



WCSD Parental Leave Frequently Asked Questions

For Maternity, Paternity, Child-rearing and Adoption leaves

What is parental leave?

Parental leave allows eligible WCSD employees to take time off work for the birth, adoption, or care of a new child. This includes maternity leave (birth parent), paternity leave (non-birth parent), adoption leave, and child-rearing leave.

What types of parental leave are available?

Type	Description	Paid/Unpaid
Maternity Leave	Leave for the birth parent for recovery and bonding	Paid (if using sick, personal, or vacation leave); may be unpaid or covered under FMLA
Paternity Leave	Leave for the non-birth parent to bond with a new child	Paid (if using leave); may be unpaid or covered under FMLA
Adoption Leave	Leave for bonding or legal/family preparation related to adoption	Paid (if using leave); may be unpaid or covered under FMLA
Child-rearing Leave	Extended time off beyond medical recovery for bonding or caregiving	May be unpaid or covered under FMLA or Board Policy

LEAVE REQUEST PROCESS

Before Arrival

- 1) [Complete a leave of absence request](#)
- 2) Have your doctor fill out the “Certification of Health Care Provider” form that will be emailed to you by a benefits specialist after you submit the leave of absence request.
- 3) Once the Benefits Department approves the leave, you will receive a copy of the approved leave. (Leave dates and pay calculations are subject to change based on delivery date.)

After Arrival

1) Contact your Benefits Specialist indicating the date of delivery and return to work date, if different than your initial leave. Please advise the Benefit Department within 30 (thirty) days of the child's birth if you wish to add the baby to your District insurance.

How do I request parental leave?

1. Notify your supervisor and Benefits Office at least 30 days in advance (or as soon as possible).
2. Submit a Leave of Absence request to the benefits department
3. Submit supporting documentation (e.g., medical certification or proof of adoption).

Is medical documentation required?

Yes, if requesting leave due to pregnancy, childbirth recovery, or a medical condition. Adoption leave may require placement documentation.

How much time can I take off?

- **FMLA:** Up to 12 weeks of job-protected leave in a 12-month period if eligible (for birth, bonding, or adoption).
- **Sick Leave:** May be used for recovery following childbirth (birth parent only).
- **Additional Unpaid Leave:** May be granted with approval per negotiated agreements or WCSD Board Policy.

Note: FMLA runs **concurrently** with paid leave.

Is parental leave paid?

Parental leave is not a separate paid leave type. You can be paid by using:

- **Sick Leave** (only during medical recovery from childbirth)
- **Personal or Vacation Leave** (if available)
- **Short-Term Disability** (if enrolled; applies to birth parent)
- **Catastrophic Leave Bank** (if approved and eligible)
- **Unpaid Leave** (if no balances remain or if choosing to extend)

Will my benefits continue during parental leave?

Yes, as long as you remain in paid status or are covered by FMLA. If your leave becomes unpaid and FMLA is exhausted, you may be responsible for paying the full cost of your benefits.

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RETURNING TO WORK

Can I return early from parental leave?

Yes, with proper notice and medical clearance (if applicable). Notify both your supervisor and the Benefits office to coordinate your return.

Can I request an extension of my leave?

Yes, if additional time is needed beyond FMLA or accumulated leave. Extensions may require HR or Board approval and may be unpaid.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Can both parents take leave if we work for WCSD?

Yes. If both parents are WCSD employees and eligible for FMLA

Can I use sick leave to bond with my child?

No. Sick leave is only for medical recovery. Bonding time (non-medical) must use personal, vacation, or unpaid leave, or qualify under FMLA.

What is the Catastrophic Leave Bank and can I use it?

It's a pool of donated leave available for employees who meet eligibility criteria. Birth parents may apply if they've exhausted all leave due to medical recovery. Non-birth parents do not qualify for bonding time.

Paternity Leave:

Paternity leave follows guidelines under Family Illness leaves. 10 days of sick leave deduction are allowed for paternity requests. If you do not have enough sick days to cover the 10 days, any remaining days could be coded as vacation (if eligible under your position)

or would be unpaid. Any days requested beyond the 10 days could be coded as vacation (if eligible under your position) or would be unpaid.

If you would like to/ need to use sick days beyond the 10, the medical documentation provided for the leave must specify the length of time that is medically required to care for the family member that is incapacitated after delivery. Child bonding and infant care are not periods of incapacitation.

Parental Leave by Bargaining Unit

Licensed Employees (Washoe Education Association)

What leave am I entitled to?

