

N E W S R E L E A S E

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California's Paid Family Leave marks its 10th Anniversary; Expands to cover more family members

SACRAMENTO – California's groundbreaking Paid Family Leave (PFL) program gives employees opportunities to care for ill family members and bond with new children – a program that has provided partial wage replacement to an estimated 1.8 million Californians over the last decade. Today, as PFL marks its tenth anniversary, the state law is expanding to cover a broader circle of family members.

Secretary David Lanier of the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency noted that a decade ago "California became the first state in the nation to offer benefits to employees who take time off to care for a seriously ill child, parent, spouse, or registered domestic partner, or to bond with a newborn or newly adopted child. And today, thanks to legislation signed by Governor Jerry Brown last fall, we're expanding that program to cover caring for a seriously ill grandparent, grandchild, sibling, and parent-in-law."

The program is administered by the California Employment Development Department (EDD).

"When PFL was signed into law a decade ago, it signaled a recognition that employees at times have to make difficult decisions between family and work obligations, and we simply don't want Californians to have to choose between being good parents and good employees," said EDD Director Patrick W. Henning Jr. "I'm proud of the dedicated work EDD staff have delivered over the last ten years in easing those decisions for about 1.8 million of our fellow Californians, and supporting their families' needs."

In celebration of the first ten years of PFL, the EDD has compiled a summary report of its use over that time. [Paid Family Leave: Ten Years of Assisting Californians in Need, July 1, 2004 – June 30, 2014](#) includes information about PFL, statistics, the experiences of those who have used PFL, and most commonly asked questions.

(more)

"California's first-in-the-nation Paid Family Leave law has provided California families with economic stability during important family events and has benefited California businesses and the state economy. Now it's a model as a national conversation starts about how best to provide paid family leave across the country," said Ann O'Leary, Vice-President and Director of the Children & Families program at Next Generation.

Highlights of Paid Family Leave in California:

- PFL provides benefits of 55 percent of a worker's wage, up to a weekly maximum of \$1,067. The average benefit has risen from \$405 a week in 2004 to \$526 a week today.
- The number of PFL claims has grown steadily, from 150,514 in the first year to 215,830 in the most recently completed year of 2012-2013, a total of 1.8 million claims in the first nine years.
- Total benefits paid have risen from \$295.6 million in 2004-2005 to \$554.1 million last year, a total of \$4.6 billion in the past decade.
- Ninety percent of the claims are for bonding with a new child, ten percent for caring for an ill family member.
- The number of men filing claims, most of them new fathers, has increased over 400 percent, from 12,812 in the first year to 65,513 last year.

For more program details, visit the [Paid Family Leave](#) section of EDD's website. Currently, only two other states offer some form of paid family leave – New Jersey and Rhode Island. Washington state enacted a paid family leave law in 2007, but it has yet to be implemented because of funding difficulties.

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