



CALIFORNIA PAID FAMILY LEAVE

Helping Californians be present for the moments that matter.

Helpful information for employers
and community counselors.



California Paid Family Leave

California Paid Family Leave (PFL) provides partial wage replacement benefits to Californians who need to take time off from work to care for a seriously ill child, parent, parent-in-law, grandparent, grandchild, sibling, spouse, or registered domestic partner. Benefits are also available to parents (individuals, spouses, or registered domestic partners) who need time to bond with a new child entering the family by birth, adoption, or foster care placement.

This guide will help you assist your employees and/or customers in understanding and navigating the PFL program so they can be present for the moments that matter most.

Who pays for PFL?

California PFL is entirely funded by workers through State Disability Insurance (SDI) deductions from their paychecks (noted as “CASDI” on most paystubs). Most California workers pay SDI taxes, meaning they are most likely eligible for PFL benefits. It is not a government welfare or aid program.



What is a qualifying life event for California PFL?

There are two life events that qualify for PFL – bonding and caregiving.

Bonding – To qualify, an individual must be a new parent welcoming a child into the family through birth, adoption, or foster care placement within the past 12 months.

A “parent” is defined as an individual, spouse, or registered domestic partner who will be serving as a parent for the child.

Caregiving – To qualify, an individual must 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 physician or health care practitioner.

How does California PFL work?

California workers are eligible for partial wage replacement benefits that can be taken all at once or split over a 12-month period. 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 initially and then the remaining time eight months later.

What is California’s PFL wage replacement rate?

California PFL pays claimants approximately 60 to 70 percent of their weekly salary, with a maximum of \$1,300 per week. Employers may allow workers to use vacation, sick, paid time off, or other leave to supplement their PFL benefits to receive up to 100 percent pay. The Employment Development Department (EDD) provides an online calculator to help estimate a claimant’s weekly benefit amount. Visit the [Disability Insurance and Paid Family Leave Calculator \(edd.ca.gov/PFL_Calculator\)](https://edd.ca.gov/PFL_Calculator) for more information.

Does California PFL provide job protection?

PFL does not provide job protection, just paid benefits. However, individuals may qualify for job protection through other laws that can be taken concurrently with PFL. Individuals should check with their human resources department about job protection before using PFL.

Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) – The 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 or to care for an ill family member. Visit the [Department of Labor \(dol.gov/whd/fmla\)](https://dol.gov/whd/fmla) to learn more.

California Family Rights Act (CFRA) – Similar to the FMLA, the 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. Visit the [Department of Fair Employment and Housing \(dfeh.ca.gov\)](https://dfeh.ca.gov) to learn more.

New Parent Leave Act (NPLA) – The 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. Visit the [Department of Fair Employment and Housing \(dfeh.ca.gov\)](https://dfeh.ca.gov) to learn more.

Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA) – The 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. Visit the [Department of Fair Employment and Housing \(dfeh.ca.gov\)](https://dfeh.ca.gov) to learn more.





How do PFL and DI benefits work together?

Bonding: A mother receiving DI benefits due to pregnancy or childbirth may transition from her DI claim to a PFL bonding claim. She will automatically receive a *Claim for Paid Family Leave (PFL) Benefits – New Mother (DE 2501FP)* form when her pregnancy-related DI claim ends.

Caregiving: An individual receiving DI benefits due to a non-work-related injury or illness may require care due to their disability, and their family members may be eligible to receive PFL benefits to take time to provide that care.

How can individuals apply for California PFL?

An individual with a qualifying life event can apply for PFL online for faster processing. Claims should be submitted no later than 41 days after individuals begin their family leave but not before the first day of leave.

Information needed to file a PFL claim:

- Name of employer(s).
- Last day of work before leave was taken.
- For bonding claims, include documentation showing proof of relationship between the individual and child (e.g., a copy of the child's birth certificate, adoptive placement agreement, or foster care placement record).
- For caregiving claims, include medical certification showing that the care recipient has a serious health condition and requires care. This needs to be completed by the care recipient's physician/practitioner.
- Information about the person who will be cared for and their signature for a caregiving claim.

To apply for PFL benefits online:

1. Visit **SDI Online** (edd.ca.gov/SDI_Online).
2. Register for a new SDI Online account or sign into an existing account.
3. Once signed in, select "New Claim."

To apply for PFL benefits by mail:

1. Complete a *Claim for Paid Family Leave (PFL) Benefits* (DE 2501F) form. This form is available in English and Spanish. (The Spanish version includes an English form with Spanish instructions.)
2. Submit the form to the EDD with all required documentation. The form can be ordered online or found at an SDI office. Individuals can also request a copy of the form mailed to them by visiting **EDD Forms and Publications** (edd.ca.gov/Forms) or by calling 1-877-238-4373.



What happens next?

A properly completed claim typically takes two weeks to be processed. The EDD mails a *Notice of Computation* (DE 429D) which informs the individual that the claim was received and their estimated benefit amount. Individuals will know their claim has been approved once they receive an *Electronic Benefit Payment (EBP) Notification* (DE 2500E). If more information is needed or if the claim has been denied, EDD staff will contact the claimant directly by phone or mail.

Once a claim has been processed and benefits have been paid, the claimant will receive an EDD Debit CardSM. Claimants do not have to accept the EDD Debit Card and may choose to receive benefit payments by check.

A properly completed PFL bonding claim includes:

- PART A – Statement of Claimant.
- PART B – Bonding Certification and supporting documentation showing evidence of the relationship.

A properly completed PFL caregiving claim includes:

- PART A – Statement of Claimant.
- Page 2 – Care Recipient’s Authorization for Disclosure of Personal-Health Information.
- PART C – Statement of Care Recipient.
- PART D – Physician/Practitioner’s Certification.





Paid Family Leave:

Giving Californians the benefits they need to be there for the moments that matter.

English	1-877-238-4373
Spanish	1-877-379-3819
Cantonese	1-866-692-5595
Vietnamese	1-866-692-5596
Armenian	1-866-627-1567
Punjabi	1-866-627-1568
Tagalog	1-866-627-1569
TTY	1-800-445-1312

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moments matter.



Individuals can also visit a Paid Family Leave or Disability Insurance office to obtain claim forms, receive information, or speak to a representative. Visit **Contact SDI** (edd.ca.gov/Disability/Contact_SDI.htm) to locate an office.

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.