

Paid Parental Leave *Toolkit*

About This Toolkit

On Sept. 20, 2019, the University of North Carolina Board of Governors approved a Paid Parental Leave program for eligible university employees. The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill will offer a Paid Parental Leave (PPL) benefit, effective as of Jan. 13, 2020, that provides eligible employees dedicated leave time to care for and bond with a newborn or a newly-placed child, under the age of 18, by adoption, foster care placement, or other legal placement.

This toolkit is designed to help employees understand:

- The new PPL benefits, including eligibility criteria.
- The policy's leave and certification requirements.
- The process for requesting and utilizing PPL.

Included in this Toolkit

[Paid Parental Leave Overview](#)

[Paid Parental Leave Policy](#)

[How to Request Paid Parental Leave](#)

[Paid Parental Leave FAQs](#)



For More Information

Complete information and additional resources are available at go.unc.edu/paid-parental-leave. For questions, please call the Benefits & Leave Administration unit in the Office of Human Resources at 919-962-3071 or email leave@unc.edu.



THE UNIVERSITY
of NORTH CAROLINA
at CHAPEL HILL

Paid Parental Leave Overview

As of Jan. 13, 2020, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill will offer new Paid Parental Leave (PPL) benefits to support new parents by childbirth, adoption, foster care placement, or other legal placement. Together, the new benefits provide birth parents up to eight weeks and non-birth parents up to four weeks of paid time off in addition to current leave options.

	Recuperation Leave	Bonding Leave
Who will use the leave?	Birth Parent (defined as any person who gives birth)	Birth and Non-Birth Parent
What is the purpose?	Paid leave for physical recovery from childbirth	Paid leave to allow for bonding following childbirth, adoption, foster care placement, or other legal placement
How long is the leave?	4 continuous weeks	4 continuous weeks
When is the leave available to use?	Immediately following the childbirth	Within 12 months of childbirth, adoption, foster care placement, or other legal placement
How often may the leave be used?	Once every 12 months	Once every 12 months
Who is eligible?	Full-time or part-time (working at least 20 hours per week) <i>SHRA</i> and <i>EHRA Non-Faculty</i> employees in a permanent, probationary, or time-limited (benefits-eligible) position. <i>EHRA Faculty</i> are not eligible for PPL.	
When does eligibility begin?	Once an eligible employee has been continuously employed by the State of North Carolina for the immediate 12 preceding months, and has been in pay status for at least 1,040 hours in the previous 12-month period.	
Additional Criteria	An employee's eligibility for PPL shall be made based on the employee's months of service and hours of work as of the date of the qualifying event.	
	PPL must run concurrent with Family & Medical Leave, if available.	
What if my qualifying event occurred before Jan. 13, 2020?	If an eligible employee had a qualifying event that occurred on or after Sept. 1, 2019, and met the eligibility requirements as of the date of the event, the employee will be eligible for four weeks of PPL for purposes of bonding, beginning Jan. 13, 2020 and expiring 12 months from the time of the qualifying event date. If you are the birth parent, you may be eligible for prorated PPL for purposes of recuperation.	

Paid Parental Leave Policy

Purpose

On Sept. 20, 2019, the University of North Carolina Board of Governors approved a Paid Parental Leave program for eligible university employees. The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill will offer a Paid Parental Leave (PPL) benefit, effective as of Jan. 13, 2020, that provides eligible employees dedicated leave time to care for and bond with a newborn or a newly-placed child, under the age of 18, by adoption, foster care placement, or other legal placement.

Eligibility

As of the date of the qualifying event, an UNC-CH employee must meet the following criteria to be eligible for PPL:

- Be in a permanent, probationary, or time-limited SHRA and EHRA Non-Faculty position working at least 20 hours per week;
- Have been continuously employed by the State of North Carolina for the immediate 12 preceding months;
- Have been in pay status for at least 1,040 hours in the previous 12-month period;

Definitions

For purposes of this policy, the terms below mean the following:

Birth Parent Any person who gives birth to a child.

Bonding Leave Up to four weeks of leave the birth parent and non-birth parent may take to care for and bond with an eligible child. This leave must be used within the first 12 months following the birth or placement of a child. It must be used as a continuous 4-week period of leave.

Child A biological child or a newly-placed adopted, foster, or otherwise legally placed child under the age of 18, whose parent is an eligible university employee.

