

Washington
Paid Family & Medical Leave



Employment Security Department
WASHINGTON STATE

Advisory Committee Meeting

October 21, 2021



Agenda

Introductions & approve minutes

Premium rates

Upcoming legislative session

Claims data – volumes, payments, types

Medical & bonding leave for birthing parents

Ombuds report

Agenda items for November

Meeting schedule for 2022

Meeting structure

- Only Advisory Committee and the presenters will be unmuted during the meeting, until open comment.
- Public to hold all feedback until the open comment period.
- Comments and questions in the chat will not be reviewed as part of the meeting structure, rather:
 - Open comments will be taken at the end of the meeting.
 - Please frame your questions as a comment.
 - “Raise your hand” if you have a comment.
 - The meeting host will unmute individual line to allow for the open comment.

Introductions

- Advisory Committee

(Note: We will use the Zoom feature to identify who is on the phone rather than announcing during meeting)

Approve August & September minutes

- Discussion

Rates discussion (2022 rates and authority under statute)

Premium rate overview (RCW 50A.10.030)

Total premium rate

- Set at 0.4% for 2019-2020
- Starting 2021, total premium rate depends on Account Balance Ratio

$$= \frac{\text{Trust fund account balance as of Sep 30}}{\text{Prior fiscal year total wages}}$$

- Can go up to .6% based on Account Balance Ratio

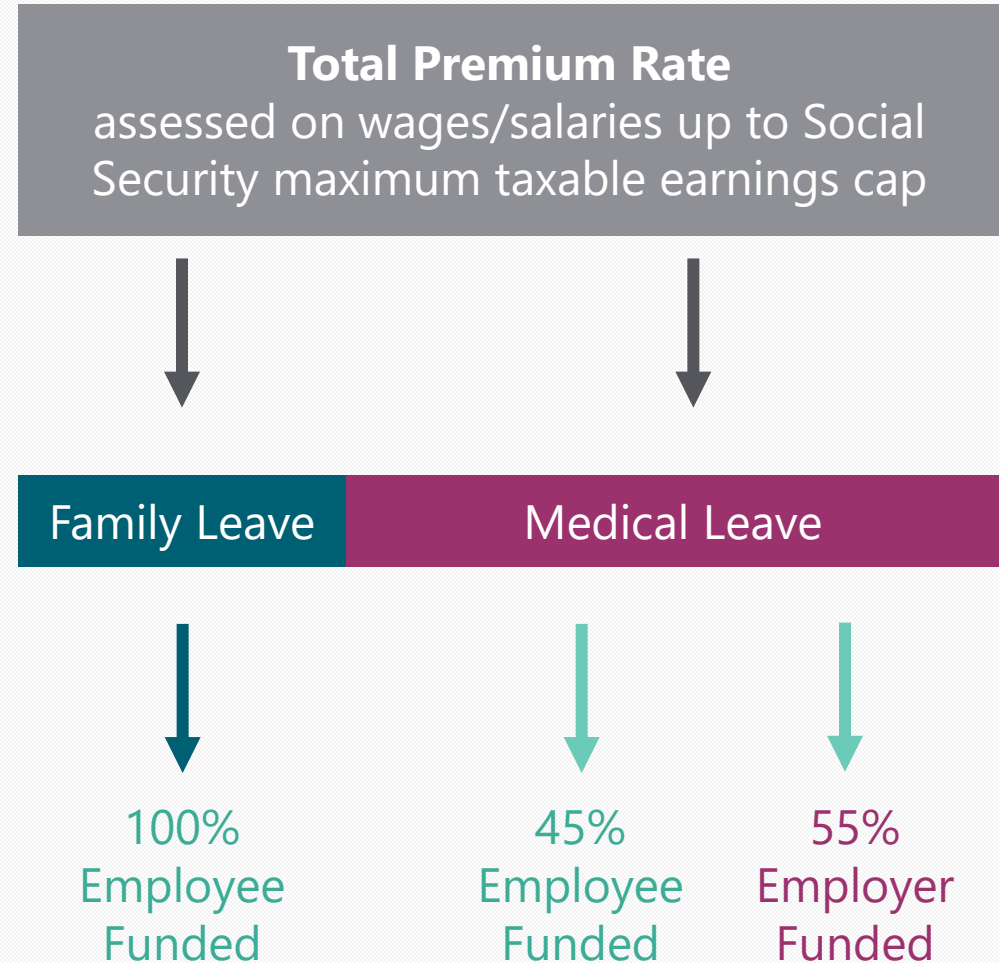
Account Balance Ratio	Premium Rate
0.00% to 0.09%	0.6%
0.10% to 0.19%	0.5%
0.20% to 0.29%	0.4%
0.30% to 0.39%	0.3%
0.40% to 0.49%	0.2%
0.50% or Greater	0.1%

- If account balance ratio is less than .05% and insolvency is projected in the coming year, a solvency surcharge must be added at lowest rate to achieve solvency. Surcharge maximum is .6%.
- Total maximum possible (regular rate + solvency surcharge) is 1.2%
- Assessed on wages/salaries up to Social Security Cap (\$147,000 in 2022)

Premium rate overview (RCW 50A.10.030)

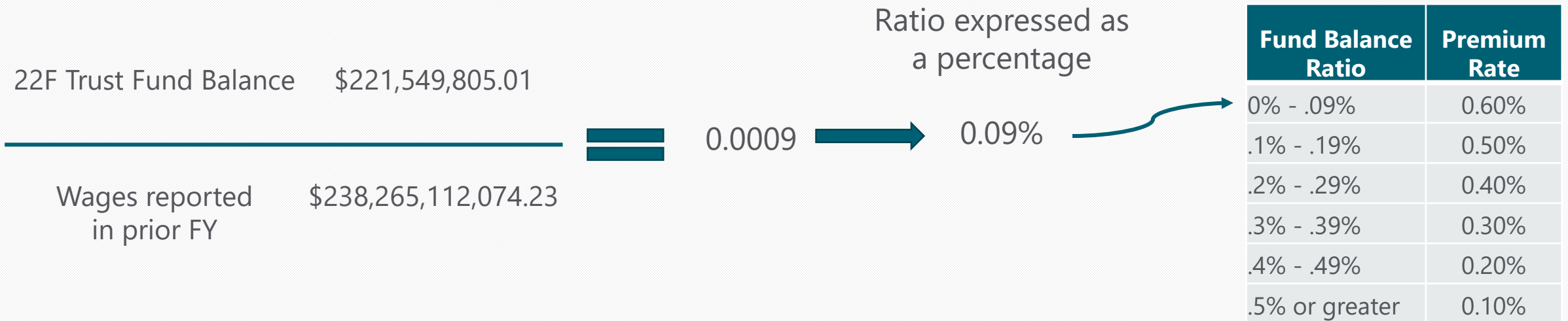
Family/medical split & employer/employee portions

- Employers may withhold up to 100% of family leave and 45% of medical leave premiums from employees
- Small businesses with fewer than 50 employees are not required to pay employer portion (except 3 years following a grant)
- Split set at 1/3 Family, 2/3 Medical for 2019-2021
- Starting 2022, family/medical split depends on proportion of family or medical paid claims in prior fiscal year



