

Paid Family Leave

Ten Years of Assisting Californians in Need



10-YEAR ANNIVERSARY

July 1, 2004 – July 1, 2014



On September 25, 2002, Senate Bill (SB) 1661 was enacted, making California the first state in the nation to provide Family Temporary Disability Insurance, more commonly known as Paid Family Leave (PFL). Established within the State Disability Insurance (SDI) program and administered by the Employment Development Department (EDD), PFL provides benefits to individuals who take time off of work to care for a seriously ill child, spouse, parent, or registered domestic partner, or to bond with a new minor child due to birth, adoption, or foster care placement. The EDD began issuing benefit payments on July 1, 2004.

Individuals can receive up to six weeks of PFL benefits within a 12-month period. Approximately 13.1 million Californians are covered by PFL.

Eligibility

To be eligible for PFL benefits, an employee must:

- Be unable to do their regular or customary work for at least eight days due to the need to provide care or to bond with a new child.
- Be employed or actively looking for work at the time the family leave begins.
- Have lost wages due to caring for a seriously ill family member or bonding with a new child, or if unemployed, been actively looking for work.
- Have earned at least \$300 from which SDI deductions were withheld during a base period.
- Obtain medical certification from a physician/practitioner for claims to care for a seriously ill family member.
- Complete and submit a claim form within 49 days of the first day of their family leave or they may lose benefits.

Expansion of PFL Program to Cover More Family Members

On September 24, 2013, Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. signed Senate Bill (SB) 770, extending PFL to workers who take time off of work to care for a seriously ill parent-in-law, grandparent, grandchild, or sibling. The implementation date for SB 770, July 1, 2014, coincides with the 10-year anniversary of PFL.

Paid Family Leave Highlights

Since implementation of PFL on July 1, 2004:

- The SDI program has paid 1.8 million claims and authorized \$4.6 billion in benefit payments.
- There has been a 43.4 percent increase in claims filed.
- There has been an 87.5 percent increase in benefits paid to California workers.
- Of the total claims filed, approximately 90 percent of claims are parents bonding with a new child and 10 percent are individuals caring for a seriously ill family member.
- PFL claims filed by males have increased by more than 400 percent.

Claims Filed		
Fiscal Year	Claims Filed	Percent Change
2004-05	150,514	
2005-06	160,988	7.0%
2006-07	174,838	8.6%
2007-08	192,494	10.1%
2008-09	197,638	2.7%
2009-10	190,743	-3.5%
2010-11	204,893	7.4%
2011-12	210,167	2.6%
2012-13	215,830	2.7%
Percent Change 2004 to 2013		43.4%

Benefits Paid		
Fiscal Year	Benefits (in Millions)	Percent Change
2004-05	\$295.6	
2005-06	\$348.9	18.0%
2006-07	\$387.1	10.9%
2007-08	\$438.2	13.2%
2008-09	\$471.8	7.7%
2009-10	\$468.8	-0.6%
2010-11	\$498.4	6.3%
2011-12	\$527.1	5.8%
2012-13	\$554.1	5.1%
Percent Change 2004 to 2013		87.5%

Paid Family Leave by Gender 2004-05 Fiscal Year		
Gender	Claims Filed	Percent
Female	61,266	82.5%
Male	12,812	17.3%
No Response	167	0.2%

Paid Family Leave by Gender 2012-13 Fiscal Year		
Gender	Claims Filed	Percent
Female	151,086	69.6%
Male	65,513	30.2%
No Response	439	0.2%

Paid Family Leave Average Weekly Benefit

Calendar Year	Average Weekly Benefit	Maximum Weekly Benefit Amount
2004	\$405	\$603
2005	\$422	\$728
2006	\$435	\$840
2007	\$450	\$882
2008	\$464	\$917
2009	\$481	\$959
2010	\$489	\$987
2011	\$491	\$987
2012	\$504	\$1,011
2013	\$526	\$1,067

Calendar Year is used for comparison to the maximum weekly benefit amount.

Testimonials

*“Paid Family Leave
was a complete
lifesaver...”*

“Paid Family Leave was a complete lifesaver. I did not realize how much life would change after having a baby and the unforeseen obstacles. After six weeks of Disability Insurance, neither my baby nor I were ready for me to return to work. My family and I are truly grateful that California offers an additional six weeks of leave to care for a newborn baby.”