Eligible University Employee A full-time, part-time (half-time or more) permanent, probationary or time-limited SHRA and EHRA Non-Faculty employee who has been continuously employed by the State of North Carolina for the immediate 12 preceding months and has been in pay status for at least 1,040 hours in the previous 12-month period.

Family & Medical Leave Act (FMLA) FMLA is a federal law that provides eligible employees with unpaid job-protected leave for specified family and medical reasons.

Non-Birth Parent The parent of a child who does not give birth.

Paid Parental Leave A benefit provided to a parent by childbirth, adoption, foster care placement, or other legal placement.

Parent A parent by childbirth, adoption, foster care placement, or other legal placement.

Public Safety Concern A significant impairment to the university's ability to conduct its operations in a manner that protects the health and safety of North Carolinians.

Qualifying Event The birth of a child to an eligible university employee, or the adoption, foster care placement, or other legal placement, *in loco parentis* placement, of a child with an eligible university employee. *Guardian ad Litem* assignments are not qualifying events.

Recuperation Leave Up to four weeks of leave the birth parent may take for recuperation during the disability period associated with the birth of child. The four weeks of leave must be used as a continuous period beginning immediately following the birth.

- Have a child born, adopted, placed with the employee through foster care placement, or other legal placement on or after Sept. 1, 2019.

Employees not covered

Temporary and part-time (working less than 20 hours per week) employees are not eligible for the PPL benefit. However, temporary employment may count toward the 12 months service requirement so long as the employee is in a permanent, probationary, or time-limited (benefits-eligible) SHRA or EHRA Non-Faculty position at the time of the qualifying event.

Faculty members on 9 or 12 months of service are not eligible for the PPL benefit as they are already covered under the Faculty Serious Illness, Major Disability, and Parental Leave Policy. More information about this policy is available at academicpersonnel.unc.edu/faculty-policies-procedures-guidelines/leave/faculty-serious-illness-major-disability-and-parental-leave-policy/

Guidelines

Paid Parental Leave (PPL) is designed to allow employees paid time off to care for and bond with a newborn child, or a newly-adopted or newly-placed child. PPL will run concurrently with approved unpaid leave under the Family & Medical Leave Act (FMLA), as applicable by law.

Paid Parental Leave provisions

- **Eight weeks** of PPL for the birth parent, providing the **first four weeks** for **recuperation** immediately following the birth and **four weeks** for **bonding** within 12 months.
- **Four weeks** of PPL for **bonding** for the non-birth parent, following birth, adoption, foster care placement, or other legal placement of a child, within the 12 months.
- Leave for **part-time employees** (working at least 20 hours per week) will be awarded on a **pro-rated basis** corresponding to the percentage of hours they normally are scheduled to work.

PPL for recuperation

Eligible employees who have given birth may receive a maximum of four weeks (160 hours) of PPL for **recuperation** during the disability period associated with the birth of a child. This leave must be used as a continuous 4-week period of leave commencing immediately following the birth of a child. **PPL for recuperation** may not be used or extended beyond this 4-week period. The number of children born during a single event does not increase the PPL for recuperation allowance.

PPL for bonding

Eligible employees who are parents of a newborn child or a child under the age of 18 who is placed with the employee through adoption, foster care placement, or other legal placement may receive up to four weeks (160 hours) of PPL to care for and **bond** with an eligible child.

- Bonding leave must be used as a continuous 4-week period of leave and must be taken within the first 12 months of the birth or placement of the child. PPL for bonding that is not used during the first 12-month period will be forfeited. This leave should be coordinated with the employee's supervisor to minimize impact to the work unit, if feasible, and to avoid any public safety concerns.

Additional Criteria for Paid Parental Leave

Each hour of PPL will be compensated at 100 percent of the employee's regular base pay at a straight time rate, excluding any premium pay. PPL will be paid on regularly-scheduled pay dates.

If more than one parent works for UNC-CH, each parent is independently eligible to use PPL; the leave benefit is not shared between parents.

Eligibility for PPL ends if an employee of UNC-CH transfers to an ineligible position or receives an appointment to a non-participating institution. Upon termination of an individual's employment with UNC-CH, the employee will not be paid for any unused PPL. PPL cannot be donated to other employees.

PPL cannot be used prior to the effective date of birth, adoption, or foster care placement, or other legal placement.