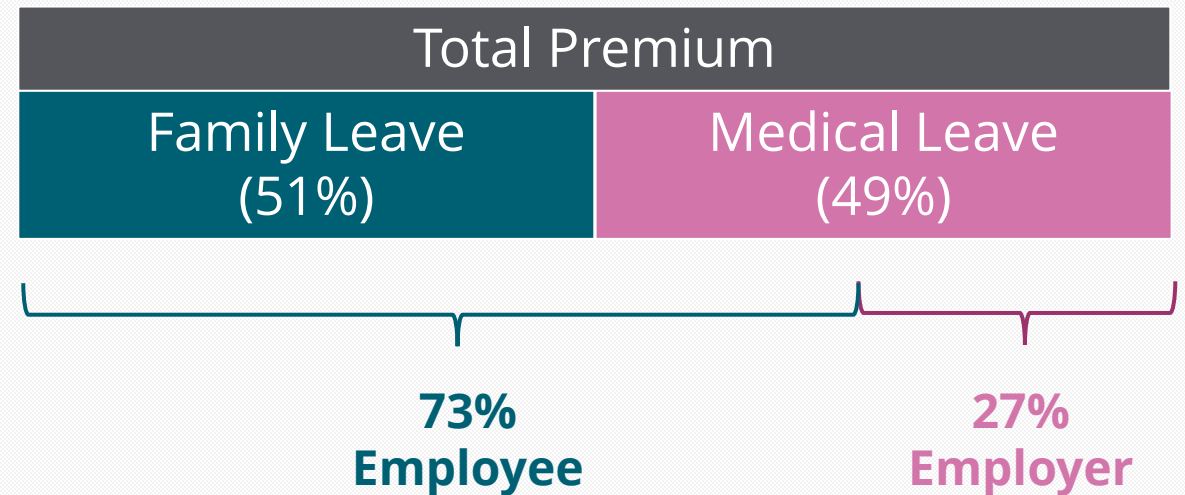
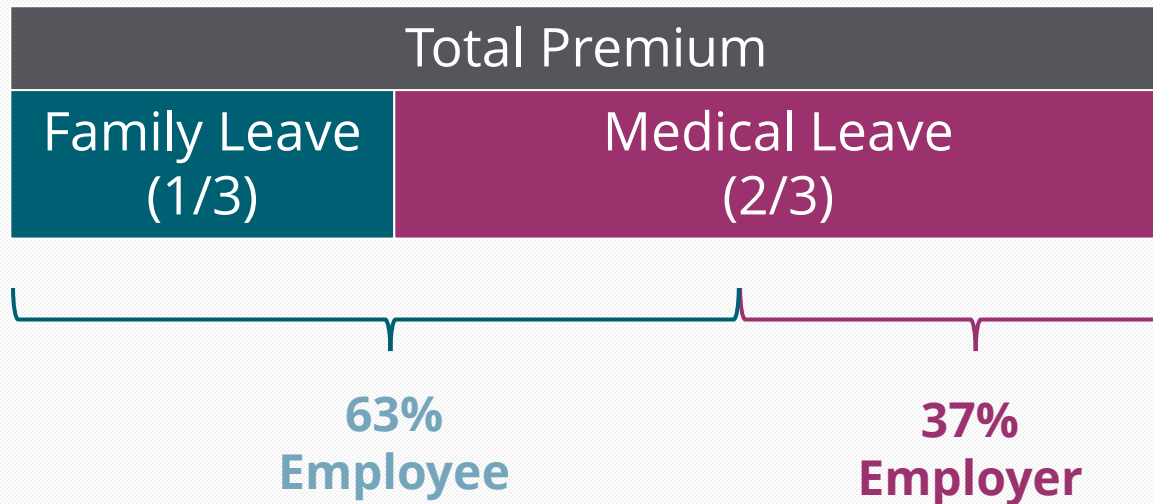
Premium rate calculation for 2022

- Trust fund balance \$221,549,805.01
- Wages reported in prior fiscal year






Variable family-medical split -- begins in 2022

- Premium split is proportional to family vs medical claims volumes
 - Claims paid = leave claims with at least one payment in the prior fiscal year
- Employee/employer share varies based on family/medical split
 - Employer's fund 55% of medical and employees fund 45% of medical and 100% of family



Weekly premium per employee

	Total Premium 	Employee Portion 	Employer Portion 
2021 <i>.4% rate with 33% Family and 67% Medical</i>			
Minimum Wage (14.49/hr or \$30,139/yr)	\$2.32	\$1.47	\$0.85
Average Wage (\$76,741/yr)	\$5.90	\$3.74	\$2.16
Paid Leave 2022 Maximum Taxable (\$147,000/yr)	\$10.98	\$6.95	\$4.03
2022 <i>.6% rate with 51% Family and 49% Medical</i>			
Minimum Wage (14.49/hr or \$30,139/yr)	\$3.48	\$2.55	\$0.93
Average Wage (\$76,741/yr)	\$8.85	\$6.48	\$2.37
Paid Leave 2022 Maximum Taxable (\$147,000yr)	\$16.48	\$12.42	\$4.54



Annual premium on median payroll for employer size

2021

.4% rate with 33% Family and 67% Medical

Small <50 (est. taxable wages \$116,294)
Medium 50-150 (est. taxable wages \$3,408,884)
Large >150 (est. taxable wages \$14,074,264)

2022

.6% rate with 51% Family and 49% Medical

Small <50 (est. taxable wages \$116,294)
Medium 50-150 (est. taxable wages \$3,408,884)
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Employer Portion



