

Purpose/Objective

JFCS will provide up to four weeks of paid parental leave to employees following the birth of an employee's child or the placement of a child with an employee in connection with adoption or foster care. The purpose of paid parental leave is to enable the employee to care for and bond with a newborn or a newly adopted or newly placed child. This policy will run concurrently with Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leave, as applicable. This policy will be in effect for births, adoptions or placements of foster children occurring on or after January 1, 2019.

Eligibility

Eligible employees must meet the following criteria:

- Have been employed with the agency for at least 12 months.
- Have worked at least 1250 hours during the 12 consecutive months immediately preceding the date the leave would begin.
- Be a full- or part-time, regular employee (temporary employees and interns are not eligible for this benefit).

In addition, employees must meet one of the following criteria:

- Have given birth to a child.
- Their spouse or committed partner has given birth to a child.
- Have adopted a child or had a foster child placed with them (in either case, the child must be age 17 or younger). The employee's adoption of a child of the employee's new spouse is excluded from this policy.

Amount, Time Frame and Duration of Paid Parental Leave

- Eligible employees will receive a maximum of four weeks of paid parental leave per birth, adoption or placement of a child/children. In the event that a multiple birth, adoption or placement occurs (e.g., the birth of twins or adoption of siblings) the four-week total amount of paid parental leave does not increase. Additionally, an employee will not receive more than four weeks of paid parental leave in a rolling 12-month period, regardless of whether more than one birth, adoption or foster care placement event occurs within that 12-month time frame.
- Each week of paid parental leave is compensated at 100 percent of the employee's regular, straight-time weekly pay. Paid parental leave will be paid on a biweekly basis on regularly scheduled pay dates.

- Approved paid parental leave may be taken at any time during the six-month period immediately following the birth, adoption or placement of a child with the employee. Paid parental leave may not be used or extended beyond this six-month time frame, absent compelling circumstances and at the sole discretion of the agency.
- In the event of an employee who has given birth, the four weeks of paid parental leave will commence at the beginning of the leave period and will run concurrent with any short-term disability leave/benefit provided to the employee for the employee's own medical recovery following childbirth.
- Employees must take paid parental leave in one continuous period of leave and must use all paid parental leave during the six-month time frame indicated above. Any unused paid parental leave will be forfeited at the end of the six-month time frame.
- Upon termination of the individual's employment at the agency, they will not be paid for any unused paid parental leave for which they were eligible.

Coordination with Other Policies

- Paid parental leave taken under this policy will run concurrently with leave under the FMLA; thus, any leave taken under this policy that falls under the definition of circumstances qualifying for leave due to the birth or placement of a child due to adoption or foster care, the leave will be counted toward the 12 weeks of available FMLA leave per a 12-month period. All other requirements and provisions under the FMLA will apply. In no case will the total amount of leave—whether paid or unpaid—granted to the employee under the FMLA exceed 12 weeks during the 12-month FMLA period. Please refer to the Family and Medical Leave Policy for further guidance on the FMLA. Employees extending their leave beyond the FMLA period must follow agency policy regarding notice up-to the maximum leave time allowance.
- After the paid parental leave is exhausted, the balance of FMLA leave (if applicable) will be compensated through employees' accrued sick, vacation and leave or personal time. Upon exhaustion of accrued sick, vacation, leave or personal time, any remaining leave will be unpaid leave. Please refer to the Family and Medical Leave Policy for further guidance on the FMLA.
- The agency will maintain all benefits for employees during the paid parental leave period just as if they were taking any other agency paid leave such as paid vacation leave or paid sick leave.

- If an agency holiday occurs while the employee is on paid parental leave, such day will be charged to holiday pay; however, such holiday pay will not extend the total paid parental leave entitlement.
- If the employee is on paid parental leave when the agency offers any paid time off due to unplanned closings (e.g. weather, local or national emergencies or events), that time will be recorded as paid parental leave. Unplanned paid time off will not extend the paid parental leave entitlement.
- An employee who takes paid parental leave that does not qualify for FMLA leave will be afforded the same level of job protection for the period of time that the employee is on paid parental leave as if the employee was on FMLA-qualifying leave.
- An employee who has met the eligibility criteria while on a temporary layoff and is then recalled from that layoff and exercises their FMLA rights effective on their recall day, will be provided paid time up to the six-month limit from the date eligibility would have begun (e.g. adoption date, date of birth, or foster child placement effective date).

Requests for Paid Parental Leave

- The employee will provide their team leader or program director and the human resource department with notice of the request for leave at least 30 days prior to the proposed date of the leave (or if the leave was not foreseeable, as soon as possible). The employee must complete the necessary HR forms and provide all documentation as required by the HR department to substantiate the request.
- As is the case with all agency policies, the agency has the exclusive right to interpret this policy.