

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. As of January 2020, most people who work in the state of Washington are 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 is 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 a 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 began 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. 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.

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' advance 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.