\$171

\$5,000

\$20,644

\$187

\$5,477

\$22,615



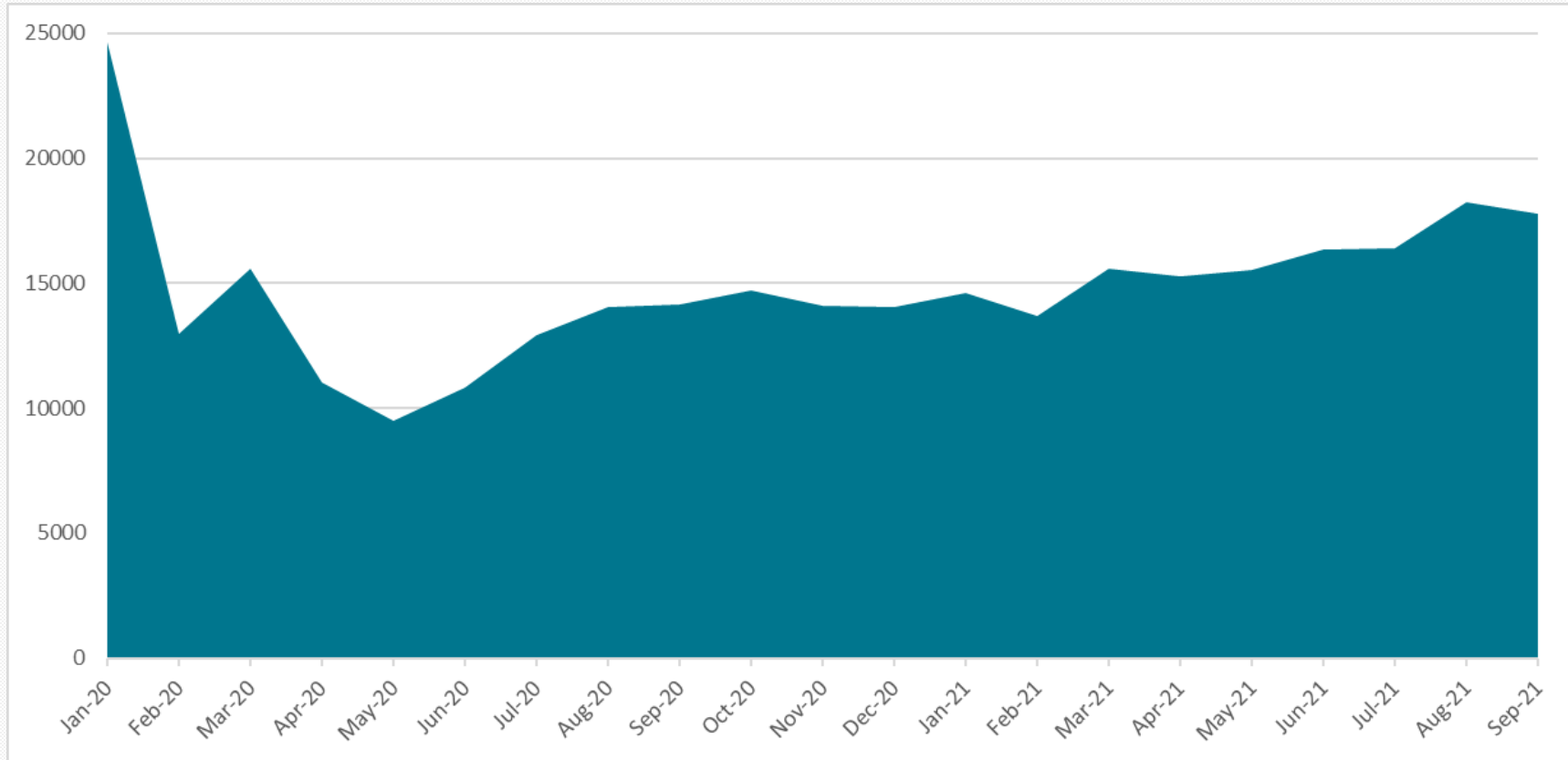
Upcoming legislative session

April Amundson

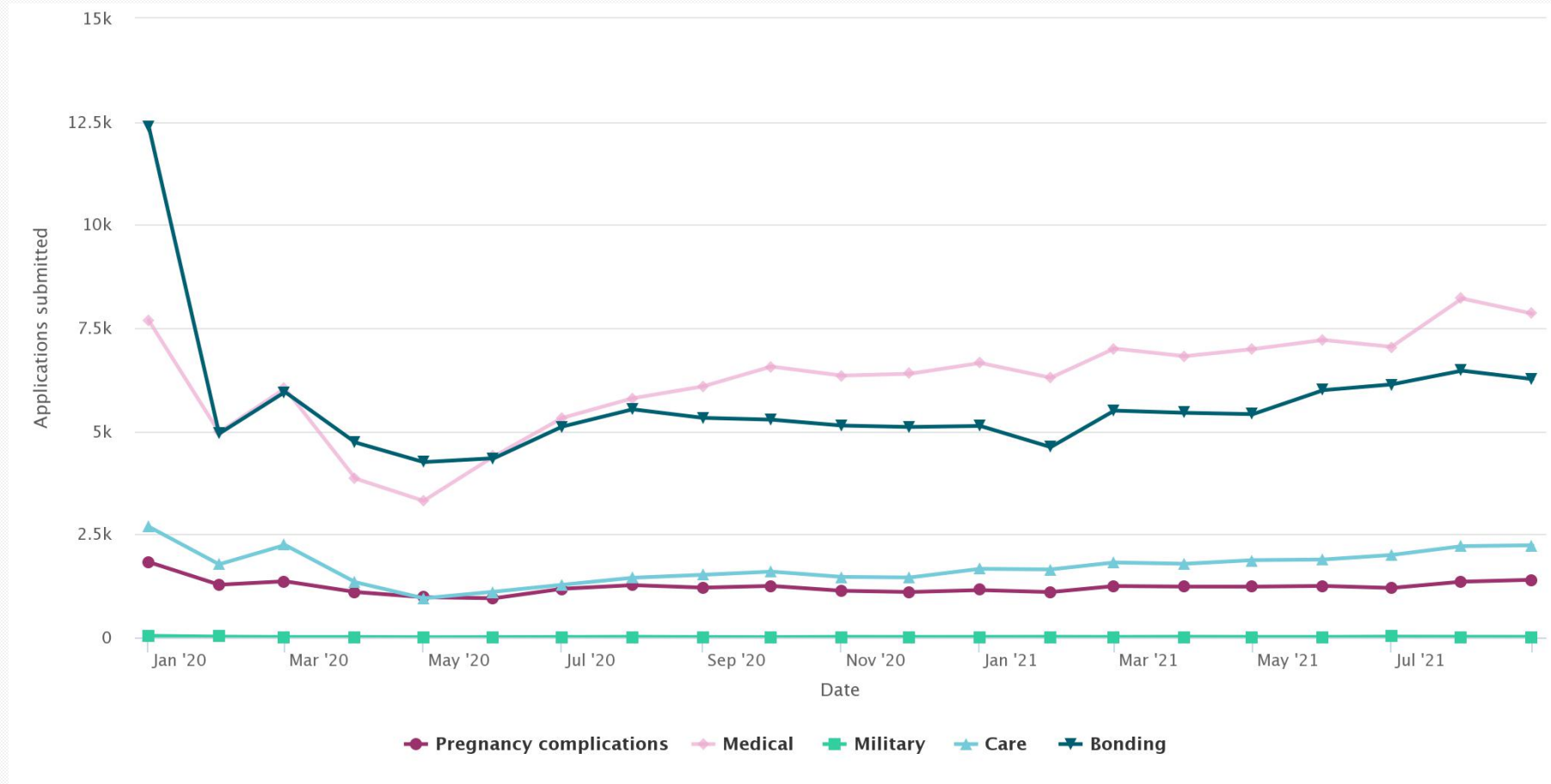
Claims data

Trends in volumes, payments & types

Claims submitted: Monthly totals

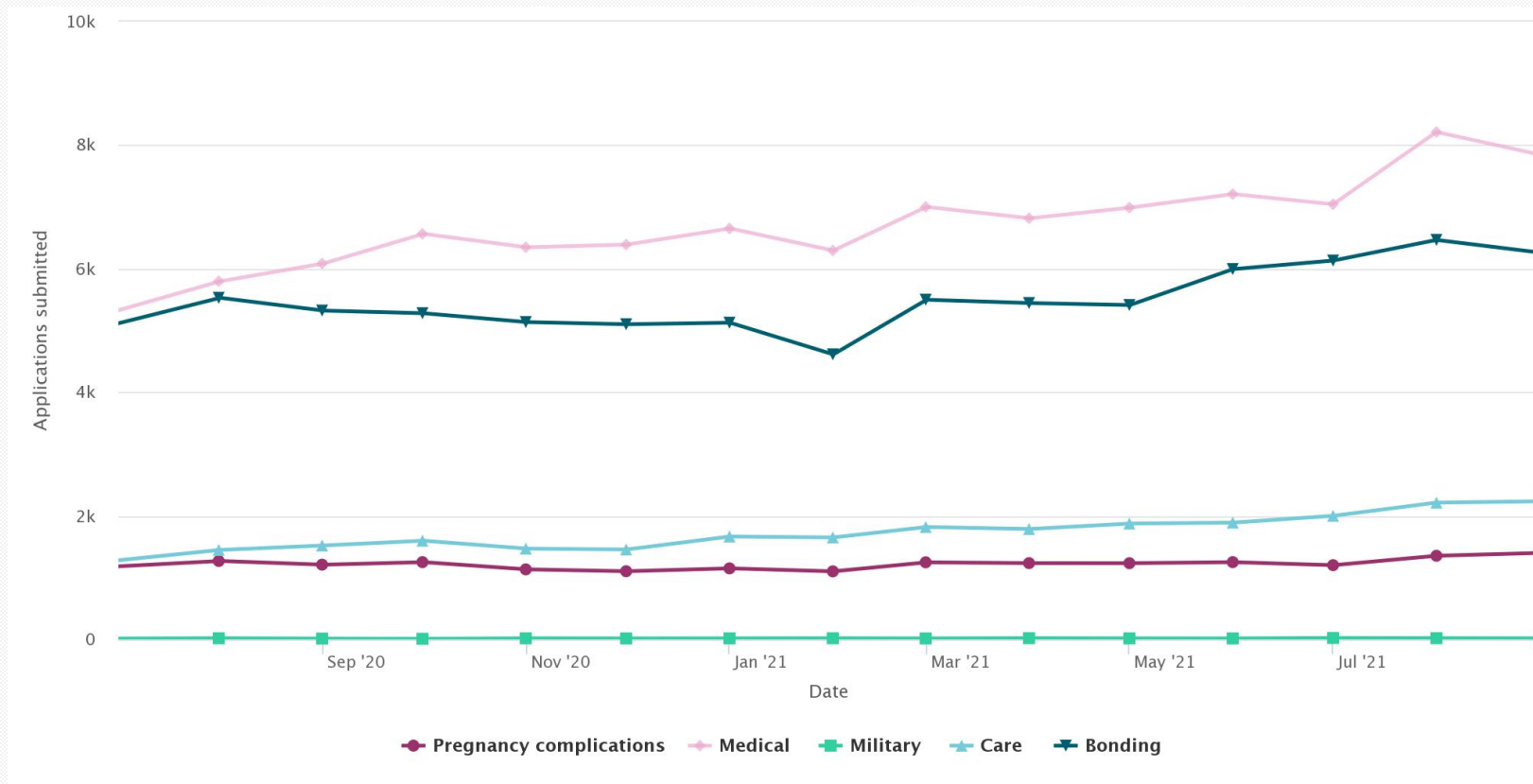


Submitted claims: Monthly trends by subtype



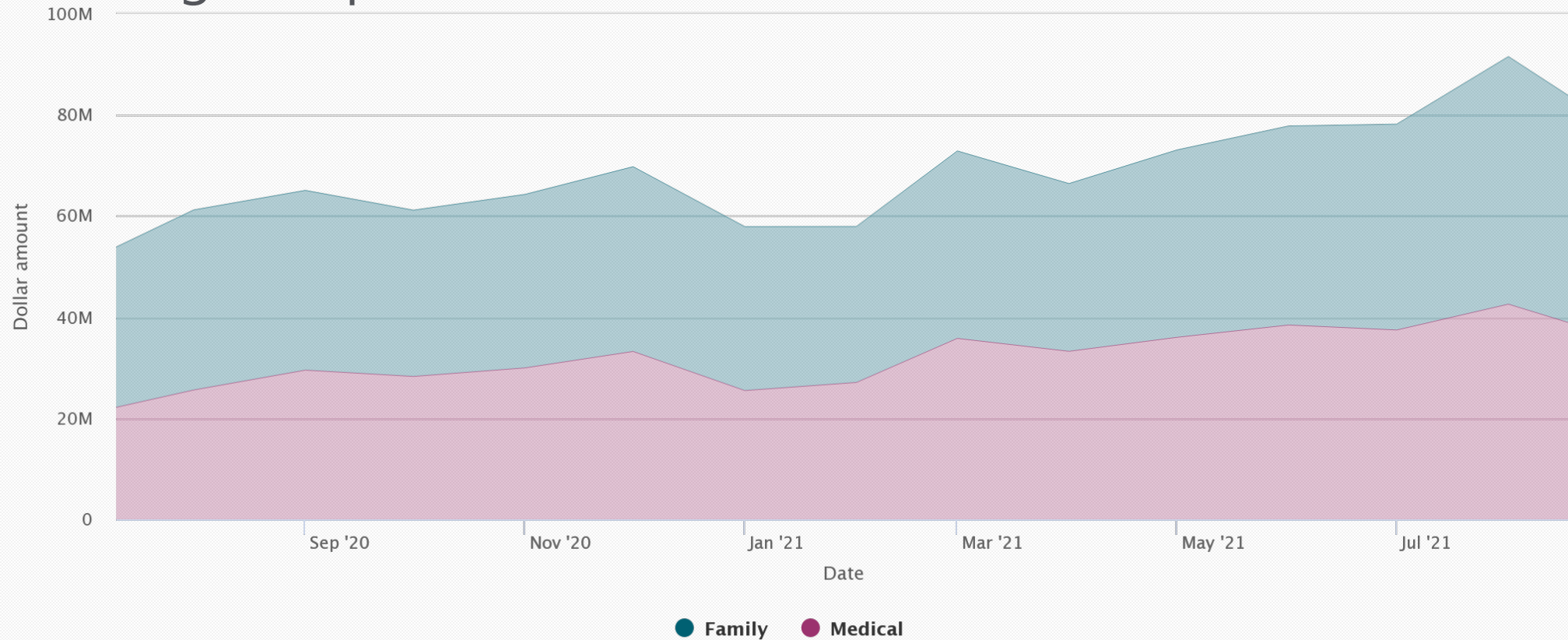
Submitted claims: Monthly trends by subtype

- Zooming into past 15 months

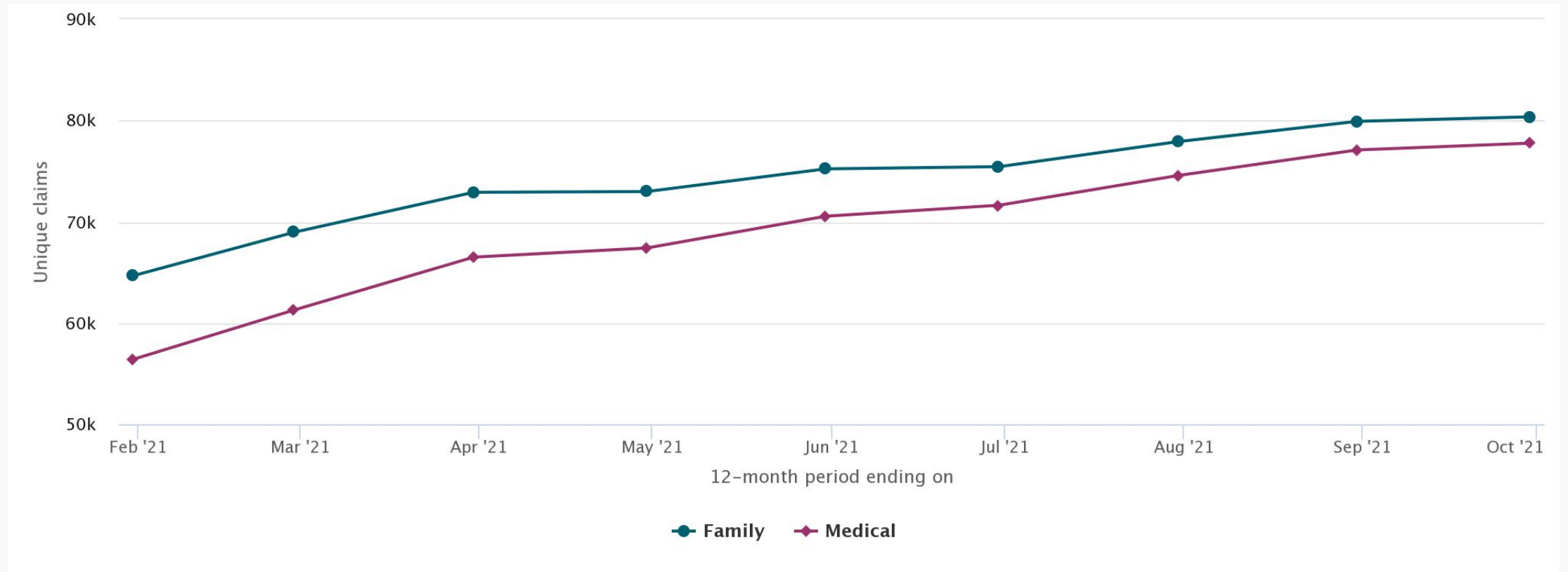


