

# *Pregnant & Parenting*

## HANDBOOK

April 2025



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

MISSION STATEMENT AND GOALS.....	5
LEGISLATION.....	7
POLICIES.....	10
DEFINITIONS.....	14
PROCEDURES.....	16
ACADEMIC ADJUSTMENTS.....	19

# MISSION STATEMENT AND GOALS

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## Parenting Services Mission Statement

The mission of Trinity Valley Community College Pregnant and Parenting Services is to offer meaningful support to pregnant and parenting students by addressing their unique challenges, therefore allowing them the greatest opportunity to complete their degree program in a timely manner and ultimately provide for themselves and their children.

Pregnant and Parenting Services offers resources and academic support to students as they pursue academic goals while pregnant and/or parenting, and act as a resource for faculty and staff to assist with their interactions with students. When this mission is fulfilled, the quality of students' experience at Trinity Valley Community College is enhanced, and they are more likely to achieve academic and personal success.

Goals derived from Pregnant and Parenting Services' mission statement and legislation:

1. Enhance students' academic and personal functioning as they juggle school and home life by offering meaningful support, advocacy, individualized success strategies, reasonable academic adjustments, and referrals to outside resources.
2. Foster peer-to-peer collaboration and community within this population so that they know they are not alone.
3. Make an ongoing effort to monitor and evaluate the success of activities and services provided to students to determine effectiveness and make any needed changes.

# LEGISLATION

# PREGNANT AND PARENTING SERVICES LEGISLATION

## Pregnancy and Parenting Laws

1. [House Bill 1361](#) states that each institution of higher education shall designate at least one employee of the institution to act as a liaison officer for current or incoming students at the institution who are the parent or guardian of a child younger than 18 years of age. The liaison officer shall provide the student information regarding support services and other resources available at the institution. The liaison officer shall assist in coordinating college readiness and student success efforts relating to those students.
  - a. TVCC's Parenting Services Liaison is Natalie Palacios  
(Phone: [903-675-6310](tel:903-675-6310); Email: [parenting@tvcc.edu](mailto:parenting@tvcc.edu))
2. [Senate Bill 412](#) states that an institution of higher education may not require a pregnant or parenting student, solely because of the student's status or due to issues related to the student's pregnancy or parenting to take leave of absence or withdraw, limit studies, participate in an alternative program, change their major or degree program, or refrain from joining/stop participating in any course, activity, or program at the institution. An institution of higher education shall provide reasonable accommodations to a pregnant student such as those for a temporary medical condition and those related to protecting the health and safety of the pregnant student or unborn child. The institution shall excuse the student's absence and allow the student to make up missed assignments for reasons related to pregnancy, childbirth, or any resulting medical status or condition; allow the student additional time to complete assignments; and provide the student access to instructional materials and recordings of lectures that are made available to any other student with an excused absence. The institution shall allow a pregnant or parenting student to take a leave of absence and, if the student is in good academic standing at the time they take the leave of absence, shall allow the student to return to the program and remain in good academic standing without being required to reapply for admission.
3. [Title IX](#) prohibits discrimination, including harassment or retaliation, against any student based on race, color, religion, sex/gender, national origin, disability, age, or any other basis prohibited by law is strictly prohibited. Sex-based harassment is a form of sex discrimination based on sex and includes harassment based on pregnancy or related conditions.

Trinity Valley Community College does not discriminate based on sex and prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates, as required by Title IX and its regulations, including in admission and employment.

Inquiries about Title IX may be referred to the College's Title IX Coordinator, the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, or both. The College's Title IX Coordinator is:

***Janene Dotts, Title IX Coordinator***

Administration Building Room 215

[Janene.dotts@tvcc.edu](mailto:Janene.dotts@tvcc.edu)

[903-675-6215](tel:903-675-6215)



# POLICIES

# POLICIES FOR TVCC PREGNANT AND PARENTING SERVICES

## Pregnant and Parenting Services Information

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this Operating Policy establishes procedures and defines responsibility for the administration of services available to pregnant and parenting students through Pregnant and Parenting Services, and the provision of specific academic adjustments for pregnant and/or parenting by TVCC staff and faculty.

