

WA Paid Sick Leave

Starting **January 1, 2018**, employers in Washington will be required to provide their employees with paid sick leave.

Paid Sick Leave Requirements

Accrual

- Most employees must accrue paid sick leave at a minimum rate of 1 hour of paid sick leave for every 40 hours worked. This includes part-time and seasonal workers.
- Paid sick leave must be paid to employees at their normal hourly compensation.
- Employees are entitled to use accrued paid sick leave beginning on the 90th calendar day after the start of their employment.
- Unused paid sick leave of 40 hours or less must be carried over to the following year.
- Employers are allowed to provide employees with more generous carry over and accrual policies.

Usage

Employees may use paid sick leave:

- To care for themselves or their family members.
- When the employees' workplace or their child's school or place of care has been closed by a public official for any health-related reason.
- For absences that qualify for leave under the state's Domestic Violence Leave Act.
- Employers may allow employees to use paid sick leave for additional purposes.

For more information visit the link below or email info@atbapllc.com.

<http://www.lni.wa.gov/WorkplaceRights/LeaveBenefits/VacaySick/PaidSickLeave.asp>

WA Paid Family and Medical Leave

Washington has a new paid family and medical leave insurance program, funded by premiums paid by employers and employees and administered by the Employment Security Department (ESD). WA is the fifth state in the nation to provide this benefit to workers.

ESD is developing the program now. As directed by the Legislature, **premium assessment begins on Jan. 1, 2019** and **benefits will be available on Jan. 1, 2020**.

The new law provides eligible workers up to 12 weeks of PFML benefits annually for:

- Bonding after the birth or placement of a child who is under the age of 18;
- A family member's serious health condition; or
- Certain military assignments like leave for short notice deployments, military events, urgent childcare and related activities, and post-deployment activities.

Employees may also receive up to 12 weeks of paid medical leave benefits annually for their own serious health conditions, as defined in the federal Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and its regulations. If workers experience both scenarios in a given year, they may receive up to 16 weeks of combined benefits or up to 18 weeks if the employee experiences a serious health condition with a pregnancy that results in incapacity.

Who's eligible?

Employees are eligible for family and medical leave benefits after working for at least **820 hours** during the qualifying period. Tribes and self-employed individuals, including independent contractors, may opt-in to the program. Self-employed individuals are eligible for benefits once they have worked 820 hours, after electing coverage, and must agree to pay premiums for a minimum of three years.

How much do eligible employees receive?

Benefits will be a percentage of the individual's average weekly wage (AWW) during the two highest quarters in the qualifying period. The maximum weekly benefit amount is \$1,000—adjusted annually. The minimum weekly benefit will not be less than \$100 per week except if the employee's AWW at the time of the leave is less than \$100 per week. In that case, the weekly benefit is the employee's full wage.

How much will employers and employees pay in premiums?

- The law sets the initial premium rate at 0.4 percent of wages beginning on Jan. 1, 2019.
- Employers may deduct from the employees' wages 100 percent of the premiums due for the family leave and up to 45 percent of the premiums due for the medical leave portion.
- The employer is responsible for 55 percent of the medical leave premium.
- An employer may also elect to pay all of the premiums.
- The amount of wages subject to a premium assessment is capped at the maximum wages subject to social security tax.

Self-employed individuals who elect coverage pay only the employee share of the premiums.

Employers with fewer than 50 employees are exempt from paying the employer share of the premiums.

For more information visit the link below or email info@atbapllc.com.

<https://esd.wa.gov/paid-family-medical-leave>