

Paid Parental Leave

POLICY

Paid Parental Leave provides new parents the opportunity to bond with their children, which has a positive, lifelong impact on a child's development. Additionally, it supports the County's Equity and Social Justice guiding principles by reducing disparities between how low- and high-wage employees take leave.

Paid Parental Leave supplements an employee's accrued paid leaves. The employee will receive the equivalent of his or her full salary for up to a total of twelve weeks, when combined with the employee's accrued leave (except for one week of sick leave and one week of vacation leave), following the birth, adoption, or foster-to-adopt placement of a child with the employee.

Eligibility

- Paid Parental Leave is available to all leave-eligible employees who have been employed with the County for at least six months of continuous service at the time of the birth, adoption, or foster-to-adopt placement ("qualifying event").
- Participants must be either a non-represented employee or an employee represented by a union that has signed an agreement to participate in the program. A list of participating unions can be found at <http://www.kingcounty.gov/audience/employees/pay-benefits/paid-parental-leave/union-participation.aspx>
- If both parents work for King County, then each employee is entitled to up to 12 weeks of Paid Parental Leave.

Benefit Amount

- An employee's supplemental leave benefit is calculated based on the employee's accrued leave balances at the time of the qualifying event.
- The employee will receive the equivalent of his or her full salary for up to a total of twelve weeks, when combined with the employee's accrued leave (except for one week of sick leave and one week of vacation leave, or the equivalent for Benefit Time). For example:
 - If at the time of the qualifying event, the employee has three weeks of accrued vacation leave and two weeks of sick leave.
 - Two weeks of vacation leave and one week of sick leave would be applied towards the twelve weeks of Paid Parental Leave.
 - Then, the County would provide the employee an additional nine weeks of supplemental leave, for a total of twelve weeks of Paid Parental Leave.
 - A calculator is available at: <http://www.kingcounty.gov/~media/employees/benefits/documents/leaves/paid-parental-leave-calculator.ashx?la=en>
- The employee is permitted to use the supplemental leave first. Additionally, the employee may choose to take less than twelve weeks of leave.
- Supplemental Paid Parental Leave is not subject to cash out.
- An employee who does not return to work for at least six months of continuous service following the leave, will be required to reimburse King County for the salary received while on supplemental paid parental leave.

Benefit Period, Frequency, and Concurrency

- Paid Parental Leave must be used within twelve months of the qualifying event.
- An employee may use Paid Parental Leave on an intermittent or part-time basis, as long as it is consistent with the department's operational needs, and it is approved in writing by the employee's supervisor prior to the leave.
- Paid Parental Leave will run concurrently with the County's family and medical leave, as well as federal and state family and medical leave laws, to the fullest extent permitted by law.

Job Protection, Health Benefits, and Seniority

- Paid Parental Leave is protected leave. Barring required budget cuts or layoffs, an employee's job cannot be eliminated while the employee is on leave. Further, no retaliatory action may be taken against an employee for participating or planning to participate in the program.
- The employee will continue to receive all health benefits and shall continue to accrue vacation and sick leave during the period of Paid Parental Leave.
- Collective bargaining agreements will determine how Paid Parental Leave affects seniority.

PROCEDURE FOR REQUESTING PAID PARENTAL LEAVE

1. Provide notice – In all but a small minority of cases, employees will have advance notice of the need for Paid Parental Leave. Except in the rare circumstance when the need for leave is unexpected, at least thirty days' notice must be given to the department human resources representative and/or immediate supervisor. In the rare case when the need for leave is not foreseeable, you must provide notice as soon as possible.
2. Discuss your anticipated leave duration and schedule with the department human resources representative and/or your immediate supervisor. If you plan to take intermittent or part-time leave, this must be approved in writing prior to the leave.
3. Complete the *Protected Family and Medical Leave Request Form* found under "Leave Request" at <http://www.kingcounty.gov/~media/employees/benefits/documents/leaves/fmla-request-form-fillable.ashx?la=en>
4. Submit the *Protected Family and Medical Leave Request Form*, along with acceptable documentation of the birth, adoption, or foster-to-adopt placement of the child, to the department human resources representative.
5. If you enter your own time, use PeopleSoft time reporting codes (TRC):
 - 754 – for concurrent FMLA/KCFML Paid Parental Leave time
 - 755 – for concurrent KCFML Paid Parental Leave time
 - 751 – for Paid Parental Leave time (not concurrent with FMLA or KCFML)

QUESTIONS

Refer all questions or comments to your department's HR Service Delivery Manager or to the Human Resources Division.