Benefits paid monthly

- Zooming into past 15 months



Trend in Paid Leave claims: Rolling 12-month period



Medical & bonding leave for birthing parents

Medical-family leave taking

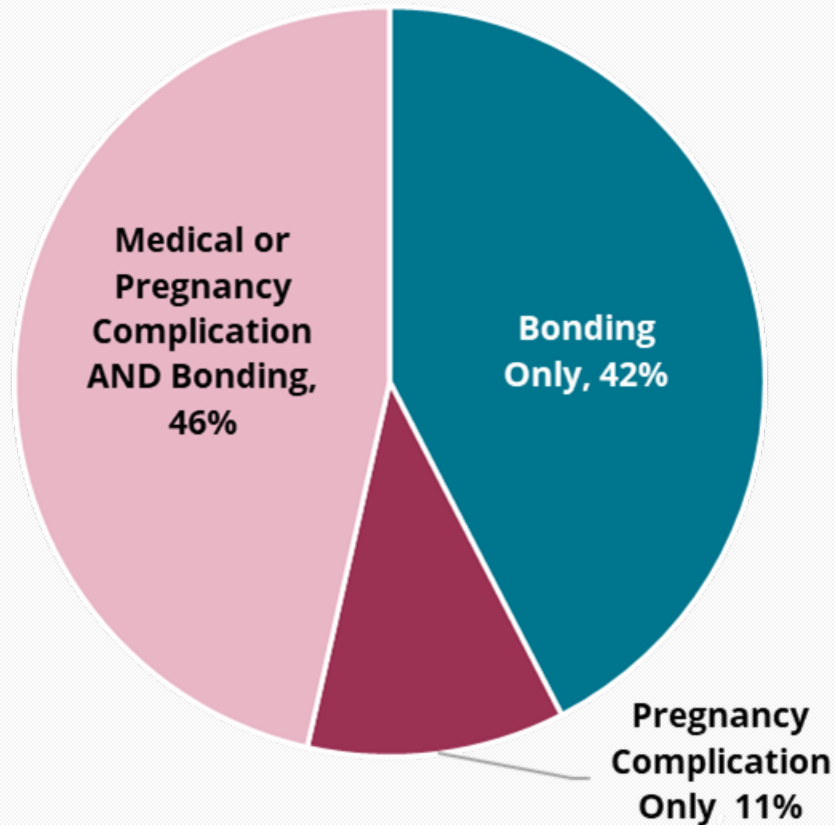
Questions we aimed to answer

- What is the leave-taking behavior of customers who appear to be birthing mothers?
 - How are they combining their leave?
 - Lengths of leave? How much medical leave are they taking? What percent are maxing out possible leave?