Coordination with other leave policies

PPL will run concurrently with leave under FMLA, if available. Any leave taken under this policy due to the birth, adoption, or foster care placement, or other legal placement of a child will be counted towards the 12 weeks of available FMLA leave per 12-month period. All other requirements and provisions under FMLA will apply. In no case will the total amount of FMLA leave (paid or unpaid) granted to the employee exceed 12 weeks during the 12-month FMLA period.

PPL must be applied to absences prior to the employee using any available personal leave (vacation, bonus, sick, etc.), other accrued paid time off, or leave without pay. After the PPL is exhausted, the employee may use the balance of FMLA leave (if applicable), in which case compensation can be provided through a combination of accrued leave (i.e., sick, vacation/bonus leave) and/or Voluntary Shared Leave (if applicable). Upon exhaustion of these leave balances, any remaining FMLA leave will be unpaid.

Paid holidays occurring during a **full week** of PPL count towards the employee's PPL entitlement and do not extend the PPL period. Paid holidays occurring during a **partial week** of PPL do not count towards the employee's PPL entitlement and do extend the PPL period unless the employee was otherwise scheduled and expected to work during the paid holiday.

Condition 3 Adverse Weather Closings with pay count towards the employee's PPL entitlement and do not extend the PPL period.

Employees are eligible to use PPL if it has not been used within the past 12 months even if they have already exhausted their available Family & Medical Leave entitlement.

Exception for stillbirth

In the event of a stillbirth occurring 20 or more weeks into the pregnancy, a birth parent who is an eligible employee shall be provided up to four weeks of **PPL for recuperation** commencing immediately following the stillbirth.

Retroactivity

If an employee had a qualifying event that occurred on or after Sept. 1, 2019, and met the eligibility requirements as of the date of the event, the employee may be eligible for up to four weeks of PPL for purposes of **bonding**, beginning Jan. 13, 2020 and expiring 12 months from the time of the qualifying event date. Additionally, a birth parent who is still in the recuperation period may be eligible for prorated PPL for purposes of **recuperation**.

Request for Paid Parental Leave

Eligible employees should provide notice of the request for PPL at least 30 days prior to the proposed date of leave by submitting the required documentation to the Benefits & Leave Administration unit in the Office of Human Resources. If your need for leave is unforeseeable, you must provide notice as soon as practicable.

How to Request Paid Parental Leave

Paid Parental Leave (PPL) cannot be approved before the qualifying event (birth, adoption, foster care placement, or other legal placement of a child). Eligible employees who would like to request PPL should follow the steps below.

Step 1: Communication

- Notify your supervisor of your need for PPL and discuss your proposed leave schedule prior to completing the required forms.
- Work with your department to create a transition plan to cover essential job functions during your absence.

Step 2: Required forms

- Complete and sign the Family & Medical Leave Request Form and Paid Parental Leave Request Form with your supervisor's signature. The forms are available at hr.unc.edu/benefits/forms/.
- For business planning purposes, please submit the request for leave at least 30 days prior to the proposed date of the leave (or if you learn of your need for leave less than 30 days, as soon as practicable).
- Email the completed forms to leave@unc.edu.
- The Benefits & Leave Administration unit will notify you of your eligibility for PPL.

Step 3: Additional documents

- After the qualifying event, email the required supporting documentation (below) to leave@unc.edu.
- Requests for PPL will be processed once the required supporting documentation is received by the Benefits & Leave Administration unit.
- The Benefits & Leave Administration unit will review your supporting documentation and communicate with you and your department regarding the status of your request for PPL.

Examples of acceptable supporting documentation

Qualifying event	Only one (1) document required
Adoption	Adoption Order, or Letter of Placement by placement professional or agency
Birth	Birth Certificate, or Documented confirmation from hospital of delivery, or Certification of health care provider
Foster Care Placement	Foster Care Placement Agreement, or Custody Order, or Letter of Placement
Other Placements	Custody Order, or Letter of Placement by placement professional or agency

Documents provided must show the date of birth or date of placement. The name of the legal parent must appear on the supporting documentation.

What to expect after your request for PPL is approved

Once your request for PPL is approved, your PPL time will be entered and tracked in the Time Information Management (TIM) system by your departmental TIM Administrator.

Should you have any questions about your request, you may call the Benefits & Leave Administration unit at 919-962-3071 or email leave@unc.edu.

PPL Pay Codes (for TIM Administrators)

PPL must be applied to absences prior to the employee using any available personal leave (vacation, bonus, sick, etc.), other accrued paid time off, or leave without pay. PPL must run concurrently with Family & Medical Leave, if available.