- Maternity: Use of sick leave for medical recovery; up to 6-8 weeks depending on delivery type.
- Bonding: You may use personal leave, vacation (if applicable), or request unpaid child-rearing leave.
- FMLA: Up to 12 weeks of job-protected leave for birth, bonding, or adoption.
- Extended Leave: After FMLA, you may request up to 1 school year of unpaid child-rearing leave, subject to HR approval.

Can both licensed parents take leave?

Yes. However, if both are WCSD employees and qualify for FMLA.

What if I adopt a child?

Adoption qualifies under FMLA. You may use personal leave or take unpaid leave. Sick leave does not apply unless there's a medical reason.

Do I retain my position?

Yes, during FMLA. If you take extended unpaid leave beyond FMLA, you're guaranteed a position in the district but not necessarily your original role.

Classified Employees (Washoe Education Support Professionals)

What leave is available for childbirth and parenting?

- Maternity: Use accrued sick leave during medical recovery.
- Bonding/Adoption: Use vacation, personal, or unpaid leave.
- FMLA: Up to 12 weeks of job-protected leave for eligible employees.

Can I take additional time off beyond FMLA?

Yes, with supervisor and HR approval. Extended unpaid leave may be granted based on operational needs.

What about paternity or partner bonding leave?

non-birth parents can take bonding leave using accrued time or unpaid leave under FMLA. Sick leave is not available for bonding unless there's a medical necessity

School Site Administrators (School Site Administrators Association)**What parental leave provisions apply to administrators?**

- Sick Leave: Used during childbirth recovery only.
- Bonding or Adoption: May use vacation or unpaid leave.
- FMLA: Eligible for up to 12 weeks of protected leave.

Can I use vacation time for bonding?

Yes, vacation time can be used for bonding after birth or adoption, including after FMLA entitlement is exhausted.

Professional-Technical Employees (Association of Professional & Technical Administrators)**What types of leave can I take for parenting?**

- Birth Recovery: Use sick leave (6–8 weeks).
- Bonding/Adoption: Use vacation, personal leave, or unpaid leave.
- FMLA: Eligible employees may take up to 12 weeks.

CERT and ADMIN Employees:

If you have some unpaid days, your sick leave must be adjusted accordingly. You receive your total number of sick days for the school year at the beginning of the year. If you have unpaid days, some sick days must be taken back because you will not have earned them. This may reduce the number of sick days that you have available to use for your recovery period. For ADMIN, this may also adjust the number of vacation days earned for the school year.

Can I use my personal days with my leave?

If you have accrued sick time and have not taken your personal days then you may add these days onto the leave at the end of the recovery time. Please specify on the leave form

that you wish to use personal days and how many days to apply to leave. You must have sick leave available for the sick deduction days in order to utilize them.

CERT: 1 'Free Day, 3 days deducted from available sick leave, 1 day sub rate deduction

ADMIN: No 'Free' Days, 2 days deducted from available sick leave

ESP: 1 'Free' Day, 1 day deducted from sick leave (only for employees with 3 years+ with WCSD)

Can I use sick bank days to cover my non-paid recovery time?

Sick bank does not cover normal recovery time after delivery for Maternity Leave. For personal illness or family illness extensions, please contact your association sick leave bank.

How does taking non-paid days affect my benefits?

Please be aware that should you be in a non-paid status during your leave, this will affect your PERS service credit. Please contact PERS at 775-687-4200 for more information.

What is the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)?

FMLA is a federal law that entitles eligible employees with unpaid, job protected leave for specified family and medical reasons with continuation of insurance coverage for up to 12 weeks within a 12- month period. It does not provide pay for your leave.

How do I know if I qualify for FMLA?

Please reference this [LINK](#) to download the current Employee Guide with FMLA guidelines. Your FMLA eligibility cannot be determined until all required documents have been received by your Benefits Specialist. You will receive a letter from the Benefits Department outlining if you meet eligibility requirements when your leave is approved.

Will my medical benefits continue while on a maternity leave?

If you remain in paid status or are eligible for FMLA, your district coverage will continue while on an approved leave of absence. If you should fall unpaid but still qualify for FMLA, your benefits will continue but you will be responsible for paying any dependent premiums during your FMLA eligible period. If you fall unpaid and are no longer FMLA eligible your coverage will be terminated, and you will be referred to COBRA coverage.

Now that my baby has arrived, I want to take additional time off. What do I do?

If you want to take additional time beyond your original leave request, please submit a new completed leave form to your Administrator. Contact your Benefits Specialist regarding

your pay. If at any time during your approved leave of absence you fall into an unpaid status or your FMLA has exhausted your benefits will be termed and you will be referred to [COBRA](#). Once you return to work from your leave of absence you will have 30 days to email the Benefits Department requesting your benefits reinstated.