Approach

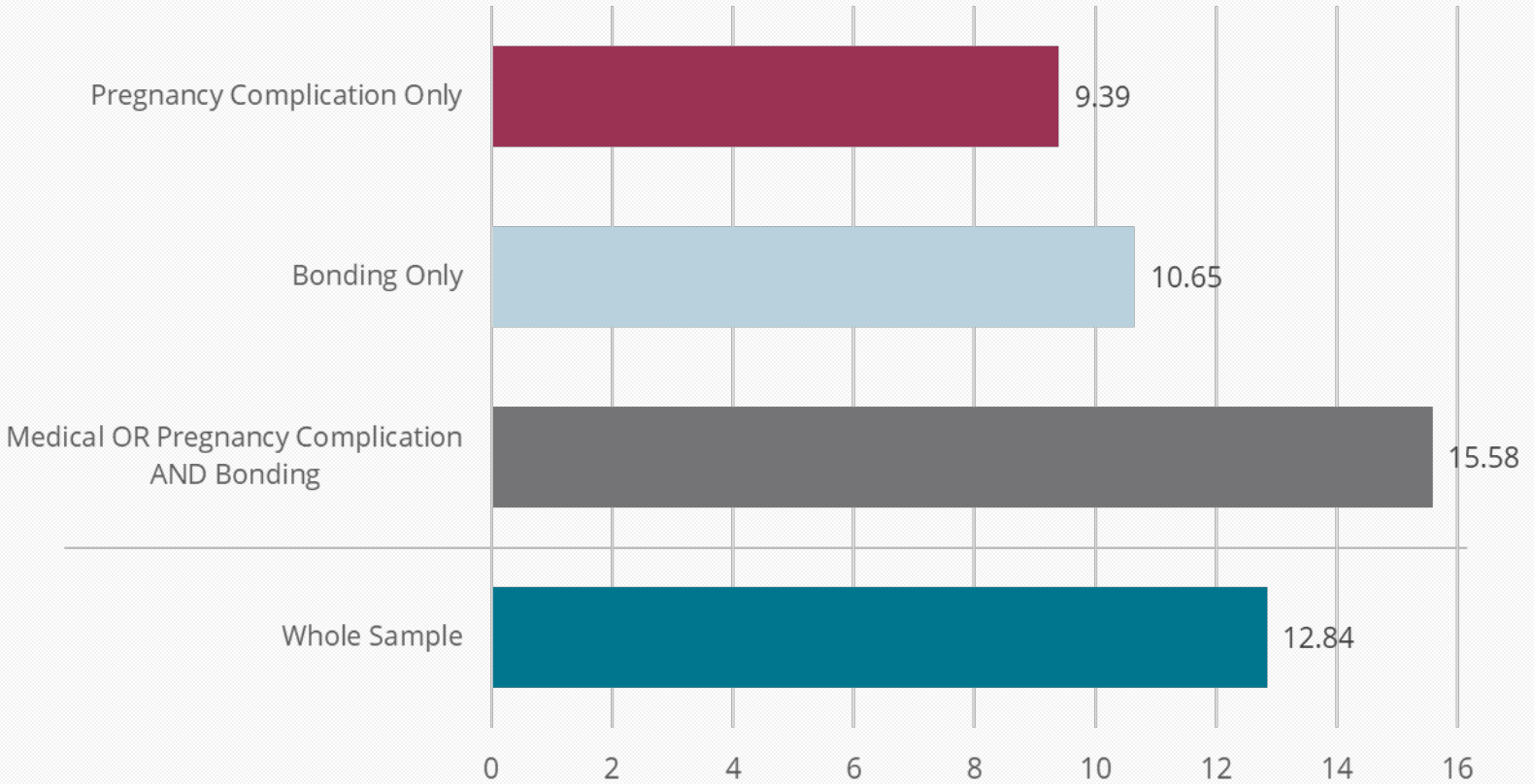
- Administrative data & survey of subset using only bonding
- Approximating birthing parents

Sample approximating birthing parents

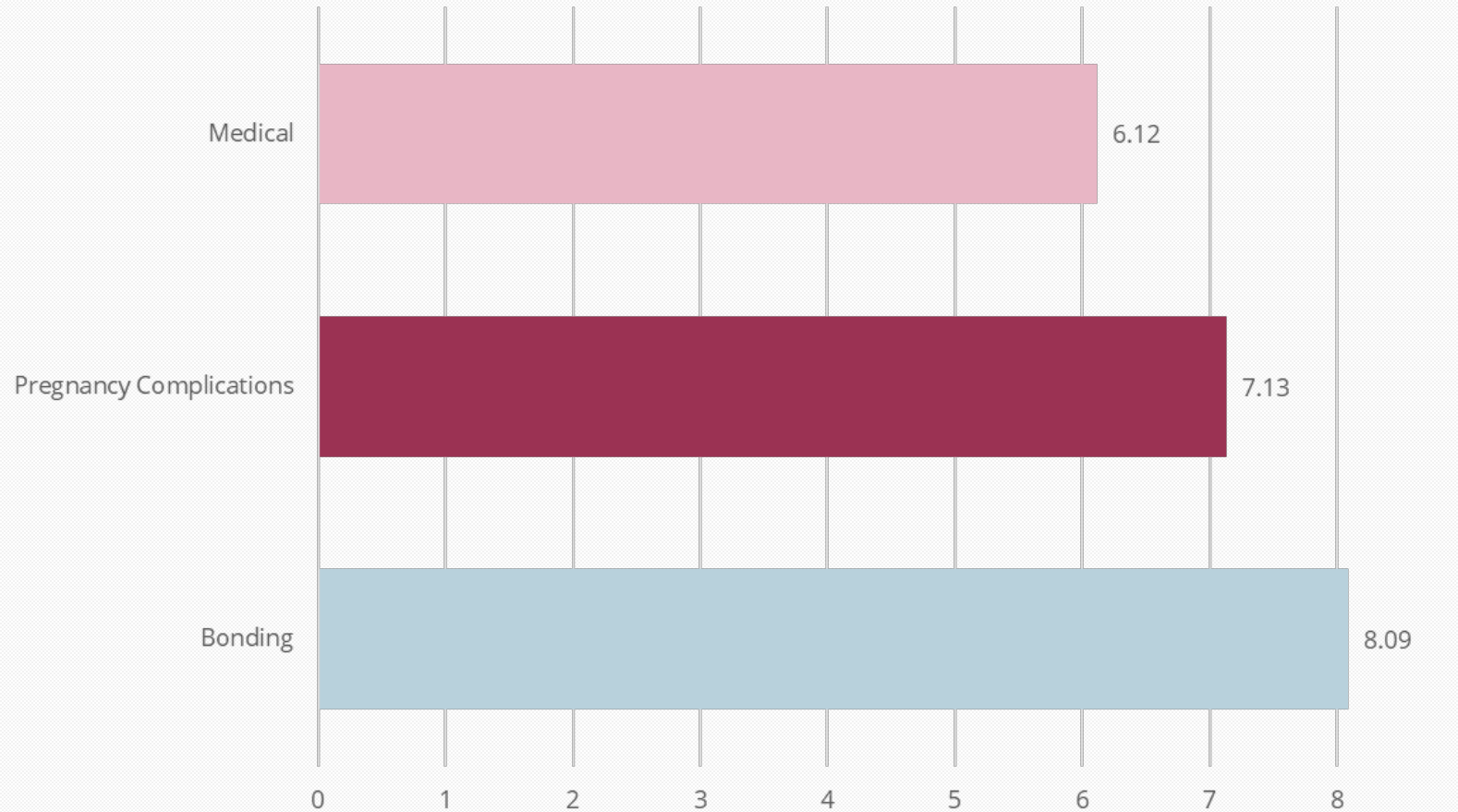


- Female customers with at least one approved Pregnancy Complication or Bonding claim
 - Included these customers' medical claims
 - Excluded 2019 births
- Sample caveats
 - Includes bonding for placement/adoption
 - Excludes birthing parents who identify as male
- 37,991 claims
- 24,813 female customers

How much total leave did customers use in their claim year?



For those who took medical/pregnancy complication and bonding leave, how long was each?



Did customers use all the leave available to them?

Overall, about 44% are using the maximum possible leave in their claim year

Medical & bonding

Took **14.8 weeks** of leave on average

53% used a full 16 weeks

Pregnancy complication & bonding

Took **16.1 weeks** of leave on average

34% used a full 18 weeks

Only bonding

Took **10.7 weeks** of bonding leave on average

53% used a full 12 weeks of bonding leave

Why do some customers only take bonding leave?

