



Paid Family Leave

# Helping Californians be there for the moments that matter.

A helpful guide for employers  
and community counselors.



# Paid Family Leave

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 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?

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.

**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.

**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.
- Helping make legal or financial arrangements during the deployment.
- Attending counseling.
- Helping 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.

## 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.

- **Example:** 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 at first; and then the remaining time eight months later, should they need it.

## What is Integration of Wages with Benefits?

PFL provides 70 to 90 percent 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 percent of their pay. Employees can use the [Disability Insurance and PFL Calculator](http://edd.ca.gov/PFL_Calculator) ([edd.ca.gov/PFL\\_Calculator](http://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.

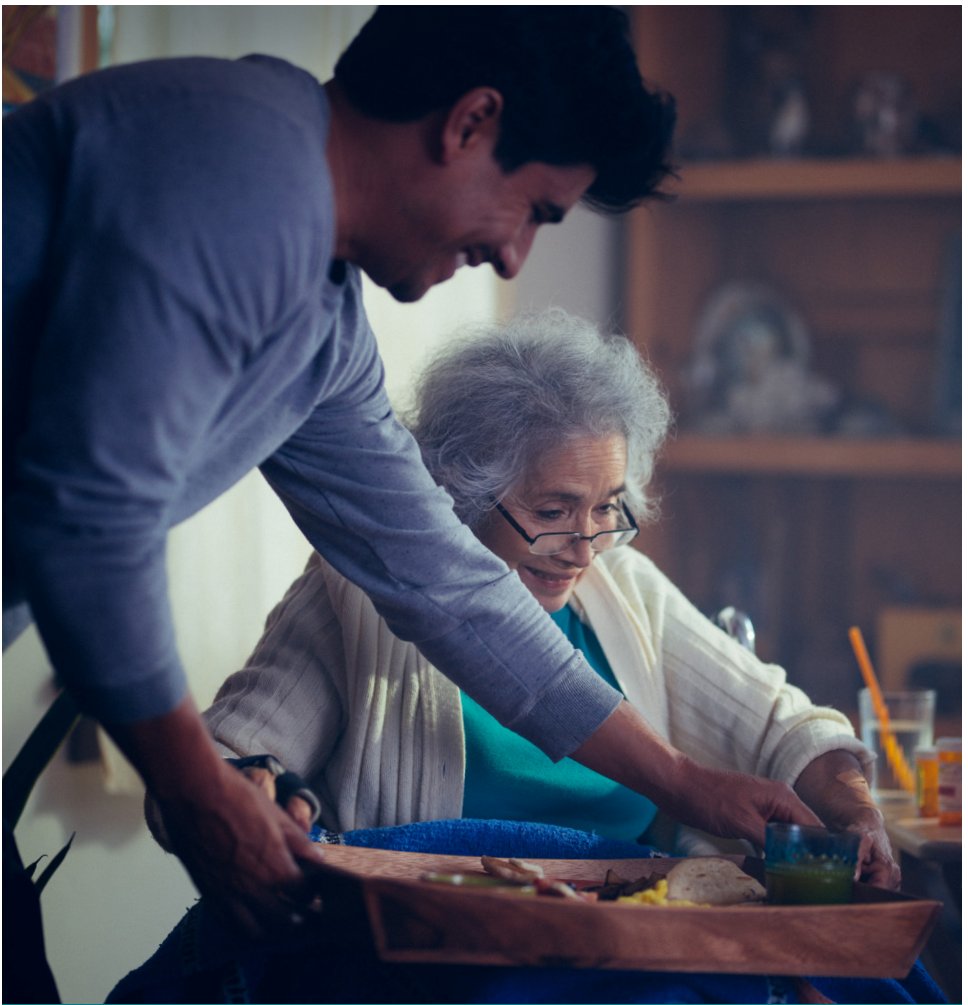
**Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)** – FMLA is a federal law that gives eligible employees 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave in a 12-month period to bond with a new child, to care for an ill family member, or to participate in a qualifying military event. Visit the [Department of Labor](http://dol.gov/agencies/whd/fmla)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

**California Family Rights Act (CFRA)** – 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)** – 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)** – 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, visit the [California Civil Rights Department](http://calcivilrights.ca.gov) ([calcivilrights.ca.gov](http://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. 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 move 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.

Examples include:

- Birth certificate.
- Adoptive placement agreement.
- Foster care placement record.

### 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 documents.

Examples include:

- Covered active-duty orders.
- Letter of impending call or order to covered duty.
- Documentation of military leave signed by the approving authority for the military member's rest and recuperation.

- Documents for the qualifying event.

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## Where Can Employees Apply for Benefits?

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

## 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 claim form (DE 2501F/S), visit [EDD Forms and Publications](http://edd.ca.gov/forms) ([edd.ca.gov/forms](http://edd.ca.gov/forms)).
2. Submit the completed form with all required documentation to EDD.

# What Happens Next?

- A properly completed claim, including all additional documents, typically takes two weeks to be processed.
- We will mail a *Notice of Computation* (DE 429DF) to confirm that we received their claim and provide 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.
- We will contact the individual if we need more information or if their claim was denied.





**For more information, call or visit Contact SDI ([edd.ca.gov/Disability/Contact\\_SD1.htm](http://edd.ca.gov/Disability/Contact_SD1.htm)) for office locations.**



<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

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.