students may not be penalized for their absence. Upon returning to MUSC, you will be reinstated to the status you held before your absence.

## **AM I ALLOWED TO MAKE UP ANY MISSED WORK?**

Yes, your College must provide you with the opportunity to make up any missed work while you were out. That being said, we encourage good faith communication by all parties. If you know that you will be missing classes, assignments, tests, etc., be proactive in discussing your plans to make up missed work with your professors.

## **CAN I ADD MY CHILD TO MY STUDENT HEALTH INSURANCE?**

Yes, any time your family status changes, such as having a baby or adopting a child, you can add dependents to your Student Health Insurance. You should contact Academic Health Plans (AHP) directly within 31 days of your child's birth or formal adoption at 855-850-4302. Your child's coverage will be effective from the date of birth or adoption, and premiums will be prorated by AHP. For more information regarding Student Health Insurance, visit the [Student Health Insurance website](#).

## **ARE THERE ANY CLASSES FOR PREGNANT OR PARENTING STUDENTS?**

MUSC Health offers several [classes for new parents](#), including:

- basic newborn care class (every third Monday -\$10)
- breastfeeding class (available on various dates -\$10)
- childbirth education class (4-week series or an 8-hour Saturday class -\$30)
- infant CPR class (available on various dates -\$10)

For more information and to reserve your seat, call 843- 792-5300.

## WHAT ELSE DOES MUSC OFFER?

Students who have a low risk pregnancy may join a Centering Pregnancy Group. The group meets 10 times for 2-hour sessions, beginning in your 12th week of pregnancy. For more information, please visit [MUSC Women's Health page on Centering Pregnancy Groups](#).

## WHERE CAN I GO TO BREASTFEED OR EXPRESS MILK?

MUSC provides private spaces for expressing breast milk. Some rooms are outfitted with a hospital-grade, multi-user Medela Symphony breast pump. Some rooms require badge access. Please contact the Department of Public Safety ([muhcard-access@musc.edu](mailto:muhcard-access@musc.edu)) to request access to your selected room. The following lactation rooms are available for use by students and employees:

- 135 Cannon Street: CS201A
- Ashley River Tower: AR2101C, AR2217F, AR4452A1, Mamava pod (1st floor lobby)
- Basic Science Building: BS1B3A
- Colbert Library: EL205C
- Dental Clinic Building: DC614B
- Hollings Cancer Center: H0353
- Rutledge Tower: RT444B
- University Hospital: H170
- Hospital Extension: Mamava pod (1st floor lobby across from gift shop)
- Shawn Jenkins Children's Hospital: 1000C, 2071, 3150, 3071, 4053, 5017, 5070, 8035, 9035, 10029

## WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFO ABOUT CHILD CARE?

**Daycare:** [The Division of Early Care and Education](#) provides a list of all registered daycare centers in South Carolina. The Division assigns a grade to the daycare centers from A+ to C based on five categories—program administration and structure, staff education and professional development, child well-being, family and community partnership, and intentional teaching practices. The Division of Early Care and Education also offers financial assistance for childcare. Learn more [here](#).

**Babysitters and Nannies:** We are aware of three companies that can connect you with care providers: Care.com, Sittercity, and Urban Sitter. All three offer slightly different benefits and membership options (e.g., the option to do a background check on a prospective hire). There are also numerous Facebook groups for new parents to find nannies and babysitters, meet other parents for nanny-share arrangements, and ask for advice.

**Au Pairs:** The [Au Pair program](#) allows families to host individuals on a J-1 (exchange visitor) visa in exchange for live-in childcare. Au pairs are proficient in spoken English, have graduated from a secondary school or equivalent, are between 18- and 26-years old, are personally interviewed by an organizational representative, and have successfully completed a background investigation. The cost of hosting an au pair, which includes agency fees and a weekly stipend, can be competitive when compared to hiring a nanny or using daycare.

**Preschool:** MUSC offers discounts at several preschools. Please check [Abenity.com](#) for the most current information about discounts.