

Maternity Leave Benefit and Salary Questions

Benefit Information:

What is FMLA (Family Medical Leave Act)? FMLA is a federal law that provides up to 12 weeks each year of job-protected leave to employees who need to care for themselves or certain family members in the event of birth, adoption, or a serious health condition. You are eligible for FMLA leave if you have been employed by SSD for at least one year and have worked 1,250 hours or more in the most recent 12 months. FMLA leave for maternity leave is unpaid leave. The District would continue its contribution for your benefits for up to 12 weeks. Your share of the monthly premiums, if any, would continue to be paid by you. If your approved leave goes past the end of the 12-week FMLA period, District contributions would end.

How Long Does Maternity Leave Last?

Maternity leave typically begins when your baby is born and lasts 6-8 weeks (6 weeks for a vaginal delivery or 8 weeks for a caesarean deliver), but can include a period of time before childbirth under FMLA leave, if medical conditions related to your pregnancy prevent you from working.

What Happens to My Benefits While I am on Leave? The District contribution toward the cost of your employee benefits will continue as long as you either are in a paid status, or as long as your leave is qualified as FMLA. The 2010-2011 District benefit contribution rate is \$768.00/month for a 1.0 FTE employee.

What if I Don't Qualify for FMLA?

If you do not qualify for FMLA, you will be required to use any paid leave available during your maternity leave. When this paid leave ends, your district benefit contribution ends as well. See "When Do My Benefits End?" below for details. You can still take your 6-8 weeks of maternity leave but any additional time off will not be paid or covered by the District benefit contribution each month.

When Do My Benefits End? District benefits contributions end at the end of the same month your FMLA ends. When District benefit contributions end, you will have to pay the entire monthly cost yourself to maintain your insurance coverage.

What Can I Do To Keep My Benefits When My District Contributions End?

When District benefit contributions end, you will receive a letter offering you the opportunity for COBRA insurance benefits. You can continue your benefits under COBRA by paying the full premium each month. The COBRA period is usually 18 months, but can be longer.

What if I Need More Time with My Baby? SSD bargaining agreements allow for a year of Leave of Absence without Pay. This provides time during the 12 months following birth (or placement by adoption) to care for your new child. A Leave of Absence without Pay is always an unpaid leave but if you also qualify for FMLA District benefits contributions would continue for up to 12 weeks. If your Leave of Absence without Pay goes past the end of FMLA period, District benefit contributions will end, and you will become eligible to continue benefits under COBRA insurance.

How Do I Enroll My New Baby on My Insurance Plans? If you wish to enroll your new baby on your medical plan, you must complete the appropriate enrollment form(s) and submit it to the Human Resources Department within 60 days of your baby's birth. You do not need to wait for your baby's social security number to add him or her to your plan. You will be responsible for paying any premium that exceeds the District benefit contribution.

What Should I Do When I Return From Leave? If you receive District benefit contributions throughout your leave, you will not need to do anything about your benefits when you return. However, if you have been on COBRA insurance, or if you have allowed your benefits to lapse, you must complete the appropriate enrollment form(s). You must submit your completed form(s) to Human Resources by the 10th of the month immediately following your return to work to reinstate your coverage as an active employee. Otherwise you may have to wait until the next open enrollment period the following school year.

Salary Information

When Do I Start to Use My Available Sick Leave? Available sick leave begins the day your baby is born and following that for 6-8 weeks (6 weeks for a vaginal delivery or 8 weeks for a caesarean deliver). You may also use available sick leave if you have medical conditions related to your pregnancy prior to the birth that prevent you from working.

Can I Use My Sick Leave After the 6-8 Weeks Maternity Leave? No, unless medical conditions related to your pregnancy prevent you from working.

Can I Continue to Work Any Mandatory/Extended Days While On Maternity Leave and/or FMLA Leave? You are not eligible to work mandatory or extended days during the period of maternity, Family Medical Leave or extended maternity leave.

If I Have Unpaid Days How is the Money Deducted if I am a Certificated Employee? You may consult with payroll to arrange an adjusted contract.

What if I Have Optional Payroll Deductions Taken Out of My Paycheck Such as Flex Plan, Credit Union, 403B, etc.? You will need to make the appropriate adjustments for previously arranged payroll deductions in the event that you do not receive a paycheck in any given months, such as flex plan, credit union, 403b, etc. You will need to contact these companies to inform them that they will need to stop deductions since you will not be receiving a paycheck.

Forms to be Completed for Requesting Leave:

What Form Do I Complete for My Maternity Leave? Complete the Family Medical Leave Form (FMLA) if you have worked for 1,250 hours or more in the past 12 months. The FMLA Form is available in your building, in the Human Resources/Payroll Department.

What Form Do I Complete For My Maternity Leave If I Am Not Eligible for FMLA Leave? If you are not eligible for FMLA Leave you will need to complete a Leave Request Form and check the Leave of Absence without Pay Option. These forms are available in your building or in the Human Resources/Payroll Department.

What Form Do I Complete If I Would Like to Request a Year Off without Pay? If you are eligible to request a year leave of absence without pay per your bargaining agreement you will need to complete a Leave Request letter.