PPL Pay Codes

FMLA PD - PPL-Recuperation: Use when the birth parent is approved for both FMLA Leave and Recuperation Leave.

FMLA PD - PPL-Bonding: Use when the birth parent or non-birth parent is approved for both FMLA Leave and Bonding Leave.

PPL-Recuperation: Use when the birth parent is approved for Recuperation Leave, but not FMLA leave.

PPL-Bonding: Use when the birth parent or non-birth parent is approved for Bonding Leave, but not FMLA leave.

If you have questions about what PPL pay code to use, please contact the Benefits & Leave Administration unit at 919-962-3071 or leave@unc.edu.

If a TIM Administrator has a question about what PPL pay code to use, they may contact the Benefits & Leave Administration Unit at 919-962-3071 or leave@unc.edu.

If a TIM Administrator has a functional 'how to' TIM question, they may email TIM support at timsupport@unc.edu. For technical issues, users can call 919-962-HELP (4357) or submit a request for help online at help.unc.edu.

Additional Resources

[Paid Parental Leave Policy](#)

[Family & Medical Leave](#)

[Lactation Support](#)

Paid Parental Leave Frequently Asked Questions

General information for Paid Parental Leave

What is Paid Parental Leave?

Paid Parental Leave (PPL) is paid time off from work for eligible employees to recuperate and bond with a newborn or a newly placed child through adoption, foster care placement, or other legal placement.

Why are there two different types of Paid Parental Leave (PPL)?

The two types of Paid Parental Leave (PPL) cover different uses of the leave. The four weeks of ***Paid Parental Recuperation Leave*** is for the birth parent to use for the disability/recuperation period following the birth of the child. The four weeks of ***Paid Parental Bonding Leave*** can be used by both parents for the bonding period associated with a newborn or placement of a child through adoption, foster care placement, or other legal placement. For this reason, the birth parent may receive up to eight weeks of PPL (four weeks of Recuperation Leave and four weeks of Bonding Leave).

Will my benefits or employment status be affected if I take Paid Parental Leave (PPL)?

No. You will remain in pay status and your coverage for any benefits that you are enrolled in will remain the same. You will continue to earn retirement service credit and your contributions will not be affected by Paid Parental Leave (PPL).

Do I get all my regular pay while I'm on Paid Parental Leave (PPL)?

You get 100 percent of your regular pay during an approved Paid Parental Leave (PPL).

Why does the parent who didn't give birth only get four weeks of Paid Parental Leave (PPL) instead of eight weeks?

The Paid Parental Recuperation Leave is applied only to the birth parent for their recovery from the birth. The other parent does not have the same medical necessity for recovery as the birth parent and so is not eligible for Recuperation Leave.

If I was approved for my 4 weeks of Paid Parental Bonding Leave following my spouse giving birth to my baby, can my supervisor require me to return to work early due to staffing issues?

No. Once an employee has received approval and has begun to take Paid Parental Leave (PPL), management cannot revoke approval based on staffing issues.

What happens when an employee with available Paid Parental Leave (PPL) transfers to a State agency/university that does not have PPL?

The employee is not eligible to use Paid Parental Leave (PPL) while employed by a non-participating institution. Employees who are eligible for PPL and transfer to a non-participating agency will have their PPL eligibility frozen until the expiration of their 12-month period. If the employee returns to a participating agency/university before the end of their 12-month eligibility period, they may resume the use of PPL so long as they complete usage by the end date of eligibility.

What if I have a remaining balance of Paid Parental Leave (PPL) but separate from university employment?

Paid Parental Leave (PPL) is not paid out if it is not used. If an employee leaves State employment, their eligibility for PPL ends.

Do parents receive additional Paid Parental Leave (PPL) due to multiple births (twins, triplets, etc.)?

No. A multiple birth is considered one qualifying event, and the same leave is provided. Parents do not receive Paid Parental Leave (PPL) for each child born in a multiple birth event.

Eligibility for Paid Parental Leave

Who is eligible for Paid Parental Leave (PPL)?

Full-time or part-time (working at least 20 hours per week) SHRA and EHRA Non-Faculty employees in a permanent, probationary, or time-limited (benefits-eligible) position. Please contact the Benefits & Leave Administration Unit in the Office of Human Resources at 919-962-3071 or leave@unc.edu for additional questions.

