

Paid Family & Medical Leave (PFML)

Basic Contribution Facts for Workers

Most benefits will be available beginning on Jan. 1, 2021



Key Dates



Oct 1, 2019

Employers will begin payroll deductions. Your share of contributions as a worker is a fixed percentage of your wages.



Jan 1, 2021

Benefits available to bond with a new child, address needs relating to a family member who is on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces, and to manage a serious personal health condition.



July 1, 2021

Benefits will be available to care for a family member with a serious health condition.

Frequently Asked Questions

How is PFML different than FMLA (Family and Medical Leave Act)?

The FMLA is a federal law that provides unpaid, job-protected leave to certain employees. FMLA is available for the employee to use for themselves or when caring for a parent, child, or spouse with a serious health condition and is only a requirement for employers with 50 or more employees.

PFML is a Massachusetts law that applies to all MA employers regardless of size and provides paid, job-protected leave to eligible workers for similar reasons. Other differences include a broader definition of family, waiting periods for eligibility, and size of the employers that are required to participate. Visit mass.gov/pfml to read more about what PFML can be used for.

How much am I paying into the PFML program?

You will pay a maximum of 0.378% on your wages into the Employment Security Trust Fund, which will fund PFML benefits. In other words, for every \$100 you earn, you will pay a maximum of 38 cents. Your employer may decide to contribute some or all of your employee contribution, and may be responsible for contributions of their own.

How much is the benefit?

The weekly benefit amount is calculated as a percentage of your earnings and will vary by person. The maximum benefit is \$850 per week, paid out by the Employment Security Trust Fund.

Do I have to take part in the PFML program?

If your employer pays unemployment benefits to the Commonwealth of MA, you must participate in the program, regardless of your age or the number of hours you work, even if you are a seasonal worker.

What types of leave are covered?

Family leave

Up to 12 weeks of family leave may be taken to:

- Care for a family member with a serious health condition
- Bond with a child within the first 12 months after the child's birth, adoption, or foster care placement
- Manage family affairs when a family member is on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces (see page 2)

Medical leave

Up to 20 weeks of medical leave may be taken while you are unable to work due to your own serious health condition

Frequently Asked Questions (Cont'd)

What if I have a family member on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces?

Military families can get up to 12 weeks to care for needs arising from a family member's active-duty service, and/or up to 26 weeks to care for an ill or injured service member. The maximum allowance for all leave is 26 weeks in the aggregate. This, for example, can be a combination of exigency leave and care for an ill or injured service member.

What is the definition of a family member?

Your family members include: Your spouse, domestic partner, child, parent or parent of a spouse or domestic partner; a person who stood in loco parentis when you were a minor; or a grandchild, grandparent, or sibling.

Am I covered for PFML?

You're covered by the PFML law if:

- You're an employee working for a Massachusetts business or a state agency
- You're a contractor who contracts with a business that issues 1099-MISC tax forms for more than 50% of its workforce
- Your employer doesn't offer a private paid leave plan with benefits that are equal to or greater than the state's coverage

If you've been unemployed for up to 26 weeks, you may be eligible for PFML benefits.

Are there earnings requirements?

There is an earnings eligibility requirement for anyone who wants to take paid leave under the law. Before applying for benefits, you must have:

- Earned at least \$4,700 in the previous 12 months; *and*
- Received total wages as an employee or payments for service as a covered contract worker from a Massachusetts employer or a Massachusetts covered business entity that in the aggregate equal or exceed 30 times your weekly benefit amount.

Is my job protected while I am out on leave?

Yes. After you return from leave, you must be restored to the same or equivalent position with the same pay and benefits. An employer cannot retaliate against you because you exercised your rights under PFML law and/or took leave.

Additional information on the Paid Family and Medical Leave law is available at the Department of Family and Medical Leave website: mass.gov/dfml

Employees with questions or concerns about Paid Family and Medical Leave contributions or benefits should contact their employers, email the Department of Family and Medical Leave at: mass.gov/contactDFML or visit the website at: mass.gov/pfml