—P. Felix

"A few months before our son was due, I researched my options for spending the most amount of time at home with my family. It was vital for me to help with our transition from the hospital to our home, and support my wife in any way possible. Paid Family Leave was invaluable to me as a new father, and my wife, as she delivered via C-section and needed a lot of help with the baby while she recovered. Once I returned to work, many of my coworkers who were also soon-to-be fathers heard about my time off and used Paid Family Leave to support their spouses and spend time with their newborns."

—M. Fitzgerald

"As a first-time mother, I was grateful for the benefits I received from California's Paid Family Leave. The experience of bonding with my newborn—of getting to care for her, watch her daily development, and learn new and ever-evolving parenting skills—was invaluable and irreplaceable. Thanks to Paid Family Leave, I was able to stay at home with my newborn daughter and enjoy being a new mother without having to worry about working to secure an income."

—R. Richins

"Paid Family Leave was a great resource to utilize after having my child. Not only did it provide me with extra time to bond with my baby before having to return to work, it also provided my husband with the opportunity to bond with our son before he returned to work. The extra six weeks really does make a difference, especially when your baby will be attending daycare because we were able to have that special bond with him, make sure he was happy and healthy, and ready to be looked after by others."

—S. Daniels





"Nine years after passage of the bill, my husband was able to use paid family leave when my mother-in-law fell and has remained bed-ridden. Moreover, because of the recent expansion of the program to relatives such as siblings, grandparents, and in-laws, I will likely be using paid family leave in the future. I am thankful to the legislators and community organizations that 10 years ago recognized the critical need to help working baby boomers, like me, balance work and family. The paid family leave program lessens my financial strain and most importantly, it supports what I value most—my family."

—D. Benton

"Our second son was born with clubfeet, a birth defect that is effectively treatable if you start early enough. This was extremely stressful for our family, and if I had not been able to take paid leave to care for him, I don't know what I would have done—how could I have possibly concentrated on work? Now that the hardest part of my youngest son's treatment is over and I am back at work, I can concentrate better and can do my work more effectively because I could take paid time off. I wish that everyone in this country had access to the rights of Paid Family Leave."

—M. Ignatius



Frequently Asked Questions

Who is covered by Paid Family Leave?

Workers covered by State Disability Insurance (SDI) and have earnings from which SDI deductions were withheld during the base period are covered by Paid Family Leave. If a Voluntary Plan insurer provides a company's Disability Insurance coverage in lieu of SDI, then it must also provide Paid Family Leave coverage. Self-employed individuals are covered only if they participate in the Disability Insurance Elective Coverage program. Some government employees may be eligible for Paid Family Leave benefits if they pay into the SDI program.

How do I apply for Paid Family Leave?

To apply for Paid Family Leave, you may submit a *Claim for Paid Family Leave (PFL) Benefits*, DE 2501F form online through SDI Online, or you may request a hard copy of the DE 2501F and mail it to the EDD. With your claim form, you will need to submit medical certification from your family member's physician/practitioner or documentation showing the relationship between you and your new child.

Does Paid Family Leave provide job protection?

Paid Family Leave does not protect your job. It provides partial wage replacement when you are unable to work due to the need to care for a child, parent, parent-in-law, grandparent, grandchild, sibling, spouse, or registered domestic partner, or to bond with a new child. An employee may have his or her job protected under other laws, such as the Family and Medical Leave Act and the California Family Rights Act.

May I receive Paid Family Leave benefits if I work part time?

If you work part time and suffer a wage loss due to family care leave, you may receive benefits provided you are otherwise eligible.

Do I need to take all of my Paid Family Leave benefits at one time?

No. The law does not establish a minimum number of hours or days or weeks that you must take Paid Family Leave. It only establishes the maximum leave time of six paid weeks within a 12-month period.

How soon will I receive my first benefit payment from Paid Family Leave after submitting my claim form?

