



## Paid Parental Leave Questions & Answers

Following are questions and answers about the Paid Parental Leave benefit for eligible employees at the University of Chicago Medical Center. For additional information, please refer to the [policy document](#). (You must have network/VPN access to view.)

### **What is Paid Parental Leave?**

Paid Parental Leave is a new benefit (effective April 1, 2021) offered by the University of Chicago Medical Center to support employees' and their families' well-being when adding a child to their family. Eligible employees can receive up to six weeks of paid leave within a 12-month period to care for and bond with their child following birth, adoption or foster care placement.

### **Am I eligible for Paid Parental Leave?**

You are eligible for this benefit on the first of the month after 30 days of employment and if:

- You are regularly scheduled to work 20 or more hours per week; and
- You are a new biological, adoptive or foster parent (or a same-sex spouse or civil union partner of a biological, adoptive or foster parent) of a child under the age of 18 years.

### **Am I eligible if I am represented by a labor union?**

Paid Parental Leave policies for employees represented by a labor union must be collectively bargained. For that reason, this new policy does not automatically extend to employees currently represented by a labor union as of its date of issuance unless provided for in an applicable collective bargaining agreement. Please consult your collective bargaining agreement or bargaining representative with questions.

### **Am I eligible for Paid Parental Leave if I am not the birthing parent?**

Yes. All employees who are parents — regardless of gender or whether they are the birthing parent — and meet the eligibility criteria are entitled to receive Paid Parental Leave.

### **If my spouse/partner and I are both University of Chicago Medical Center employees, can we both take Paid Parental Leave?**

Yes. If you both work for the University of Chicago Medical Center and are eligible under the Paid Parental Leave policy, you can both receive up to six weeks of paid time off. However, if you work in the same department, business needs might prevent you from taking leave at the same time.

### **Am I eligible for Paid Parental Leave if I am a surrogate?**

No. Paid Parental Leave is not available for surrogates. However, you may be eligible for medical leave associated with giving birth, including short-term disability.

**Is Paid Parental Leave available for the adoption of a child or placement of a foster care child, regardless of the age of the child?**

Only if the child is under the age of 18 years.

**How much Paid Parental Leave time can I take?**

This benefit provides up to six weeks of paid leave within a 12-month period, starting from the date of the qualifying event (birth, adoption or foster care placement).

**Do I have to use all six weeks of Paid Parental Leave consecutively?**

You may use Paid Parental Leave in one continuous six-week block or in a minimum of one-week increments on an intermittent basis over a 12-month period of time.

**Is this benefit retroactive if my child was born before the policy was implemented on April 1, 2021?**

It depends. Eligible employees who added a child through birth, adoption or foster care placement between January 1, 2021, and March 31, 2021, will be permitted to receive up to six weeks of Paid Parental Leave as part of a one-time transition benefit.

**What if a child was added to our family through birth, adoption or foster care placement in 2021 before the policy was implemented on April 1, 2021, and I already returned to work?**

As part of a one-time transition benefit, you will receive the six weeks of Paid Parental Leave. This will come in one of two ways:

- If you already took 12 weeks off as part of the approved leave and part of that period was unpaid, it will be retroactively paid under Paid Parental Leave. No action is required by you to initiate reimbursement. In addition, any accrued time taken during the leave will be replaced with Paid Parental Leave and your accrual balance will be restored.
- If you returned to work having taken less than six weeks of time as part of the approved leave, you may use Paid Parental Leave to cover any remaining amount of leave, up to 12 weeks of total time off within one year of the birth, adoption or foster care placement.

**What if a child was added to our family through birth, adoption or foster care placement in 2021 before the policy was implemented on April 1, 2021, and I am still on leave?**

As part of a one-time transition benefit, you will receive the six weeks of Paid Parental Leave. This will come in one of two ways:

- Any unpaid time during the approved leave will be retroactively paid under Paid Parental Leave. No action is required by you to initiate reimbursement. Also, any accrued time taken during the leave will be replaced with Paid Parental Leave, restoring your accrual balance.
- If you return to work having taken less than six weeks of time as part of the approved leave, you may use Paid Parental Leave to cover any remaining amount of leave, up to 12 weeks of total time off within one year of the birth, adoption or foster care placement.