## Policy Statements

1. This policy reflects an interactive process between the student and Trinity Valley Community College used to establish reasonable adjustments and referrals. The process includes:
  - a. The specific, individual barriers experienced by the student will be discussed in the intake appointment.
  - b. Identification of on-campus and off-campus resources (such as a pregnancy center or counseling services).
  - c. An initial framework for reasonable adjustments.
2. Trinity Valley Community College will comply with House Bill 1361, Senate Bill 412, Senate Bill 459.
3. All college departments are responsible for maintaining a close relationship with the Pregnant and Parenting Services liaison regarding requests from pregnant and/or parenting students and any special services offered to them.
4. The policy statement provided below shall be used in college publications:
  - a. TVCC prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates. Individuals may report concerns or questions to the Title IX Coordinator. The notice of nondiscrimination is located at [tvcc.edu/Human- Resources/category.aspx?z=1102](http://tvcc.edu/Human-Resources/category.aspx?z=1102)

5. The mission of Pregnant and Parenting Services is to ensure that pregnant and/or parenting students can participate in all college programs and activities. Parenting Services provides students the opportunity to reach their full potential by:
  - a. Coordinating academic adjustments and support services
  - b. Promoting independence and self-advocacy
  - c. Providing information and referrals to appropriate services
6. Pregnant and Parenting Services helps to foster a supportive and inclusive educational environment by:
  - a. Building and maintaining partnerships with faculty, staff, and the community
  - b. Promoting awareness of access to parenting services and resources among all members of the college community, and
  - c. Providing guidance regarding college policies and procedures to ensure full participation for pregnant or parenting students in all aspects of campus life.

## Trinity Valley Community College

### Pregnant and Parenting policy

*This policy is taken entirely from the following Texas Administrative Code:*

TAC Title 19, part 1, Chapter 4, subchapter X (pregnant and parenting students); Rule 4.375

- (b) Absences related to a student's pregnancy, childbirth, or resulting medical status or condition
  - a. An institution shall excuse absences related to a student's pregnancy or childbirth WITHOUT a doctor's certification that such absence is necessary for the greater of three school days in a term or semester or the maximum number of excused absences that the institution would grant to another student enrolled in the same course for any reason. Allow up to 48 hours to submit assignments or exams from the original deadline. All coursework must be turned in by the end of the semester unless the professor can prove this will fundamentally alter the course curriculum or cause an undue burden to the institution.
  - b. An institution may ensure that the total number of excused absences DOES NOT result in a fundamental alteration to an **ESSENTIAL PROGRAM REQUIREMENT** or conflict with federal law or **ACCREDITATION STANDARDS**.
  - c. The institution shall allow a student a reasonable time to make up or complete any assignments or assessments missed due to such an excused absence consistent with an institution's policy regarding excused absences and make up work.

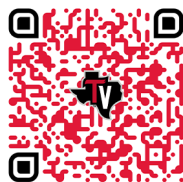
- d. An institution shall allow provide a student with access to all course materials that are made available to a student with a temporary medical condition or a disability
- e. Adjustments may be granted to students with a temporary medical condition or are related to the health and safety of the student and the student's unborn child.
- f. The student must notify faculty within 24 hours of the absence or missed deadline (unless core component). If beyond 24 hours due to extenuating circumstances, contact the Pregnant and Parenting liaison.

(c) LEAVE OF ABSENCE

- a. This policy does not supersede financial aid rules, policies, and procedures. Please check with the financial aid office to see how the Leave of Absence (LOA) may affect your financial aid.
- b. NO medical documentation can be required.
- c. LOA is related to pregnant or parenting status for a minimum of one semester.
- d. An institution must implement policies and procedures to ensure the facilitating leave within their **degree program's curriculum and accreditation requirements**. Advanced approval by the student's department or the designated office by the institution.
- e. Must be in **good academic standing** to be approved to take a leave of absence.
- f. Cannot require reapplication to the institution or to the program.
- g. May require that the student fulfills revised requirement of the program if the program in effect when the student returns has changed.
- h. The student will be allowed to come in at the same place they left the program.
- i. The student must complete a Leave of Absence form and submit it to the Pregnant and Parenting Liaison within 10 days of the anticipated leave start date.

## Policy on Pregnant and Parenting Services' Hours of Operation

Generally, the Parenting Services Office is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM. Parenting Services staff are not available during breaks such as fall break, winter break and spring break.



