

TITLE IX

Title IX is a federal law, passed in 1972, that prohibits sex-based discrimination in educational programs that received federal funds. The goal of these protections is to allow students to return to their same academic and extracurricular status as before their pregnancy or other related event.

Protected conditions

Title IX pregnant and parenting rights and accommodations apply to students who

- are pregnant or experience a false pregnancy
- give birth to a child
- terminate a pregnancy
- have a miscarriage

These conditions, as well as other conditions related to those above (e.g. postpartum depression and preeclampsia), are considered “pregnancy” under Title IX.

Under Title IX, “parenting” does not refer to childcare issues, bonding time or similar parenting situations or challenges. Instead, it refers to the medical recovery from the above noted conditions. Though not required by law, Gateway has extended these rights to your child as well, up to three months of age. This means the same rights and accommodations apply to students whose child has medical complications after birth.



Frequently asked questions

Can I receive accommodations for childbirth that happened last semester?

Accommodations are not retroactive in most cases. Students must register with DSS and request services before or at the time they are needed.

If I have a scholarship, can the college take it away due to my pregnancy?

No, colleges cannot terminate scholarships that they provide due to a student's pregnancy. If a student stays in school, they get to keep their scholarship.

I want to return to school a few days after I have my child, but the instructor said I should take off the full six weeks to recover.

It is up to the student to decide when to return to class, but they cannot be forced to return before the date provided by a doctor. Schools cannot have a rule that prohibits students from returning to classes or other educational activities for a specific period of time after childbirth.

Pregnant & Parenting Resources



We are here to support you and help you complete your education!



gtc.edu/pregnancy

Your rights

Schools are required to provide pregnant students and students with related conditions, such as childbirth or false pregnancy, with at least the same special services as it provides to students with other temporary disabilities (even though pregnancy is not considered a disability).

Students who are pregnant or parenting have the right to

- Not be told to drop out or change education plans
- Be provided a comfortable space to pump breast milk*
- Be excused from class due to pregnancy-related appointments receive pre-natal care, give birth, have an abortion, attend a pre-natal visit, or be on doctor-ordered bed rest
- Not have excused absences count against their grade
- Be provided the opportunity to make up missed work from excused absences, including clinicals**
- Not be harassed as a result of a pregnancy

In addition, students may need additional adjustments to their classroom setting, such as larger desks or frequent trips to the bathroom, as a result of their pregnancy.

*Visit gtc.edu/pregnancy for a list of personal needs/ lactation rooms. Under Wisconsin law, women may breastfeed their child in any area where the general public is allowed to go. Learn more information on your rights to breastfeed in public at: <http://tiny.cc/breastfeed>.

**The ability to accommodate a student in clinicals may be limited due to accreditation requirements and the availability of clinical sites.

What about the fathers?

As Title IX prohibits discrimination based on sex, some of the same protections and accommodations apply to fathers as well. In some situations, fathers will not receive the same accommodations due to the nature of pregnancy and recovery. For example, a mother could receive a medical excuse from school for several weeks after birth to physically recover from the birthing event. Fathers may not be eligible for the same accommodations.

The accommodation process

- Students who are pregnant are encouraged, but not required, to register with Disability Support Services (DSS) early in their pregnancy. All students who need an accommodation must contact DSS right away to fully preserve their accommodation rights. Accommodations are only made once the student has completed the required paperwork with DSS.
- The DSS instructor will guide the student in obtaining the appropriate medical documentation of their condition and the medical basis for accommodation. Accommodations are implemented based on what is determined by the medical provider.
- The DSS instructor will work with the student and his/her instructors to implement the accommodations.

Your role as a student

- Register with DSS when you know you are pregnant or, at the latest, as soon as a qualifying event (medical appointment you need excused, childbirth, etc.) occurs.
- Provide required medical documentation promptly.
- Follow up with DSS and your provider(s) as required. It is the student's responsibility to access accommodation services and assist with the process.

Who to contact

If you experience discrimination because of your pregnancy status, please contact the Office for Equal Opportunity and Civil Rights at 262-564-3062.

To receive accommodations for pregnancy, childbirth, false pregnancy, termination of pregnancy, or recovery from these events, contact Gateway's Title IX pregnant and parenting team.

Email: TIXpregnancy@gtc.edu

Beth Mulhollon: 262-564-2452

Sue Stokes-Nelson: 262-564-2771

Students can have medical documentation relating to their pregnancy or related event faxed confidentially to 262-564-2888.

