



POLICY 6.11 - PARENTAL LEAVE

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Who is eligible for parental leave?

- Employees who become parents via birth, adoption, or foster care are eligible for the leave if:
 - They have been employed by the City for at least six consecutive months;
 - AND have been paid and/or worked at least 500 non-overtime hours during the six consecutive months immediately preceding the date the leave would begin;
 - AND are a regular full time or part time employee.

2. How much leave does an eligible employee receive?

- Eligible employees are entitled to eight workweeks per year of paid parental leave following birth, adoption, or foster placement at 100% of the employee's regular pay:
 - Full-Time, Regular Personnel (2080 hours per year) – 320 hours of parental leave;
 - Full-Time Fire Suppression Personnel (2756 hours per year) – 424 hours of parental leave;
 - Full-Time School Bus Driver and School Bus Aide Personnel (30 hours per week) – 240 hours of parental leave;
 - Part-Time, Regular Personnel (Average weekly hours determined utilizing an annual, 12-month look-back period of regular, non-overtime, worked hours from date of event).

3. When can an eligible employee use paid parental leave?

- An eligible employee can use paid parental leave immediately upon the birth, adoption, or foster placement of their child(ren), or once eligibility is met, and must be used within six months of the birth or placement of the child(ren).
- The leave is limited to one occurrence per child.
- In the case of a foster care placement, parental leave terminates at the conclusion of a foster care placement or within six months following the placement, whichever occurs first.
- Any unused parental leave is forfeited six months after the date of the birth or placement.

4. If an employee is out for a medical leave for the birth of a child (the birthing parent) and is approved for short-term disability, can they use the paid parental leave, too?

- Yes, the employee may use the paid parental leave to supplement their short-term disability benefit if the benefit is at less than 100% and/or following the end of their short-term disability benefit.



5. **How many times can an eligible employee use paid parental leave?**
 - Eligible employees may utilize paid parental leave once during a twelve-month period, with the exception of a stillborn birth.
 - Parental leave can only be utilized once per child.

6. **If an employee has twins (or other multiples), do they get more weeks of leave?**
 - No, the number of children born, adopted, or placed during a single event does not increase the leave allowance of eight workweeks within a twelve-month period.

7. **An employee wants to take six weeks of parental leave, followed by reduced hour workdays or an intermittent leave for the remainder of their eligible leave hours. Can they do that?**
 - Employees may use parental leave for one continuous period of time or may utilize the leave intermittently with approval of their Department Director (or their designee).
 - *Example: An employee who normally works 40 hours per week is out for the birth of child for six weeks and requests to return to work for half days for the remainder of available paid parental leave. With Director approval, the employee then utilizes twenty hours per week over the next four workweeks.*

8. **Can an employee choose to be unpaid for part of their leave to “save” their paid parental leave for a later period?**
 - No, if parental leave is available, an employee cannot go in a leave without pay status.

9. **When can employees begin using the paid parental leave?**
 - The paid parental leave is available on the policy effective date of January 1, 2025.

10. **What about employees who had an applicable event (and are eligible) prior to January 1?**
 - Employees who experienced an event of birth, adoption, or foster care placement prior to January 1, 2025 are eligible for paid parental leave during the eligibility period of six months following the event date.
 - *Example: An employee has a newborn child on September 27, 2024 and meets eligibility requirements for hire date, status, and hours worked. The employee is eligible for paid parental leave from January 1, 2025 through March 27, 2025.*

11. **What about employees who had an applicable event but do not yet meet eligibility requirements for hire date?**
 - Employees who experienced an event of birth, adoption, or foster care placement prior or following January 1, 2025 would be eligible for paid parental leave during the period of six months following the event date, to begin their date of eligibility.
 - *Example: An employee has a newborn child on January 2, 2025 and was hired November 4, 2024. The employee is eligible for paid parental leave from May 4, 2025 through July 2, 2025.*



12. How does an employee ask for parental leave?

- Employees are to provide their supervisor and Human Resources with notice of the request for leave at least sixty (60) calendar days prior to the proposed date of the leave (or if the leave is not foreseeable, as soon as possible). Human Resources will inform the employee of their eligibility status and documentation requirements applicable to their leave type. Documentation must be received by the due date noted by Human Resources.

13. As a supervisor, what do I do when notified of a leave request? How do I know if the employee is eligible and for how much leave?

- Once a request is received, please forward to Human Resources who will inform the Department's representative (Department Director or designee, supervisor, and/or payroll representative) of the status of leave, including the beginning and end dates of leave eligibility and total hours available.
- Human Resources will provide information, including a tracking spreadsheet, to the Department's designee. This information will include the eligibility status of the employee, dates applicable to the leave, and hour equivalent of the leave available. The Department's designee will track parental leave hours and provide the completed tracking spreadsheet to Human Resources each pay period in which leave is used.

Additional questions? Please contact Human Resources at HR@harrisonburgva.gov or 540.432.8920.

Updated: September 23, 2024