



Maternity leave entitlements run concurrently where applicable. Please refer to your union's collective bargaining agreement for specifics as employee entitlement options differ depending on bargaining groups.

Applying for Maternity Leave

Go to DORA and fill out a Leave of Absence Request Form. Please indicate you are applying for Maternity Leave and include your approximate due date. At the bottom of the form, include the estimated first day of absence from work and the expected return to work date.

Pregnancy Disability Leave

Your maternity leave will be considered under the **Washington State Law Against Discrimination (WLAD)**. This entitlement provides UNPAID job protection for the duration an employee is considered "disabled" while recovering from delivery. Disability period is 6 weeks for a normal birth and 8 weeks for a C-Section in less more time is determined by your healthcare provider and will be indicated on your **Birth Documentation Form**. Employees who are not eligible for FMLA or PFML will be entitled to this leave.

FMLA – Family Medical Leave Act

The Family & Medical Leave Act (FMLA) provides eligible employees up to 60 workdays of unpaid leave each calendar year, and requires district health benefits to be maintained. You can use your accrued leave during your disability period.

- Your district Leave Coordinator will let you know if you are eligible for **FMLA**.

PFML – Washington State Paid Family & Medical Leave

In order to be eligible to take leave under PFML, an employee must have worked a minimum of 820 hours in Washington over the last year. This is not a job protected entitlement.

Your Pay While of FMLA

You are able to apply your accrued leave hours such as sick, personal or vacation hours to remain in a paid status while using the FMLA entitlement. If your leave hours run out you will become unpaid at that point for the duration of your leave.

You can elect to participate in leave share. Donations are completely anonymous and are only applied once all accrued leave hour balances are exhausted. You can elect to reserve 40 hours of sick leave to remain in your leave balance for when you return from your leave.

If you go on unpaid leave, your contract will stop, your earnings from the first day in your contract until the date that you became unpaid will be calculated and any “escrow” will be divided amongst the remaining months in your contract and paid out each month through August. Upon your return, your earnings will be calculated from your return date through the end of your contract. That amount will then be divided by the number of months left through August.

How Does FMLA and PFML Work Together?

If you take PFML starting from delivery, your FMLA (if eligible) will run concurrently. If you use FMLA starting at delivery you can use PFML later (within one calendar year from the date of delivery).

How PFML Impacts Your Benefits

If you do not run FMLA concurrently or overlap your FMLA by one day you could be in danger of losing your benefits while on this entitlement.

Your Pay While On PFML

Your earnings from the first date of your contract until the date that you begin your PFML entitlement will be calculated and if you have any “escrow” it will then be divided by the months left in contract and paid monthly through August. Your pay assignments will be completely shut off during your leave. Upon your return, your earnings will be calculated from your return date through the end of your contract. That amount will then be divided by the number of months left through August.

What Happens to My Health Benefits When I go on Leave?

Benefits continuation is based on whether you have worked or anticipated to work or be paid for 630 hours in the school year, which begins September 1st and ends August 31st each year. In all circumstances, if you terminate your employment, benefits will end on the last day of the same month in which employment ends. We have outlined three different scenarios that may be applicable:

1. If you have already worked 630 hours when your leave begins, your benefits will continue until August 31st of that school year, unless you terminate employment.
2. If you have not yet worked 630 hours by the date you go on leave or by the date your FMLA status ends, but you anticipate returning to work during the current school year and completing 630 hours of work, then benefits remain in place during your leave.
3. If you have not worked 630 hours before your leave starts or FMLA status ends and are not returning during the school year then benefits will end on the last day of the month that FMLA ended.

Paying Your Premium Portion While on Unpaid Leave

If your pay ends while you remain benefits eligible, you will still be responsible for paying your portion of the premium. If you are receiving a check from the district while on leave that can support your monthly premium, it will be deducted from your check. If you are not receiving a check from the district while on leave, you will be invoiced monthly for your portion of the premium.

Enrolling Your New Baby on Insurance Plan

If you wish to enroll your new baby on your medical, dental and vision plans, you must make a “Special Open Enrollment” request through the SEBB MyAccount enrollment portal within 60 days of your baby’s birth. You add your baby as a dependent on your account to enroll them on your current coverage. You do not need to

wait for your baby's social security number to take these actions. Coverage is retroactive to the date of birth. You will be responsible for paying any additional premium to cover your baby.

Leave Share

Employees that run out of accrued leave hours may participate in leave share. You must be completely out of your own accrued leave hours before leave share donations can be applied. You do have the option to reserve 40 hours of sick leave hours for when you return from your leave. Donations are not guaranteed and are completely anonymous.

Medical Complications

If medical complications develop during delivery for either you or your baby, please ask your doctor to mail or FAX (253) 298-3016 a note to HR advising us that you need more recovery time. You will be able to use earned sick leave through the "back to work" date your doctor recommends.

Working on LOA

If you are on sick leave, you should not attend any trainings or other paid school functions occurring during your period of leave. Prior authorization from the Human Resources Administrator is required for any exception.

Substitute Coverage

If your position requires a substitute during your Leave of Absence, work with your Principal and the Substitute Office to obtain coverage and for your absences to be entered into the Frontline Substitute system. Other employees who may need back up while they are off work, but who do not enter absences in the Frontline Substitute system, should work with their immediate supervisor.

Returning from Leave

In all instances, when an employee is on a Maternity leave, before returning to work, the employee must notify the Leave Coordinator of intent to return to work and be approved by Human Resources to return to work.

How to Continue Benefits if they End?

After you lose eligibility and your benefits, end, you will receive a Continuation Coverage offer letter from the Health Care Authority. This will allow you to sign up for continuation of coverage for up to 18 months through COBRA while on leave. When you enroll, you must pay the full premium, retroactive to the date coverage was ended. Premiums for continuation coverage will be provided in your offer letter and are posted on the Health Care Authority's website.

Questions??

Contact Rhonda Grissom, Leave Coordinator

253-298-3004 or rgrissom@fpschools.org