Title IX  
Nondiscrimination

# DEFINITIONS

# DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this regulation, the definitions below apply. However, some of these terms are also defined under state law.

1. *Adjustment/Accommodation.* For employment and academic-related purposes, the College will make reasonable adjustments, accommodations, and/or modifications unless such adjustment(s) would impose an undue hardship on the College. For purposes of this regulation, the terms Accommodation and Adjustment may be used interchangeably.
2. *Parenting Status.* The status of a person who, with respect to another person who is under the age of 18 or who is 18 or older but is incapable of self-care because of a physical or mental disability, is:
  - a. A biological parent;
  - b. An adoptive parent;
  - c. A foster parent
  - d. A stepparent; or
  - e. A legal custodian or guardian.
3. *Parenting Student.* A student enrolled at the college who is the parent or legal guardian of a child under eighteen (18) years of age.
4. *Pregnancy or Pregnancy-Related Conditions.* In accordance with applicable law, such conditions include pregnancy, childbirth, or lactation, including any related medical condition(s).
5. *Supportive Measures.* Non-disciplinary, non-punitive individualized services offered as appropriate, as reasonably available, and without fee or charge to restore or preserve a party's access to the college's education program or activity.

# PROCEDURES

# PROCEDURES

## Procedures for Providing Adjustments to Students on the Basis of Pregnant and Parenting Status and Related Medical Conditions

1. Pregnant and Parenting Services is designated to receive, review and create a plan of support for pregnant or parenting students.
2. Students who require adjustments to participate in the academic setting or in a college-sponsored activity or event as required as part of their degree program should contact the [Pregnant and Parenting Services](#).
3. Procedures Used to Determine Eligibility for Adjustments
  - a. Based on review by Pregnant and Parenting Services, eligibility for specific adjustments will be approved by the Pregnant and Parenting Liaison. A student is eligible for services when it is determined that the need for an adjustment exists.
  - b. Upon receipt, the request is reviewed by Pregnant and Parenting Services and formal adjustments are determined within 30 business days of receipt of the request. Pregnant and Parenting Services is the designated authority for the college for assigning parenting student adjustments.
  - c. A regularly enrolled student for whom the request has been reviewed, and adjustments approved by Pregnant and Parenting Services, is not eligible to access adjustments until the student completes the documentation.
  - d. Upon completion and return of the required documents, a student's adjustment letter will be emailed to their instructors. **NO ADJUSTMENTS ARE TO BE MADE DIRECTLY FROM THE PROFESSOR TO THE STUDENT. ALL ADJUSTMENTS MUST BE APPROVED BY THE PREGNANT AND PARENTING LIAISON. IF A FACULTY MEMBER HAS NOT RECEIVED AN APPROVAL NOTICE FROM PREGNANT AND PARENTING SERVICES, NO ADJUSTMENTS ARE TO BE GRANTED.**
  - e. The pregnant and parenting liaison is available to assist faculty or staff members who may experience difficulties in providing requested adjustments and will work with faculty or staff members to resolve



problems and provide the most appropriate and reasonable adjustments to students. The Pregnant and Parenting Services staff will consult with divisions and instructors regarding academic adjustments on an as-needed basis. Adjustments may vary depending on the needs of the academic program in which the student is enrolled.

4. Pregnant and Parenting Services will maintain all parenting and pregnant student records in a confidential file and release to members of the campus community only that information necessary to verify that the student falls under parenting legislation and to identify approved adjustments.
5. Based on an individual student's request, consideration will be given to the adjustment of a student's course curriculum on a case- by-case basis by the Pregnant and Parenting Liaison. Academic requirements that the college considers essential will not be regarded as discriminatory. Pregnant and Parenting Services will consult with the chair of the student's department and faculty members on an as- needed basis. This policy is subject to periodic revisions.
6. Pregnant and Parenting Services recommends that college syllabi include a statement directing pregnant and parenting students to the Pregnant and Parenting Liaison for needed support or resources. The following statement is suggested.

### **Pregnant and Parenting Services:**

Any student who, because of their pregnancy or parenting status, may require special arrangements in order to meet the course requirements should contact Pregnant and Parenting Services. Please note that the instructor is not allowed to provide classroom adjustments to a student until verification from Pregnant and Parenting Services has been provided.

For additional information please contact Pregnant and Parenting Services.