Survey of approximately 7,500 customers

- Customers who identified as female and took approved bonding leave but did not take medical leave

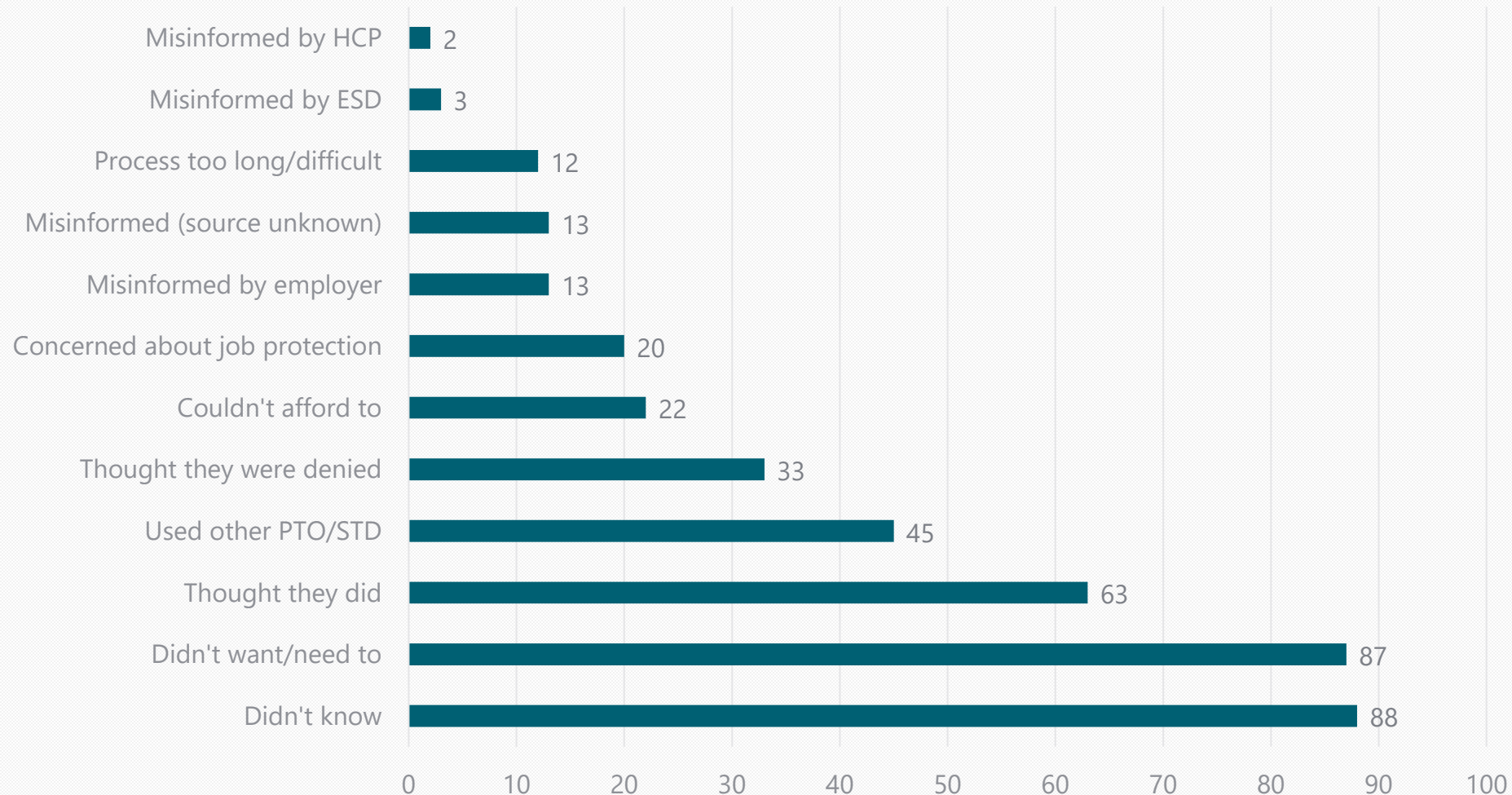
Initial analysis on 898 responses

- 93.5% gave birth to a child
- 1.5% had a spouse or partner give birth to a child
- 2.9% had a child placed in their home

Of birthing parents

- 61% said they knew they could take medical leave
- 401 wrote-in responses when asked why they didn't take medical leave

Why didn't they take medical leave?



Ombuds report

Edsonya Charles

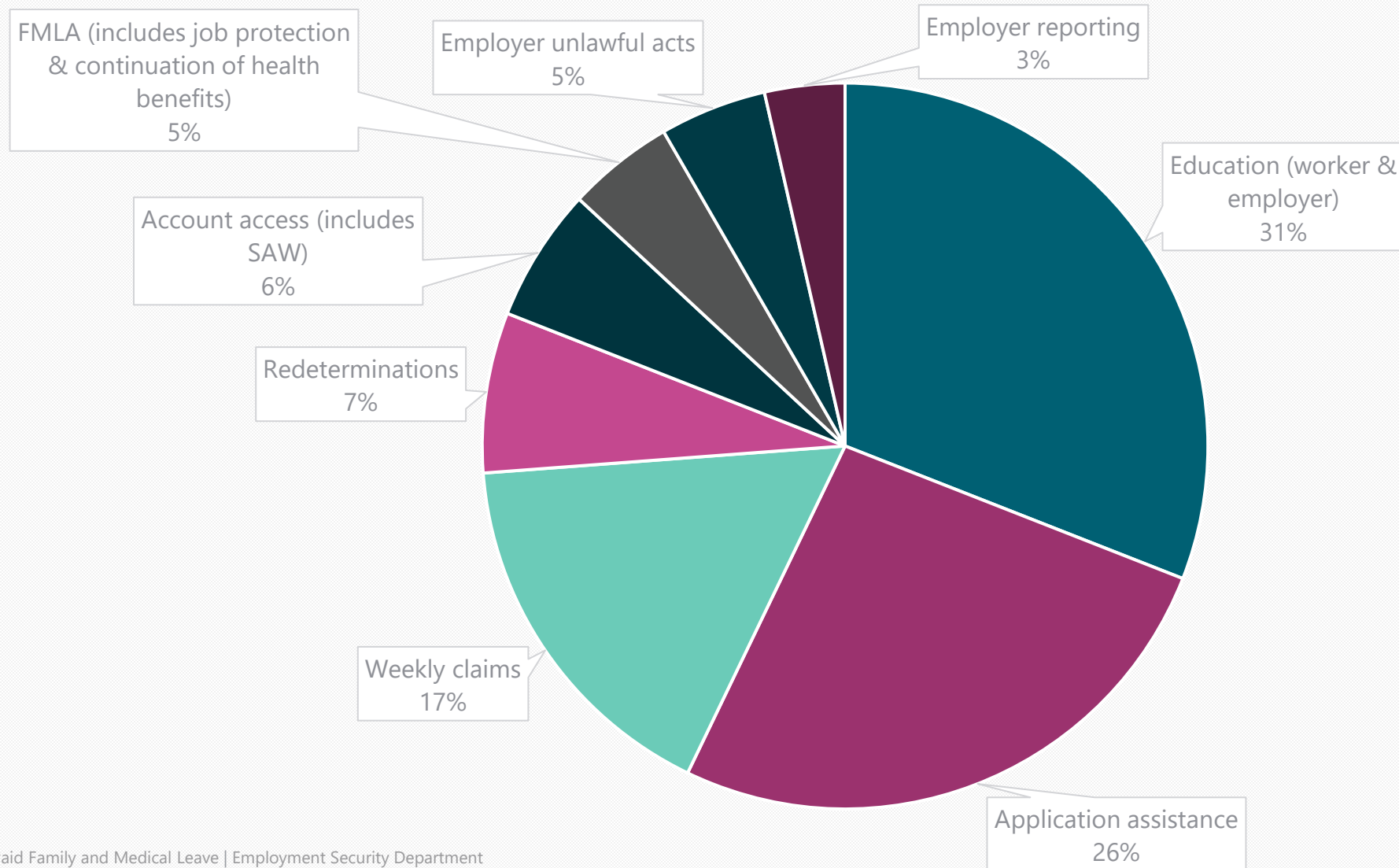
Summary of calls (January – June 2021)

1,134 calls received

Average of 189 per month

- Low of 144 in February
- High of 217 in March

Top reasons for calls (January – June 2021)



Note: Chart excludes topics with less than 3% of calls each. They are:

