



CALIFORNIA PAID FAMILY LEAVE

# Helping Californians be present for the moments that matter.

Helpful information for employers  
and community counselors



# California Paid Family Leave

California Paid Family Leave (PFL) provides partial pay to Californians who need to take time off from work to care for a seriously ill child, parent, parent-in-law, grandparent, grandchild, sibling, spouse, or registered domestic partner. Benefits are also available to parents (individuals, spouses, or registered domestic partners) who need time to bond with a new child entering their family by birth, adoption, or foster care placement.

This guide will help you assist your employees and/or 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 entirely funded by workers through State Disability Insurance (SDI) deductions from their paychecks (noted as “CASDI” on most paystubs). Most California workers pay SDI taxes, meaning they are most likely eligible for PFL benefits. It is not a government welfare or aid program.



# What is a qualifying life event for California PFL?

There are two life events that qualify for PFL – bonding and caregiving.

**Bonding** – To qualify, an individual must be a new parent welcoming a child into the family through birth, adoption, or foster care placement within the past 12 months.

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

**Caregiving** – To qualify, an individual must 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 physician or health care practitioner.

## How does California PFL work?

California workers are eligible for up to six weeks of partial wage replacement benefits. Leave can either be taken all at once or split over a 12-month period. Bonding leave must be taken within 12 months of the child entering the family.

*Example:* After adopting a new child, a parent may take two weeks of PFL initially and then the remaining four weeks eight months later.

## What is California’s PFL wage replacement rate?

California PFL pays claimants approximately 60 to 70 percent of their salary, with a maximum of \$1,216 per week. Employers may allow workers to use vacation, sick, paid time off, or other leave to supplement their PFL benefits to receive up to 100 percent pay. The Employment Development Department (EDD) provides an online calculator at [edd.ca.gov/PFL\\_Calculator](http://edd.ca.gov/PFL_Calculator) to help estimate a claimant’s weekly benefit amount.

## Does California PFL provide job protection?

PFL does not provide job protection, just paid benefits. However, individuals may qualify for job protection through other laws that can be taken concurrently with PFL. Individuals should check with their human resources department about job protection before using 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 or to care for an ill family member. Visit [dol.gov/whd/fmla](https://dol.gov/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. Visit [dfeh.ca.gov](https://dfeh.ca.gov) to learn more.

**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 new law covers individuals who work for small employers with 20 or more employees. Visit [dfeh.ca.gov](https://dfeh.ca.gov) to learn more.

**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. Visit [dfeh.ca.gov](https://dfeh.ca.gov) to learn more.





## How do PFL and DI benefits work together?

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

**Caregiving:** An individual 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 to provide that care.

# How can individuals apply for California PFL?

An individual with a qualifying life event can apply for PFL online for faster processing. Claims should be submitted no later than 41 days after individuals begin their family leave but not before the first day of leave.

## Information needed to file a PFL claim:

- Name of employer(s).
- Last day of work before leave was taken.
- For bonding claims, include documentation showing proof of relationship between the individual and child (e.g., a copy of the child's birth certificate, adoptive placement agreement, or foster care placement record).
- For caregiving claims, include medical certification showing that the care recipient has a serious health condition and requires care. This needs to be completed by the care recipient's physician/practitioner.
- Information about the person who will be cared for and their signature for a caregiving claim.

## To apply for PFL benefits online:

1. Visit SDI Online at [edd.ca.gov/SDI\\_Online](http://edd.ca.gov/SDI_Online).
2. Register for a new SDI Online account or sign into an existing account.
3. Once signed in, select "File a New Claim."

## To apply for PFL benefits by mail:

1. Fill out a *Claim for Paid Family Leave (PFL) Benefits*, DE 2501F form. This form is available in English and Spanish. (Spanish version includes an English form with Spanish instructions.)
2. Submit the form to the EDD with all required documentation. The form can be ordered online or found at an SDI office. Individuals can also request that a copy of the form be mailed to them by visiting [edd.ca.gov/Forms](http://edd.ca.gov/Forms) or by calling 1-877-238-4373.



## What happens next?

A properly completed claim typically takes two weeks to be processed. The EDD mails a *Notice of Computation*, DE 429D, which informs the individual that the claim was received and their estimated benefit amount. Individuals will know their claim has been approved once they receive an *Electronic Benefit Payment (EBP) Notification*, DE 2500E. If more information is needed or the claim has been denied, EDD staff will contact the claimant directly by phone or mail.

Once a claim has been processed and benefits have been paid, the claimant will receive an EDD Debit Card<sup>SM</sup>.

### **A properly completed PFL bonding claim includes:**

- PART A – Statement of Claimant
- PART B – Bonding Certification and supporting documentation showing evidence of the relationship

### **A properly completed PFL caregiving claim includes:**

- PART A – Statement of Claimant
- Page 2 – Care Recipient's Authorization for Disclosure of Personal-Health Information
- PART C – Statement of Care Recipient
- PART D – Physician/Practitioner's Certification





## In California, it's the law.

Paid Family Leave benefits: Giving Californians the time they need to be there for the moments that matter.

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

CALIFORNIA  
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**moments matter.**



Individuals can also visit a Paid Family Leave or Disability Insurance office to obtain claim forms, receive information, or speak to a representative. Visit [edd.ca.gov/Disability/Contact\\_SDI.htm](http://edd.ca.gov/Disability/Contact_SDI.htm) to locate an office.

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.