



ST. MICHAEL - ALBERTVILLE SCHOOLS

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STMA/ MINNESOTA PAID LEAVE INFORMATION & FAQ

Effective January 1, 2026, Minnesota Paid Leave provides payments and job protections when you need time off to care for yourself or your family. Employees may start applying for Minnesota Paid Leave through the State website as of December 1, 2025.

You can take leave for the following qualifying events:

Medical Leave:

- To care for your own serious health condition, including care related to pregnancy, childbirth, and recovery

Family Leave:

- Bonding Leave - to care for and bond with a child welcomed through birth, adoption, or foster placement
- Caring Leave - to care for a family member with a serious health condition
- Military Family Leave - to support a family member called to active duty
- Safety Leave - to respond to issues related to domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking for yourself or a family member

STMA Access Statement:

This information is available in alternative formats for people with disabilities by contacting Employee Services. This Employer notice may also be provided in any language upon request with notification to Employee Services at 763-497-6500 or by contacting michellen@mystma.org. Please do not hesitate to reach out and let us know.

IMPORTANT STMA INFORMATION AND NOTICE EXPECTATIONS

- The STMA School District will run Minnesota Paid Leave concurrently with all other forms of leave where applicable including:
 - 1) Federal Medical Leave Act; and
 - 2) Minnesota Parental Leave.
- The STMA School District Paid Leave Administrators are Michelle Neu at michellen@mystma.org and Douglas Birk at dougalsbi@mystma.org.
- Employees are expected to provide the district a written notice of their intention to take Minnesota Paid Leave (MPL) at least 30 days in advance of the leave, or as soon as is practicable in circumstances where a 30-day notice is not otherwise possible (i.e. emergency or unexpected medical condition).
 - Forms can be accessed on the [Employee Services page](#) of the district website under the [MPL section](#).
 - The district will assume staff will not be working in any capacity for the school district while out on Minnesota Paid Leave.
 - If staff intend to work in any capacity for the school district while out on Minnesota Paid Leave they need to notify Employee Services (on the district leave form) in advance and secure



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district approval.

- Staff will generally be permitted to work separate positions but the district must approve such situations in advance so the district can meet reporting requirements.
- STMA will freeze or stop pay for staff while out of work on MPL.
- STMA will continue to pay the employer portion of any benefit premiums for staff currently enrolled in a benefit plan.
- Staff members will be responsible for paying the premiums outside of the payroll process for insurance and benefit coverage while out on leave and will be invoiced on a monthly basis.
- STMA does not offer supplemental leave coverage for Minnesota Paid Leave. This means that staff cannot access their contract leave, including Earned Safe and Sick Time (ESST), while out on Minnesota Paid Leave to make up the difference between Minnesota Paid Leave and their regular income or salary.

IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND

STMA strongly encourages staff to access their rights under the new Minnesota Paid Leave law. However, STMA does not provide legal advice to employees and STMA is not responsible for identifying pathways for staff to maximize the integration of their individual benefits and this new state program. STMA will provide helpful information and work with employees to understand STMA specific rules but is not responsible for misunderstandings about the application of certain rules that may impact an employee's decision to access Minnesota Paid Leave.

Please understand the application of these rules and the possible integration of varying types of leave with Minnesota Paid Leave is very contextual and may vary depending on the facts and circumstances of each individual's situation. STMA Employee Services will be available for consultation, including meeting with staff virtually or in person, but is not responsible for providing legal advice. Minnesota Paid Leave is a state administered program and an employee's eligibility and benefit payments are determined by the program administrator (DEED).

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What is Minnesota Paid Leave? I never heard of it before.

MN Paid Leave is a state-run program that provides for partial wage replacement and job protections for employees who need extended time away from work. The program is administered by Minnesota's Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED).

2. Am I eligible for Minnesota Paid Leave?

STMA employees are covered by Minnesota Paid Leave. You may qualify for payments if you've been paid 5.3% of the state's average in the past year (\$3,900 for the start of Paid Leave in 2026). Independent contractors are not covered.

3. When is an eligible employee covered for Minnesota Paid Leave?



ST. MICHAEL - ALBERTVILLE SCHOOLS

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Employees may be eligible immediately upon hire if they earned \$3,900 in the prior year.

Employees must experience a qualifying event lasting at least 7 days (intermittently or consecutively). This requirement is not applicable to bonding leave.

Job protections apply once the employee has worked for STMA for at least 90 days.

4. Is my job or position protected while I am out on Minnesota Paid Leave?

Yes. Employees retain the right to be reinstated to the same or equivalent position upon return to work provided they have been employed by the district for at least 90 days.