Most Paid Family Leave benefits are issued within two weeks after a properly completed claim is received. The EDD uses the EDD Debit CardSM from Bank of America to deliver benefit payments for all EDD benefit programs including Disability Insurance, Paid Family Leave, and Unemployment Insurance. The EDD Debit CardSM is valid for three years from the date of issue and customers should keep their card until the expiration date of the card has passed.

For Bonding Claims: A properly completed claim includes both Part A – Statement of Claimant, and Part B – Bonding Certification. Be sure to submit a copy of your “Proof of Relationship” document with your claim form. A PFL bonding claim must be submitted within that first 12-month period the child is in the family. When SDI receives a properly completed application, Parts A and B of your *Claim for Paid Family Leave (PFL) Benefits*, DE 2501F, your claim is generally processed within 14 days.

For Care Claims: A properly completed claim includes Part A – Statement of Claimant, Part C – Statement of Care Recipient, and Part D – Doctor’s Certification. You must complete and mail a claim form within 49 days of the first day of your family leave or you may lose benefits. When SDI receives a properly completed application, Parts A, C, and D of your *Claim for Paid Family Leave (PFL) Benefits*, DE 2501F, your claim is generally processed within 14 days.

How will the weekly benefit amount for my Paid Family Leave claim be calculated?

The weekly benefit amount is calculated based on the calendar quarter with the highest earnings in your base period. The base period covers 12 months and is divided into four consecutive quarters of 3 months each. The wages the claimant was paid approximately 5 to 18 months before the claim begins are included in the base period (they must be subject to the State Disability Insurance tax). The base period does not include wages paid at the time the claim begins.

The weekly benefit amount for Paid Family Leave is approximately 55 percent of your earnings up to the maximum weekly benefit amount.

NOTE: If the claimant received Disability Insurance pregnancy-related benefits and then filed a Paid Family Leave claim to bond with a new child, the weekly benefit amount is the same as the Disability Insurance weekly benefit amount. There is no new calculation of the weekly benefit amount when the bonding claim follows the Disability Insurance pregnancy claim. This is true even if the bonding claim does not immediately follow the pregnancy-related disability claim.

Can I use Paid Family Leave back-to-back with my Disability Insurance claim for pregnancy? Will there be an additional seven-day waiting period for Paid Family Leave?

You may receive Paid Family Leave benefits to bond with your new child as soon as you have recovered from a pregnancy-related disability and are no longer receiving Disability Insurance benefits. There is no additional seven-day waiting period for a Paid Family Leave claim to bond with a newborn when the Paid Family Leave claim follows the Disability Insurance pregnancy-related claim. You will automatically be sent a *Claim for Paid Family Leave (PFL) Benefits – New Mother, DE 2501FP*, when a pregnancy-related disability claim ends.

What is integration/coordination of Paid Family Leave benefits?

Integration/coordination of Paid Family Leave benefits is a process in which the full Paid Family Leave weekly benefit amount is paid to the employee and the employee is also being paid wages from the employer. With this process the employee could potentially receive up to 100% of his/her normal gross weekly wages for the benefit period (provided the employee has leave balances available).

For example: An employee's current gross weekly wage is \$500. The weekly benefit amount from Paid Family Leave is \$275. The \$500 minus \$275 equals a \$225 per week wage loss. Consequently, the employer can integrate/coordinate a maximum amount of \$225 per week in gross wages to the employee, resulting in the employee receiving the equivalent of his/her normal weekly gross pay.

NOTE: It is the responsibility of the employer and the employee to ensure that the employee is not receiving more than 100% of his/her normal gross wages when receiving integrated/coordinated wages from his/her employer in conjunction with the Paid Family Leave weekly benefit amount balance.

What must I report to the Paid Family Leave office when I am receiving benefits?

You must report in writing or contact the Paid Family Leave office immediately:

- If you have returned to part-time, intermittent, or full-time work.
- If you have stopped providing care or bonding.
- To report the care recipient's date of death.

To advise the EDD in writing of your return to work, return the *Notice of Automatic Payment (PFL)*, DE 2587F form, or contact Paid Family Leave at 1-877-238-4373 or online using Ask EDD.





STATE OF CALIFORNIA
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EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

The EDD is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Requests for services, aids, and/or alternate formats need to be made prior to the event by calling 1-866-490-8879 (voice). TTY users, please call the California Relay Service at 711.