



California Paid Family Leave

Helping Californians be there for the moments that matter.

A helpful guide for employers and community counselors.



California Paid Family Leave

California Paid Family Leave (PFL) provides up to eight weeks of partial wage replacement to eligible Californians who need time away from work to:

- Care for a seriously ill child, parent, parent-in-law, grandparent, grandchild, sibling, spouse, or registered domestic partner.
- Bond with a new child entering the family by birth, adoption, or foster care placement.
- Take part in a qualifying event because of a spouse, registered domestic partner, parent, or child's military deployment to a foreign country, including arranging childcare or making financial arrangements.

This guide is designed to help you assist your employees and customers in understanding and navigating the PFL program so they can be present for the moments that matter most.

Who Pays for PFL?

California PFL is funded entirely by employees through State Disability Insurance (SDI) deductions from their paychecks (noted as "CASDI" on most paystubs). PFL is not a government welfare or aid program.



What Counts as a Qualifying Event for PFL?

There are three life events that qualify for PFL – bonding, caregiving, and participating in a qualifying military event.

Bonding – A new parent must be taking time off work to welcome a new child into the family through birth, adoption, or foster care placement. Bonding benefits must be taken within 12 months of the child entering the family.

A parent is defined as an individual, spouse, or registered domestic partner who will be serving as a parent for the child.

Military Assist – An individual must be taking time off work to take part in a qualifying event resulting from a spouse, registered domestic partner, parent, or child’s military deployment to a foreign country.

A qualifying event is any military event or an essential need resulting from a family member’s deployment to a foreign country. For PFL, the military event does not have to occur in California. Qualifying events include:

- Arranging for childcare or parental care during the deployment.
- Assisting in making legal or financial arrangements during the deployment.
- Attending counseling.

- Assisting the military member during rest and recuperation leave.
- Attending military sponsored events or ceremonies.
- Representing the military member at federal, state, or local events.
- Addressing issues due to the military member’s death.

Caregiving – An individual must be taking time off work to care for a seriously ill child, parent, parent-in-law, grandparent, grandchild, sibling, spouse, or registered domestic partner.

PFL defines seriously ill as an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that requires:

- At-home care or in-patient care in a hospital, hospice, or residential medical care facility.
- Continuing treatment by a licensed health professional.

How does PFL Work?

California employees are eligible for partial-wage-replacement benefits that can be taken all at once or split over a 12-month period. To bond with a new child, leave can be taken anytime within the first 12 months of a child entering the family.

Example: After adopting a new child, a parent may take two weeks of PFL initially and then the remaining time eight months later, should they need it.

What is Integration of Wages with Benefits?

PFL provides 60% to 70% of an employee's past salary. Employers may allow employees to use vacation, sick, paid time off, or other leave to supplement their PFL benefits to receive 100% of their pay. Employees can use the [Disability Insurance and PFL Calculator](http://edd.ca.gov/PFL_Calculator) (edd.ca.gov/PFL_Calculator) to estimate their weekly benefits.

Does PFL Provide Job Protection?

PFL does not provide job protection, just paid benefits. However, employees may qualify for job protection through other laws that can be taken at the same time as PFL. Employees should check with human resources about job protection before applying for PFL.

Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) – The FMLA is a federal law that gives eligible employees 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave in a 12-month period to bond with a new child, to care for an ill family member, or to participate in a qualifying military event. Visit the [Department of Labor](http://dol.gov/agencies/whd/fmla) (dol.gov/agencies/whd/fmla) to learn more.

California Family Rights Act (CFRA) – Similar to the FMLA, the CFRA allows eligible employees up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave in a 12-month period to bond with a new child or to care for a seriously ill family member.

New Parent Leave Act (NPLA) – The NPLA provides eligible employees 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to bond with a new child within one year of the child's birth, adoption, or foster care placement. The law covers individuals who work for small employers with 20 or more employees.

Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA) – The FEHA does not provide job protection during PFL but it does provide job protection to individuals while they are using Disability Insurance (DI) for pregnancy disability, childbirth, or a related medical condition. The law prohibits employer discrimination due to disability or pregnancy.

To learn more about the CFRA, NPLA and FEHA, visit the [California Civil Rights Department](http://calcivilrights.ca.gov) (calcivilrights.ca.gov).



How Do PFL and DI Benefits Work Together?

Caregiving

An employee receiving DI benefits due to a non-work-related injury or illness may require care due to their disability, and their family members may be eligible to receive PFL benefits to take time away from work to provide that care.

Bonding

A mother receiving DI benefits due to pregnancy or childbirth may transition from her DI claim to a PFL bonding claim and will automatically receive a *Claim for Paid Family Leave (PFL) Benefits - New Mother (DE 2501FP)* form when her pregnancy-related DI claim ends.

How Can Employees Apply for PFL?

They can apply online or by mail using a paper claim form. Claims should be submitted no later than 41 days after individuals begin their family leave but not before the first day of leave.

What Information Is Needed to File?

- Name of the employer.
- Date they want their claim to begin. This would be their first day of family leave.
- Wages paid (if any), and last day of work.
- Claim specific supporting documentation.

Bonding claims

- Documentation showing proof of relationship with their child (birth certificate, adoptive placement agreement, or foster care placement record).

Where Can Employees Apply for Benefits?

1. Visit [SDI Online](https://edd.ca.gov/SDI_Online) (edd.ca.gov/SDI_Online).
2. Register for a new SDI Online account or sign in to an existing account.
3. Select "New Claim".

Caregiving claims

- Medical certification showing that the care recipient has a serious health condition and requires care. This must be completed by a licensed health professional.
- Information about the person who will be cared for and their signature.

Military assist claims

- Military assist certification.
- Supporting military documentation (covered active duty orders, a letter of impending call or order to covered duty, or documentation of military leave signed by the approving authority for the military member's rest and recuperation).
- Documentation for the qualifying event.

To Apply for Benefits by Mail:

1. Complete a *Claim for Paid Family Leave (PFL) Benefits* (DE 2501F) form (available in English and Spanish.) To order a paper English claim or to download the Spanish form (DE 2501F/S), visit [EDD Forms and Publications](https://edd.ca.gov/forms) (edd.ca.gov/forms).
2. Submit the completed form with all required documentation to EDD.

What Happens Next?

- A properly completed claim, including all supplemental documentation, typically takes two weeks to be processed.
- We will mail a *Notice of Computation* (DE 429DF) confirming that we received their claim and providing their estimated benefit amount.
- Individuals will know we approved their claim once they receive an *Electronic Benefit Payment (EBP) Notification* (DE 2500E).
- The individual can choose their payment option when filling out their claim form.
- If more information is needed or if the claim has been denied, we will contact the individual.





For more information, call or visit **Contact SDI**
(edd.ca.gov/Disability/Contact_SD1.htm)
for office locations.

English	1-877-238-4373
Spanish	1-877-379-3819
Cantonese	1-866-692-5595
Vietnamese	1-866-692-5596
Armenian	1-866-627-1567
Punjabi	1-866-627-1568
Tagalog	1-866-627-1569
TTY	1-800-445-1312



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 by calling 1-866-490-8879 (voice). TTY users, please call the California Relay Service at 711.