



# Memo

**To: Pastoral Assistants for Administration, Principals, Bookkeepers, and Payroll Administrators**

**From:** Lilly McGarry, Assistant Director of Human Resources

**Date:** October 28, 2019

**Re: WA Paid Family & Medical Leave Poster and Handout**

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In January 2019, WA State began collecting premiums from employee wages to fund the new WA Paid Family & Medical Leave taking effect January 1, 2020. Washington's Employment Security Division manages this new program, which provides employee with partial wage replacement while away from work due to medical and birth related leaves. We need your help to communicate information about this new leave benefit to all employees.

- Please print the two-sided handout titled "*When life happens, you can be there to care*", included with this memo and provide a copy to each of your employees.
- Please print the single-sided poster included with this memo and post with other required employment posters at your location.

If you have questions, please contact Lilly McGarry, Assistant Director for Human Resources, at 206.382.4578 or by email at [lilly.mcgarry@seattlearch.org](mailto:lilly.mcgarry@seattlearch.org).

# When life happens, **you can be there for care.**

At some point, everyone needs to take time off from work to recover from a serious illness or injury, take care of a family member with a major medical condition, or bond with a new child. Starting in January 2020, most people who work in the state of Washington will be able to use Paid Family and Medical Leave to help replace their paycheck during these important times.

## **What is Paid Family and Medical Leave?**

Paid Family and Medical Leave is a new state program that allows you to take paid time off to care for yourself or a family member when life's big events happen, such as:



**Bonding with a  
newborn, adopted,  
or foster child**



**Recovering from  
surgery, a serious  
illness or injury**



**Supporting a  
family member  
with a serious  
medical condition**



**Certain events  
connected to a family  
member's active duty  
military service**

While you're out, you will receive payments from the state based on a percentage of your typical weekly earnings. Paid Family and Medical Leave is funded through small contributions that come from both workers and many employers.

## How do you qualify?

Nearly everyone who works in Washington will be part of the program. You are eligible when you work at least 820 hours (about 16 hours a week) during the qualifying period, which is about year, and you experience a qualifying event. Part-time, seasonal and temporary workers qualify. You are also eligible if you work for multiple employers.

## When does the program start?

Employee benefits begin in January 2020. Washington employees—and many employers—began contributing to the new program starting in January 2019.

## How much does the coverage cost employees?

Employees and employers are already contributing to the program. The amount you pay varies by how much you earn. For example, an employee who makes \$50,000 a year pays about \$2.44 each week through payroll deductions. Businesses with fewer than 50 employees are not required to contribute to the program but workers at small businesses are still covered.

## How do you apply?

If you or a member of your family experiences a serious medical condition or you welcome a new child into your family, you can apply for benefits through Washington's Employment Security Department starting January 2020.

You'll need to get certified—usually from a medical provider. If you have a planned qualifying event, such as the birth of a child or scheduled surgery, you'll need to give your employer 30 days' advanced notice.

## How much time can you take?

**12 weeks** Eligible employees can take up to 12 weeks of paid leave a year.

**16 weeks** You may be eligible for up to 16 weeks if you have a personal medical event

and family caregiving event happen in the same year – like giving birth to a baby or caring for an ill or injured family member.

**18 weeks** In cases related to complications in pregnancy, you may be able to take up to 18 weeks.

### You don't have to take your leave all at once.

For example, you may take one day off a week to support a family member undergoing chemotherapy treatment or to receive an intermittent medical treatment yourself.

# Washington Paid Family & Medical Leave

At some time in our lives, we all need to give or receive care. Paid Family and Medical Leave is a new statewide insurance program that will help Washingtonians take paid time in life's most challenging times.

## What is covered?

- Your own medical condition
- Caring for family members
- Bonding with a child (birth, foster or adoption)
- Leave for military families

### Am I eligible for benefits?

You are eligible once you have worked 820 hours in Washington during the previous year and you experience a qualifying event. You can apply for benefits starting Jan. 1, 2020.



### What is my weekly benefit?

You can get up to 12 weeks of partial pay to care for yourself or a family member during illness or injury, and for maternity and paternity leave if you have a child through birth, adoption or foster placement. You can get 16 to 18 weeks in some extreme circumstances.



The weekly benefit range is up to 90 percent, depending on your income. The less you make, the higher percentage of your pay you get.

### Is my job protected while I take leave?

Employees covered by the state program are entitled to job restoration when returning from leave if they:

Work for an employer with 50 or more employees.



Have worked for that employer for 12 months or longer.

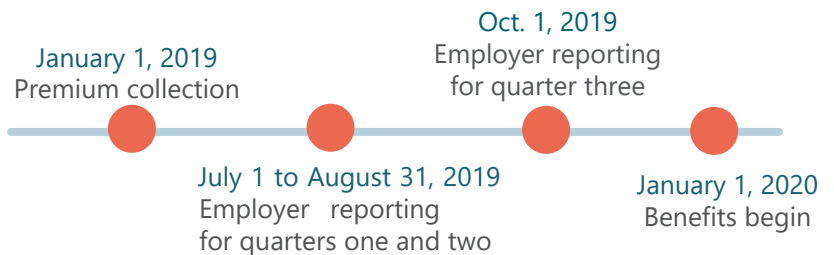
Have worked at least 1250 hours for that employer in the past 12 months.



### How much does it cost?

If your annual salary is \$50,000, you will pay about \$2.44 per week. The premium is 0.4% of an employee's gross wages and is shared by the employee and employer. Premium collection began Jan. 1, 2019.

### When does this begin?



For more information visit [paidleave.wa.gov](http://paidleave.wa.gov)