5. Who pays for Minnesota Paid Leave and why is money being taken from my paycheck?

The taxes for Minnesota Paid Leave will be paid by both STMA and the employee. For 2026, the employee will pay 0.44% of their gross payroll in withholding similar to FICA or unemployment insurance taxes.

6. Is STMA on a private covered plan?

No. This is at the option of the employer and STMA is not currently on a private plan.

7. What about my privacy and the protection of my leave information?

Employees must notify the school district when they apply for Minnesota Paid Leave. However, the school district and school board play no role in whether the request for Minnesota Paid Leave is approved. Eligibility determinations are made by the state administrator (DEED).

Minnesota Paid Leave requests will not appear on the school board agenda or be reviewed by the school board.

Employee and family health information will remain confidential and need only be provided to Employee Services (Human Resources). Such information does not need to be shared with other staff or supervisors.

8. Do I get my full pay while I am out on Minnesota Paid Leave?

No. Minnesota Paid Leave will pay staff between 55% and 90% of their regular pay up to a maximum weekly amount set out by the State. The actual payment is determined by the State and is based on earnings during the designated look back period.

9. When can Minnesota Paid Leave be taken and in what increments?

Most leaves will be taken in a single block. However, Minnesota Paid Leave may be accessed on a regular schedule (same day each week) only as needed, or at different times of the year. Such determinations are made by the state administrator and not by the school district.

10. What happens to my TRA and PERA while I am out on Minnesota Paid Leave?

The school district and the state administrator (DEED) will not be deducting pension contributions while staff are out on Minnesota Paid Leave. Employees are responsible for contacting TRA or pERA for information about purchasing service credits.



ST. MICHAEL - ALBERTVILLE SCHOOLS

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11. If I have ESST time available to use under my Master Contract, can I use that time and then add Minnesota Paid Leave before or after my use of other leave.

Yes. But time used through STMA under circumstances that would otherwise be eligible for Minnesota Paid Leave may be reported to DEED and may be counted against the maximum coverage allotment as determined by DEED for such leaves as medical or bonding time. At this time, the individual results from the application of this rule are uncertain.

12. Can I use vacation or paid time off before or after the use of Minnesota Paid Leave.

Yes. But the use of non-ESST time would be subject to the notice rules set out in the applicable Master Contract. The district may report the use of this time to DEED (the state administrator) where applicable and to the extent the use of such leave intersects with Minnesota Paid Leave.

13. (Certified Staff) - How will the use of Minnesota Paid Leave impact my eligibility for a step or to qualify for Q Comp?

The 120 day service requirement, as defined in the Master Contract, would remain applicable. The requirements set out in Q Comp for bonus payments remain applicable.

14. Why is the district not allowing me to supplement my Minnesota Paid Leave with my contract or STMA leave? I have heard that other school districts are doing this, why not STMA?

The Minnesota Paid Leave statute permits employers to determine whether supplemental leave benefits are available to staff. The STMA School District has determined that it will not permit staff to access STMA related leave benefits while out on Minnesota Paid Leave. Other school districts may have a different policy on this issue and such variance is permitted by statute.

15. How do I take Paid Leave?

1. Notify your supervisor and Employee Services (HR). STMA Schools will expect a 30 day notice when feasible or reasonable. You will need to complete a district form.
2. Apply with Paid Leave through the state website page. You will be able to apply for Paid Leave at paidleave.mn.gov. You can also apply over the phone if needed.

After you apply, you will receive a determination from Paid Leave, which is the official decision from the program about whether your application was approved or denied.

15. Where can I find more information from the State?

Visit paidleave.mn.gov to apply or for more information about Paid Leave, including calculators to help you estimate your premium costs and the payments you could receive under Paid Leave.

Other ways to reach the State for Minnesota Paid Leave Questions

Phone: 651-556-7777 or 844-556-0444 (toll free).

E-mail: paidleave@state.mn.us

Mail: Department of Employment and Economic Development, Paid leave Division



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180 E 5th Street, 12th Floor, Saint Paul, MN

Employer Information:

For more information about STMA administration of Minnesota Paid Leave, you can visit the Employee Services/ Human Resources webpage at: <https://www.stma.k12.mn.us/our-district-new/departments/human-resources>.

You can also contact:

- Michelle Neu, STMA Benefits and Leave Coordinator, at michellen@mystma.org, or call 763-497-6578.
- Douglas Birk, Executive Director of Administrative Services, at douglasbi@mystma.org, or call 763-497-6504.