

# moments you've earned

**Many Washington parents are now eligible for a new statewide program that helps them take paid time off from work to care for a new child through Washington's Paid Family and Medical Leave program.**

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## **What is Paid Family and Medical Leave?**

Paid Family and Medical Leave is a new state insurance program that allows you to take paid time off to care for yourself or for a family member to bond with a newborn, adopted or foster child.

The state program also provides paid leave to care for yourself or a family member with a serious medical condition such as your baby being born prematurely and spending their first weeks in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU).

This new state program allows you to care for your new child, while continuing to pay your bills.

## **How do you qualify?**

You've already earned the benefit by contributing a small amount each paycheck to the new state insurance program since January 2019. You can apply for paid leave when you work at least 820 hours in Washington (about 16 hours a week) during

the last year, and have what's called a "qualifying event," such as giving birth, becoming a father, adopting a child or becoming a foster parent.

Part-time, seasonal and temporary workers qualify. You are also eligible if you work for multiple employers or are undocumented.

## **How much time can you take?**

- Parents and caregivers qualify for up to 12 weeks of paid leave to bond with a new baby or child. Bonding during the first weeks is critical for your child's development and your wellbeing.
- If you give birth to a baby, you qualify for up to 16 weeks of combined medical and family leave. An additional two weeks is possible if you have serious medical issues as a result of your pregnancy.
- All parents, including fathers, partners, foster and adoptive parents, are eligible for bonding leave.

## **How do you apply?**

Applying for government benefits can be confusing and hard, which is why trained community-based partners are here to help you. These partners offer safe, private help while you apply for paid leave. They will help you complete the application and provide you with the forms you need to prove the birth, adoption or placement.

### **When should I apply?**

You must wait until after the child is born, adopted or placed in your home to apply for paid leave, however, our community partners listed below can help you plan to apply and start your application for paid leave. Your payments will include pay starting from when you were eligible. It takes about two to three weeks to get your first payment.

### **Who decides if I am eligible?**

The state of Washington approves your application, not your employer. All your personal information is kept completely confidential and is not shared with any other government agency.

### **Are undocumented Washingtonians eligible for paid leave?**

Undocumented workers are eligible if you have paid into the program through paycheck contributions. Taking paid leave is not considered a public charge, so it won't affect your citizenship application. You earn it by paying into the state insurance program.

### **How much will I receive?**

When you take paid leave, you will receive up to 90 percent of your weekly pay up to a maximum of \$1,000 a week depending on your wages.

### **Can I lose my job for taking paid leave?**

If your company has 50 or more employees, your job is protected if you have worked for the company for 12 months or longer and have worked 1,250 hours in the year before the first day you take paid leave.

### **For help or for more information, contact organizations in Yakima County:**

#### **Easterseals Washington**

Cathy Bisailon, [cathyb@wa.easterseals.com](mailto:cathyb@wa.easterseals.com)  
Tomi Barragan, [tbarragan@wa.easterseals.com](mailto:tbarragan@wa.easterseals.com)  
Lynette Gutierrez, [LGutierrez@wa.easterseals.com](mailto:LGutierrez@wa.easterseals.com)

#### **EPIC Early Learning Programs**

Celia Nava, [celias@epicnet.org](mailto:celias@epicnet.org)  
Maria Barajas, [mariab@epicnet.org](mailto:mariab@epicnet.org)

#### **La Casa Hogar**

Cristina Arellano, [cristina@lacasahogar.org](mailto:cristina@lacasahogar.org)  
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#### **Nuestra Casa**

Angie Sanchez, [office@nuestracasawa.org](mailto:office@nuestracasawa.org)

#### **OIC of Washington/Henry Beauchamp Community Center**

Adrienne Garner, [A.G@YVOIC.org](mailto:A.G@YVOIC.org)  
Frank Navarro, [F.N@yvoic.org](mailto:F.N@yvoic.org)  
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#### **People For People**

Stacy Kellogg, [skellogg@pfp.org](mailto:skellogg@pfp.org)  
Teri Sanchez, [tsanchez@pfp.org](mailto:tsanchez@pfp.org)

#### **Save the Children**

Faviola Ochoa, [fochoa@savechildren.org](mailto:fochoa@savechildren.org)  
Amea Barlet, [abarlet@savechildren.org](mailto:abarlet@savechildren.org)

#### **United Way of Central Washington**

Neiri Carrasco, [neiri@uwcw.org](mailto:neiri@uwcw.org)  
Suzy Diaz, [Diaz\\_S@heritage.edu](mailto:Diaz_S@heritage.edu)  
Jamie Shores, [Jamie@uwcw.org](mailto:Jamie@uwcw.org)

#### **West Valley School District**

Minerva Pardo, [pardom@wvvd208.org](mailto:pardom@wvvd208.org)

**Yakima Neighborhood Health Center**

Blanca Arroyo, 509-853-2353