

**Q: Whom do I contact about PFML?**

**A: The Employment Security Department (ESD) will administer all aspects of this program.** Employees will still be required to provide at least 30 days' notice to their employer if they plan to take PFML leave. City of Spokane staff will not be able to provide consultation on specific details of the program. ESD contact information is at the bottom of this document.

**Q: The ESD website says I should check with my employer to see if they offer the supplemental benefit. Does the City allow employees to supplement with vacation, sick, or PTO?**

**A:** Not at this time. Paid leave accruals (vacation, sick leave, floating holidays, compensatory time, or any other accrued leave) are not supplemental to PFML benefits. An employee may elect to use such accrued leave during a PFML-covered absence, although the receipt of accrued leave must be reported to ESD as part of the PFML claims process and will result in a pro-rated weekly PFML benefit.

**Q: Can an employee choose to apply for PFML prior to exhausting their accrued leave?**

**A:** Yes. The decision to apply for PFML is the employee's choice. Therefore, an employee's leave balance would not impact their ability to access to PFML entitlements.

**Q: I am currently on leave due to an on the job injury (OJI), can I apply for PFML?**

**A:** No, per RCW 50A.15.100: "In any week in which an employee is eligible to receive benefits under [Title 50](#) or [51 RCW](#), or other applicable federal or state unemployment compensation, industrial insurance, or disability insurance laws, the employee is disqualified from receiving family or medical leave benefits under this title."

**Q: Will the employee receive retirement credits while receiving wage replacement under the Paid Family and Medical Leave Program at ESD?**

**A:** No. The employee is receiving payment from ESD, not from their employer.

**Q: Will my medical insurance through be impacted if I receive a PFML payment?**

**A:** If an employee normally contributes a portion toward health insurance premiums, the individual is required to continue paying that share while on PFML, including the costs of dependent coverage, if applicable. Arrangement for payment must be made with the Benefits department – [eracb@spokanecity.org](mailto:eracb@spokanecity.org).

**Q: Will I continue to accrue vacation and sick leave while I receive PFML?**

**A:** No. Paid time off accruals will stop until you return to working status.

**Q: Will the money I received from ESD be considered income for tax reporting?**

**A:** ESD is waiting for a definitive response from the IRS on this.

**Q: Is the Amount I received from ESD subject to federal withholding and social security deductions?**

**A:** ESD is waiting for a definitive response from the IRS on this.

**Q: Can I take PFML Intermittently?**

**A:** Yes. The minimum claim is eight (8) consecutive hours.

**Q: What is the difference between FMLA and PFML?**

**A:** The federal Family & Medical Leave Act (FMLA) is an unpaid leave entitlement that provides job and health insurance protection when eligible employees take a leave of absence for a qualifying reason. The Washington State Paid Family & Medical Leave (PFML) program is a state of Washington program that provides partial wage replacement in the form of a weekly benefit paid by ESD while claiming this benefit. For employees who have worked for the City of Spokane for 12 months and 1,250 hours, PFML leave will be job and health benefit protected.

The City of Spokane determines when to designate a leave as FMLA. Employees choose whether and when to file a PFML claim. PFML does not replace FMLA.

	<b>PFML</b>	<b>FMLA</b>
<b>Coverage by location</b>	Work performed in State of Washington.	Work performed for the City of Spokane.
<b>Eligibility</b>	Must have worked 820 hours in the state of WA in the qualifying period.	Must have worked 12 months and 1,250 hours for The City of Spokane prior to start of FMLA leave.
<b>Job protection</b>	Must have worked 12 months and 1,250 actual work hours for the City of Spokane prior to start of PFML leave.	Must have worked 12 months and 1,250 actual work hours for the City of Spokane prior to start of FMLA leave.
<b>Pay</b>	Between \$100- \$1,000 per week.	Unpaid.
<b>Use of accrued paid and time off</b>	The City of Spokane <u>does not</u> offer supplementation. Employees would be in an unpaid status if they utilize PFML.	Use accrued City of Spokane paid time off; otherwise leave is unpaid.
<b>Covered circumstances</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Caring for your own or family member's serious health condition.</li> <li>• Bonding with newborn, newly adopted or foster child.</li> <li>• Qualifying military exigency.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Caring for your own or family member's serious health condition.</li> <li>• Bonding with newborn, newly adopted or foster child.</li> <li>• Qualifying military exigency.</li> </ul>
<b>How to apply</b>	Apply for paid benefits online or by mail with the Employment Security Department.	Follow established City of Spokane processes to request a leave of absence and record paid or unpaid time off.
<b>Employee notice to The City of Spokane</b>	Provide written notice at least 30 days before you plan to take PFML leave. Provide notice as soon as you are able to if your leave is not planned.	Provide notice at least 30 days before you plan to take leave for a circumstance covered by FMLA. Provide notice as soon as you are able if your leave is not planned.
<b>Length of leave of absence</b>	Up to 12-16 weeks a year depending on qualifying condition, measured forward from first day of PFML leave (up to 18 weeks if you have pregnancy complications).	Up to 12 weeks a year, measured forward from beginning of FMLA leave (up to 18 weeks if you have pregnancy complications).
<b>Increment of leave</b>	Minimum of 8 consecutive hours.	No Minimum.
<b>Maintenance of employer portion of healthcare premium</b>	Must have worked 12 months and 1,250 hours for the City of Spokane prior to start of PFML leave.	Must have worked 12 months and 1,250 hours for the City of Spokane prior to start of FMLA leave.

**Q: How can I learn more?**

**A:** You can find more information at the **Employment Security Website (ESD)** <http://www.paidleave.wa.gov/workers>.

- **Benefit Guide:** The Paid Family and Medical Leave Benefit Guide will provide information on how to apply for benefits and submit weekly claims. It will also explain your rights and responsibilities under the law. You will be able to download the guide at [paidleave.wa.gov/benefit-guide](http://paidleave.wa.gov/benefit-guide) or request a copy by calling (833) 717-2273.
- **How-to-apply video:** A step-by-step walk-through of the online application.
- **Detailed application instructions:** Downloadable step-by-step instructions.

**ESD has identified that during peak processing times, it may take up to 15-30 days for a PFML application to be processed.**

- **Email:** [Paidleave@esd.wa.gov](mailto:Paidleave@esd.wa.gov)
- **Phone:** (833) 717-2273