**If my child became part of my family through birth, adoption or foster care placement on or before December 31, 2020, will I be able to use Paid Parental Leave?**

No. If the qualifying life event occurred on or before December 31, 2020, the Paid Parental Leave benefit does not apply.

**What if I have more than one child in a year?**

You may not exceed six weeks of Paid Parental Leave within a 12-month period beginning on the day of the first event, regardless of the number of children added during that 12-month period. For example, if you had a child on January 1, 2022, and another on October 1, 2022:

- You would have to use your six weeks of Paid Parental Leave by December 31, 2022, for the first child.
- You could use another six weeks of Paid Parental Leave for the second child beginning January 1, 2023, but you would need to exhaust all Paid Parental Leave time by September 30, 2023.

**Can I receive additional Paid Parental Leave due to multiple births (twins, triplets, etc.)?**

No. A multiple birth is considered one qualifying event, and the same leave is provided. You are allowed six weeks of paid leave total for the multiple births.

**Can Paid Parental Leave be used in the event of a miscarriage or stillbirth?**

Miscarriage, stillbirth and other issues related to a pregnancy are not qualifying events under Paid Parental Leave, but may be covered under Family and Medical Leave and bereavement for one or either parent.

**Are paid holidays included when counting time used for Paid Parental Leave?**

If there is a paid holiday during the time you are on Paid Parental Leave, that holiday (and related pay) will be considered part of your Paid Parental Leave. In other words, you won't receive both Paid Parental Leave and holiday pay. In addition, you cannot use holidays to extend your parental leave entitlement or your total amount of pay beyond the six-week maximum.

**How much will I be paid during Paid Parental Leave?**

You will receive 100% of your base pay minus required federal and state tax deductions and any authorized deductions.

**Will my benefits continue while I'm on Paid Parental Leave?**

Yes. Your benefits will continue, and your share of benefit plan contributions will continue to be deducted from your pay.

**Will I accrue time off while I'm on Paid Parental Leave?**

No, you won't accrue time off while you are on Paid Parental Leave.

**How does Paid Parental Leave work with other types of leaves if I am the birthing parent?**

Paid Parental Leave is provided in addition to other types of leave for which you may be eligible, such as short-term disability (STD). In most cases, Paid Parental Leave will begin *after* any disability period if you are the birthing parent. Please refer to the [Short-Term Disability Summary Benefit Description](#) for more details on the STD benefits you may be eligible to receive.

**How does Paid Parental Leave work with other types of leaves if I am the non-birthing parent?**

If you are the non-birthing parent, you may use Paid Parental Leave at the time of the addition of the child or at any time within a 12-month period. After using Paid Parental Leave, you also have the option to use any accrued time off.

**If I'm not eligible for or if I've exhausted my Family and Medical Leave, am I still eligible for Paid Parental Leave?**

Yes, you are still eligible for Paid Parental Leave as long as you meet all other eligibility criteria.

**How do I request Paid Parental Leave?**

To schedule and request Paid Parental Leave:

- Notify your supervisor at least 30 days prior to the start of your absence.
- Contact Sedgwick, our leave/disability administrator, at **1-885-311-9661**, Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. CT, to open a leave request. Your notification must include the anticipated length of leave (in a minimum of one-week increments) and your expected return-to-work date.
- Inform Sedgwick every time you use Paid Parental Leave in minimum one-week increments.

**What documentation is required to receive Paid Parental Leave?**

You must provide verification of birth, adoption or foster care placement to Sedgwick. Examples include a birth certificate, adoption placement documents, immigration visas from the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, or other legal documents showing you are either the birth mother or legal parent of the child.

**Can I be employed elsewhere while on Paid Parental Leave?**

No. You may not accept other employment while you are on Paid Parental Leave.

**Am I required to return to work if I receive Paid Parental Leave?**

No. There is no requirement to return to work if you receive Paid Parental Leave.

**What if I have unused Paid Parental Leave at the end of the 12-month period?**

Unless required by law, any unused Paid Parental Leave will be forfeited at the end of the 12-month period. Similarly, if your employment ends, your eligibility for Paid Parental Leave ends.

**Where can I find more information about Paid Parental Leave?**

You can find additional information, including details about the types of leave available, taking and returning from a leave of absence, requesting an accommodation and more, at <https://ucmc-laama.com/>.