

Federal Employee Paid Leave Act (FEPLA)

The Federal Employee Paid Leave Act (FEPLA) passed by the federal government will offer 12 weeks of paid parental leave to many federal workers. The program began October 1, 2020 and will cover millions of federal workers.

Benefits

- Employees can take up to 12 weeks of paid parental leave following the birth of a child or placement of a child in adoption or foster care during the 12-month period beginning on the date of the birth or placement.
- Employees cannot use paid leave for another FMLA reason aside from bonding, such as leave to address an employee's or family member's serious health condition or a family member's qualifying exigency – such leaves remain unpaid unless required by law or the employer's policy.
- Except for Congressional, Government Accountability Office, and Library of Congress employees, federal employees who take paid parental leave must agree in writing before the leave that they will work for the agency for at least 12 weeks following their return from leave. If the employee fails to return from such leave, the employing agency may claw back the contributions paid by the agency on behalf of the employee for maintaining health insurance coverage. This claw back provision does not apply when an employee is physically incapable of returning to work or where there are circumstances beyond the employee's control.
- The agency cannot require employees to first use paid time off or sick leave before using paid parental leave. To the contrary, employees are legally entitled to use accrued paid time off or sick leave on top of paid parental leave during the 12-month period following the birth or placement.
- Employees cannot take paid parental leave intermittently unless the employee and employer agree.
- The rules under the FMLA will generally apply to FEPLA, with some exceptions.

How will FEPLA be administered and funded?

- The Department of Commerce Office of Human Resources management released the following Bulletin #249. FY21 regarding the Federal employees Paid Parental Leave for Federal Employees.
- The paid leave under FEPLA is paid for by any appropriation or fund available for salaries or expenses for positions within the employing agency. Thus, employees will not be contributing to the cost of these benefits.

What MetLife can Provide

Private plans are not applicable to this paid federal employee program. MetLife is providing general information as a thought leader as this may spark similar benefit plans in other states or private businesses.



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