

POLICY for PAID PARENTAL LEAVE

Distribution: All JF&CS Staff	Effective Date: January 1, 2022
Approved: November 17, 2021	Staff Contact: Director of Human Resources

Purpose

To provide staff with paid parental leave.

Policy

JF&CS will provide up to eight (8) 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 the effective date.

Employee Eligibility

Eligible employees must meet the following criteria:

- Have worked at least 240 hours during the three (3) consecutive months immediately preceding the date the leave would begin.
- Have been employed with the agency for at least three (3) months (the three months do not need to be consecutive).
- 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.
- Be a spouse or committed partner of a woman who has given birth to a child, regardless of whether the partners are persons of the opposite or same sex.
- Have adopted a child or been placed with a foster child (in either case, the child must be age 17 or younger). The adoption of a new spouse's child is excluded from this policy.

Amount, Time Frame and Duration of Paid Parental Leave

- Eligible employees will receive a maximum of up to eight (8) consecutive weeks of paid parental leave per birth, adoption or placement of a child/children. The fact that a multiple birth, multiple adoption or multiple placement occurs (e.g., the birth of twins or adoption of siblings) does not increase the maximum eight (8) week total amount of paid parental leave granted for that event. In addition, in no case will an employee receive more than eight (8) 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.
- The total of eight (8) weeks will equal a pro-rated number of hours based on the average weekly hours worked by the employee requesting the leave.
- Paid Parental Leave is applied and paid after all available sick or Paid Time Off (PTO) has been exhausted by the employee.

- Each week of paid parental leave is compensated at 100 percent (100%) of the employee's regular, straight-time weekly pay. Paid parental leave will be paid on a semi-monthly basis on regularly scheduled pay dates.
- Approved paid parental leave may be taken at any time during the first six (6) 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 (6) month time frame.
- Employees must take paid parental leave in one continuous period of leave and must use all paid parental leave during the six (6) month time frame indicated above. Any unused paid parental leave will be forfeited at the end of the six (6) month time frame.
- Upon termination of the individual's employment at the agency, the employee 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 Family & Medical Leave Act (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 will be counted toward the twelve (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 twelve (12) weeks during the 12-month FMLA period. Please refer to the Family and Medical Leave Policy for further guidance on the FMLA.
- Any accrued, unused and available sick or paid time off (PTO) that the employee has at the time of their leave will be used and exhausted prior to parental leave being paid to the employee. Parental leave does not extend an approved leave of absence beyond the eligible amount of approved leave.

Example: an employee is approved to take twelve (12) weeks of leave, the employee has three (3) weeks of PTO saved in their PTO balance; this employee is eligible to receive eight (8) weeks of Paid Parental Leave to max their total leave payment at eleven (11) weeks of paid leave.

- After the paid parental leave is exhausted, the balance of FMLA leave (if applicable) will be unpaid leave.
- 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 time off or paid sick leave.
- If an agency observed 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.
- 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 an FMLA-qualifying leave.

Requests for Paid Parental Leave

- The employee will provide their supervisor and the Human Resource department with notice of the request for leave at least thirty (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 organization has the exclusive right to interpret or change this policy at any time, with or without notice.