- Other
- 1099 tax forms
- Short term disability
- Supplemental benefits
- COVID-19
- Records request
- Appeals
- Fraud
- Delays

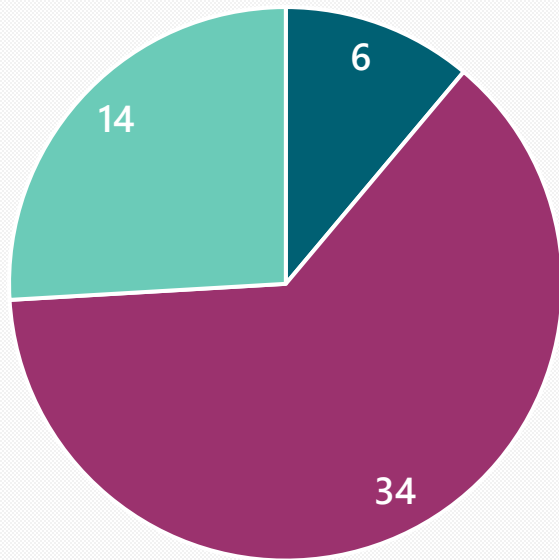
Complaints

108 received between
January and June 2021

Subject	Percent
Weekly claim correction	38%
Redetermination	29%
SAW	6%
Weekly claim assistance	5%
Technology	4%
Leave extension	3%
Underpayment	3%
Payment	3%
Application processing	2%
Letters	2%
Employer	2%
Redetermination assistance	2%
Elective Coverage	1%
Employer payments	1%
Processing delay	1%
Withdrawn	1%

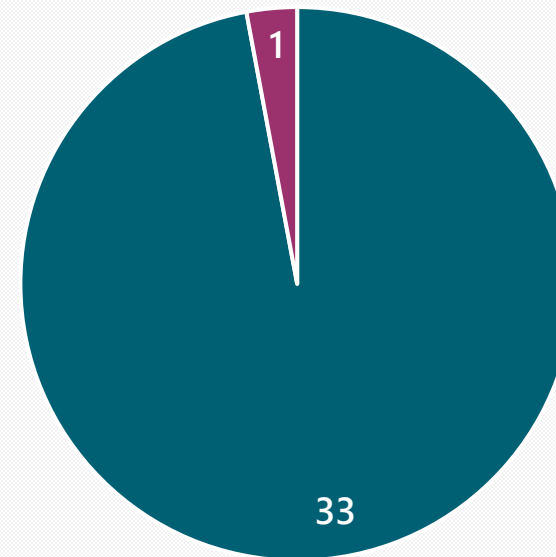
Hardship requests (January – June 2021)

Total hardship requests



■ Approved ■ Denied ■ Other

Denial reasons



■ Did not meet four-week criteria ■ Other

Reasonable accommodations (March – June 2021)

March

- Two received
 - Referrals from UI

May

- Two received
 - One approved, one referred for interpreter services

June

- Two received
 - One legislative referral, one referred for interpreter services

November meeting

Details

- 9 a.m. on Thursday, November 19, 2021

Agenda

- Topics?

Open comment

Continue the conversation

Lisa Kissler

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Visit us online at
www.paidleave.wa.gov



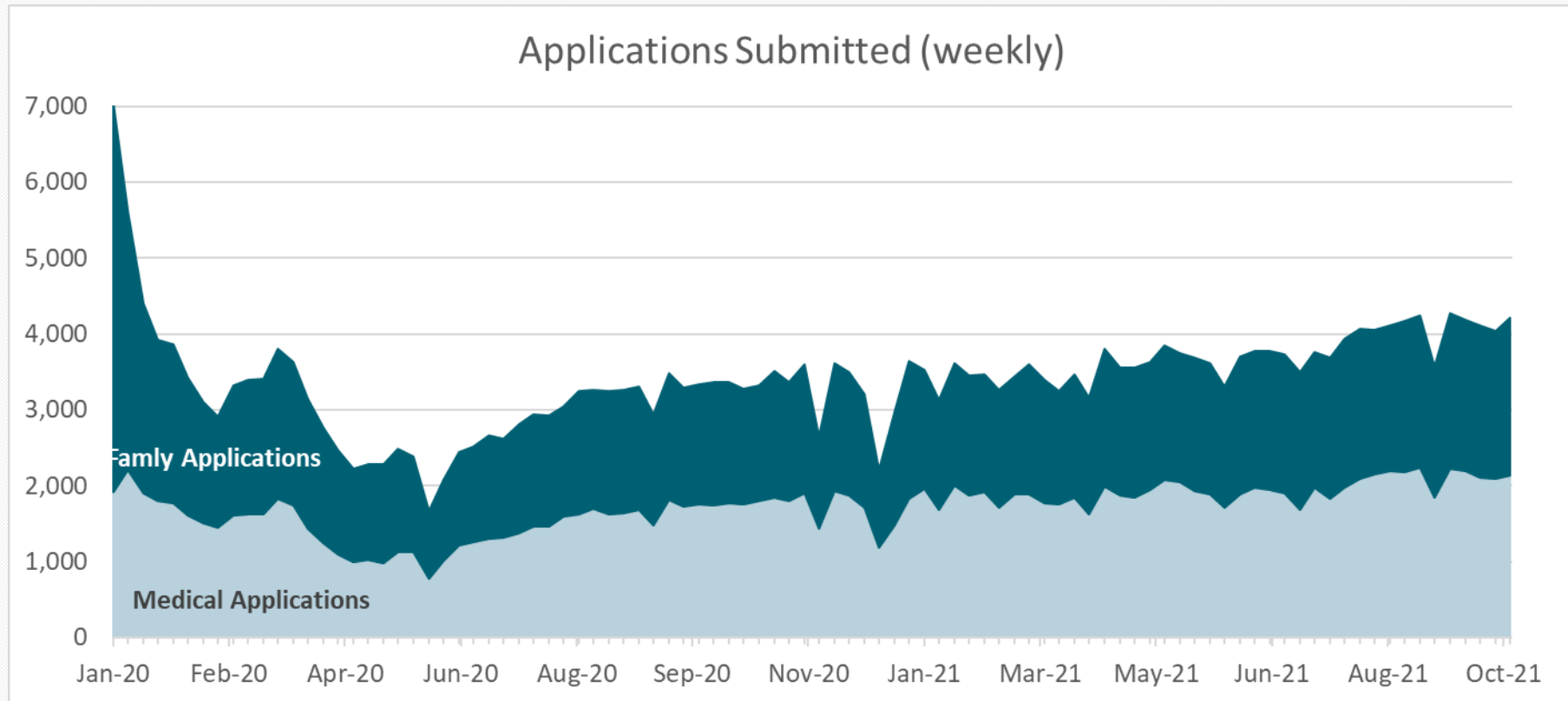
Join our listserv at
bit.ly/PaidLeaveList

Operations Telephony Data

8/9-10/15

Customer Care Call Processing	8/9 8/13	8/16 8/20	8/23 8/27	8/30 9/3	9/6 9/10	9/13 9/17	9/20 9/24	9/27 10/1	10/4 10/8	10/11 10/15
Calls Presented to PFML	12,736	11,810	10,603	10,847	12,004	13,993	12,434	14,395	16,562	20,778
Calls Presented	9,032	7,895	8,012	8,164	7,471	9,091	9,109	9,523	10,797	10,689
Calls Answered	3,619	3,373	3,507	3,812	2,763	3,586	3,382	4,051	4,222	3,527
Calls Abandoned	5,413	4,522	4,505	4,352	4,708	5,505	5,727	5,472	6,575	7,162
Average Handle Time	0:10:23	0:09:28	0:09:26	0:10:02	0:09:33	0:09:34	0:10:04	0:09:40	0:08:52	0:09:19
Max Handle Time	2:01:01	2:29:37	1:40:03	1:49:46	1:36:32	1:29:19	3:41:34	2:15:59	1:30:41	2:21:22
Average Queue Time	0:47:25	0:48:28	0:39:49	0:39:27	0:56:58	0:52:21	0:55:12	0:46:46	0:40:17	0:53:31
Max Queue Time	3:29:49	3:55:26	2:39:20	2:37:59	3:50:31	3:28:51	3:33:35	4:11:24	3:33:47	5:00:32