# ACADEMIC ADJUSTMENTS

# PREGNANT AND PARENTING ACADEMIC ADJUSTMENTS

## Reasonable Adjustments

1. Adjustments include but are not limited to:
  - a. Access to instructional materials and recordings of lectures
  - b. Accessible seating
  - c. Frequent restroom breaks
  - d. Ability to have food or drink in the classroom
  - e. Allowing the student to maintain a safe distance from substances, areas, and activities known to be hazardous to pregnant women or unborn children
  - f. Excused absences due to pregnancy, childbirth, or a resulting medical condition when deemed medically necessary by a health professional
2. Pregnant and Parenting Services will provide information regarding on and off campus resources; provide information concerning approved adjustments to relevant faculty and staff; and act as a liaison between students, faculty, and staff.

## Leave of Absence

Pregnant and Parenting Services facilitates leaves of absence on a voluntary basis for pregnant and parenting students.

- a. This policy does not supersede financial aid rules, policies and procedures. Please check with the financial aid office to see how the Leave of Absence (LOA) may affect your financial aid.
- b. NO medical documentation can be required.
- c. LOA is related to pregnant or parenting status for a minimum of one semester.
- d. An institution must implement policies and procedures to ensure the facilitating leave within their **degree program's curriculum and accreditation requirements.**  
Advanced approval by the student's department or the designated office by the institution.
- e. Must be in **good academic standing** to be approved to take a leave of absence.
- f. Cannot require reapplication to the institution or to the program.
- g. May require that the student fulfills revised requirement of the program if the program in effect when the student returns has changed.
- h. The student will be allowed to come in at the same place they left the program.
- i. The student must complete a Leave of Absence form and submit it to the Pregnant and Parenting Liaison within 10 days of the anticipated leave start date.

# Fully Remote Adjustment Procedure

1. Students may initiate a request to be exempt from in-person attendance in class using the Parenting Services process to request adjustments.
2. Pregnant and Parenting Services will explore the request and discuss alternative adjustments, resources, and options with the student such as:
  - a. Exploring adjustments in the classroom and other resources that will allow them to attend in person (i.e. frequent breaks, modified attendance, larger chair, etc.).
  - b. Working with their academic advisor to identify online courses already available that will work with their degree plan.
  - c. Working with their academic advisor to find online courses at other universities/community colleges that will meet their degree plan requirements.
3. If those options will not work for the student, Pregnant and Parenting Services will review the remote access request along with the additional information collected by the AVP of Student Advocacy or department head.
4. If not approved by Pregnant and Parenting Services, the office will communicate the decision to the student along with the reason why and with suggestions for other options, if any.
5. If approved, the student will be referred to the program head who will work with the student and the academic department to determine if remote access is an option and what those options for remote access are depending on the course/program requirements.
6. Student must make an appointment with the professor of each course to determine eligibility, submitting assignments, taking exams, etc.

### Questions to review for a course request:

- What is the purpose of the course?
- What are the prerequisites or other background knowledge needed?
- What core outcomes/expectations are stated on the syllabus and required of all students?
- What specific knowledge, principles, skills, or concepts must be mastered and demonstrated?
- What aspects/requirements constitute a significant component of the learning and assessment process?
- Could an alternative achieve the same result?
- What are the essential methods of instruction and assessment which are fundamental to the nature of the course?
- Have we diligently searched for alternatives?
- Was an alternative adjustment already offered, but rejected?
- How is the alternative believed to be effective?
- Have we identified whether other colleges have alternatives that achieve the objectives without fundamentally altering requirements?

### For an Academic Program:

- What skills or competencies will be needed within the field after graduation?
- What are the requirements for licensing or professional accreditation?

A student may choose to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights. Further information on this process can be obtained by contacting OCR at [ocr@ed.gov](mailto:ocr@ed.gov) or 800-421-3481 at <https://www.hhs.gov/civil-rights/filing-a-complaint/index.html>. Or by using the QR code below.



U.S. Dep. of Health &  
Human Services



*Resources: OCR Letter guidelines in 2017 to The University of North Carolina at Greensboro (OCR Complaint No. 11-17-2001)*

*Wynne v. Tufts Univer., 976 F. Supp. 792 (D. Mass. 1997),  
aff'd, 976 F. Supp. 792 (1st Cir. 1999)*