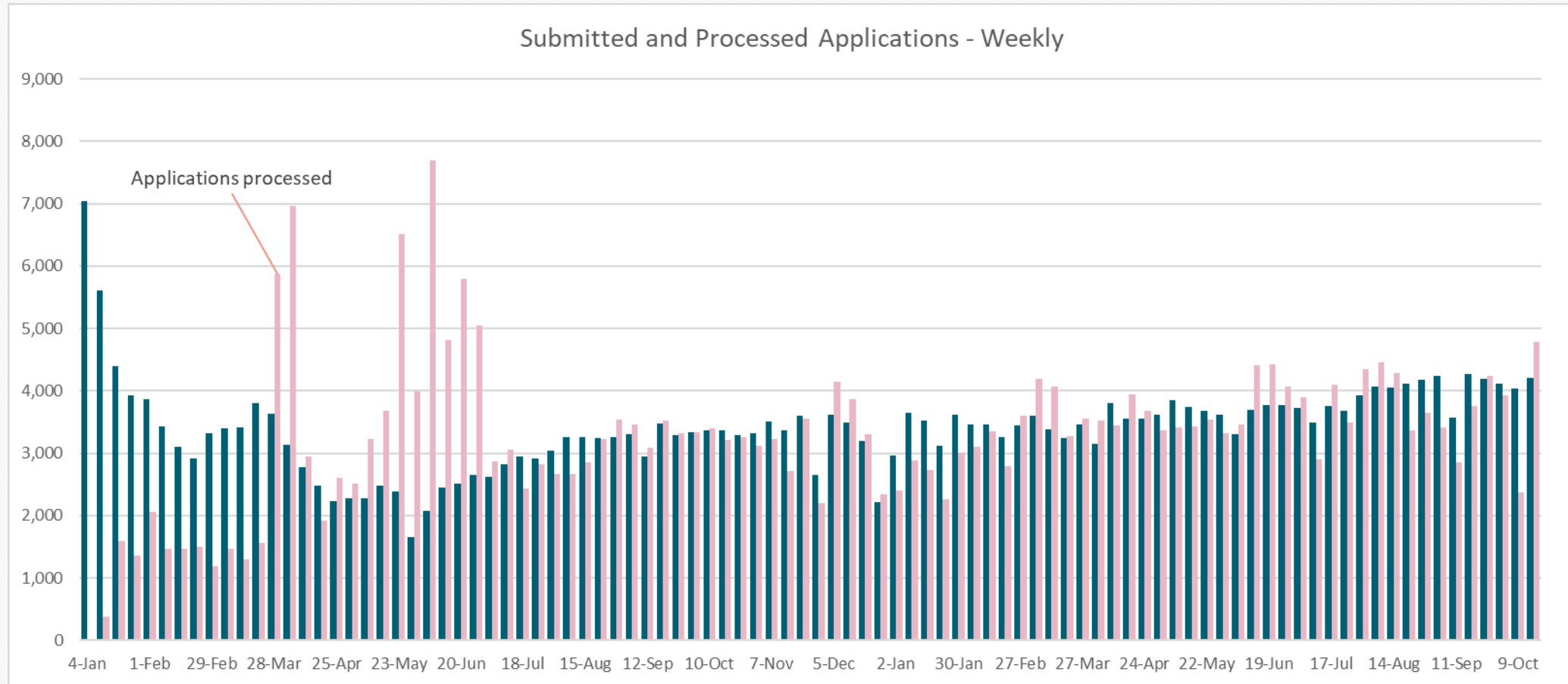
Application & Weekly Claim data through 10/16/21



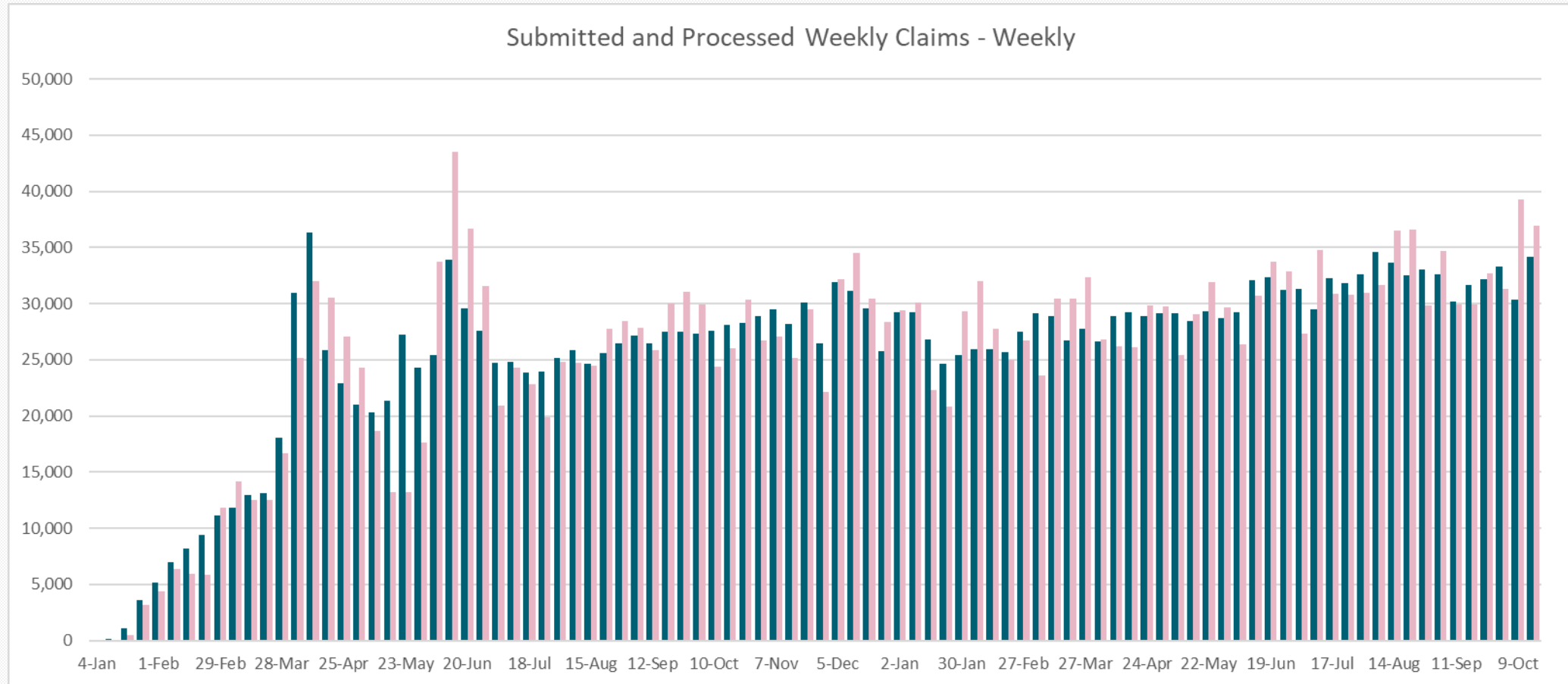
Application & Weekly Claim data past 10 weeks

Week Ending	14-Aug	21-Aug	28-Aug	4-Sep	11-Sep	18-Sep	25-Sep	2-Oct	9-Oct	16-Oct
Applications submitted	4,051	4,111	4,173	4,238	3,574	4,275	4,185	4,116	4,033	4,206
Submitted via paper	37	27	45	34	27	39	62	61	55	67
Family total	47%	47%	48%	47%	48%	48%	47%	49%	48%	49%
Family Bonding	34%	35%	36%	35%	36%	35%	34%	37%	35%	37%
Family Care	13%	12%	12%	12%	12%	13%	13%	12%	13%	13%
Family Military	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%
Medical total	53%	53%	52%	53%	52%	52%	53%	51%	52%	51%
Medical Self	45%	46%	45%	45%	45%	44%	45%	42%	38%	37%
Medical Pregnancy	8%	7%	7%	8%	7%	8%	7%	9%	14%	13%

Application & Weekly Claim data – through 10/16/21



Application & Weekly Claim data – through 10/16/21



Processing time – past 10 weeks

Week Ending	14-Aug	21-Aug	28-Aug	4-Sep	11-Sep	18-Sep	25-Sep	2-Oct	9-Oct	16-Oct
Avg weeks processing time for applications processed in the week indicated	1.9	2.0	2.0	2.1	2.5	2.6	2.5	2.5	3.0	2.9
Median weeks processing time for applications processed in the week indicated	1.4	1.6	1.7	1.9	2.1	2.3	2.3	2.1	2.6	2.7