Why aren't faculty eligible for Paid Parental Leave (PPL)?

Permanent Fixed Term and Tenured/Tenure Track EHRA Faculty on a 9 or 12-month appointment who are eligible to participate in the Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System (TSERS) or the UNC Optional Retirement Program (i.e., continuing faculty who are employed at least 75% of full-time) are eligible for the Faculty Serious Illness & Disability Leave program, which provides a comparable benefit to the Paid Parental Leave (PPL) program.

If both parents work for the university, can they both take Paid Parental Leave (PPL)?

Yes, if both parents are eligible university employees, both can independently take Paid Parental Bonding Leave. Only the birth parent is eligible for Paid Parental Recuperation Leave.

If I am a new permanent employee (new to State service), and I give birth six months after my hire date, am I eligible for Paid Parental Leave (PPL)?

No. An employee must have 12 months of continuous State service and have been in pay status for 1,040 hours in the previous 12 months to be eligible for Paid Parental Leave (PPL).

I am eligible for Family & Medical Leave as a temporary employee. Am I eligible for Paid Parental Leave (PPL)?

No. Only full and part-time (working at least 20 hours per week) employees who are in permanent, probationary, or time-limited SHRA or EHRA Non-Faculty positions are eligible for PPL. Reduced-time as a temporary employee, including student, graduate assistantships, and postdoctoral fellowships, can be included in determining the 12 months of continuous employment eligibility for PPL so long as the employee is in a permanent, probationary, or time-limited SHRA or EHRA Non-Faculty position at the time of the qualifying event.

If I have a baby in January and then have a second baby in December of the same year, am I eligible for a second Paid Parental Leave (PPL) period for the second birth?

No. Employees are allowed one qualifying event per 12-month period. The 12-month period begins with the birth or placement of the child, so if another child is born within that 12-month period, the birth would not be a qualifying event for PPL.

Am I eligible for Paid Parental Leave (PPL) if I am a surrogate?

Yes. Surrogates are eligible for up to 4 weeks of Paid Parental Recuperation Leave following the birth.

Will periods of leave without pay, such as leave due to workers compensation or short-term disability, count toward the immediate 12 preceding months to qualify for Paid Parental Leave (PPL)?

Yes. If the employee remains employed by the State of North Carolina and does not incur a 31-day break in service, then the employee will be considered continuously employed, provided they meet all other eligibility requirements.

Do I have to live with or be married to the mother of my child to be eligible for Paid Parental Leave (PPL)?

No. If you provide an acceptable document certifying your eligibility and you meet all other requirements, then you will be eligible for Paid Parental Leave (PPL).

An employee works in a non-participating state agency/university and then transfers to a participating institution, will the employee be eligible for Paid Parental Leave (PPL)?

Yes. Once at the participating agency/university, if the employee meets all other eligibility criteria, then Paid Parental Leave (PPL) will be available to the employee. However, the employee will only be eligible for qualifying events that occurred on or after the employee's start date with the participating agency/university.

Are grant-funded employees eligible for Paid Parental Leave (PPL)?

Yes. Funding source is not a requirement or restriction for eligibility, so long as the employee meets all other eligibility requirements.

I had a child on Sept. 17, 2019 before UNC-CH implemented the Paid Parental Leave (PPL) policy. Can I still use PPL for this event?

Yes. So long as the birth or legal placement occurred on or after Sept. 1, 2019 and the employee was otherwise eligible as of the date of the qualifying event (i.e., at the time of the birth/placement, the employee was a permanent, time-limited, or probationary employee with 12 months of continuous service and was in pay status at least 1040 hours within the past 12 months) then the employee could use Paid Parental Leave (PPL) for the event. The PPL, however, could be used only on a real-time basis (on or after UNC-CH's implementation date — Jan. 13, 2020).

So, although the four weeks of Paid Parental Recuperation Leave would not be available in this instance, the four weeks of Paid Parental Bonding Leave with the child could still be used starting on or after Jan. 13, 2020. The Bonding Leave must be used within 12 months of the qualifying event (in this example, no later than Sept. 16, 2020). If the employee used Family & Medical Leave in 2019 or Jan. 2020 for the event or used other available paid leave or leave without pay, then PPL cannot be used to go back and replace paid or unpaid leave used at that time.

I gave birth Aug. 20, 2019. Am I eligible for Paid Parental Leave (PPL)?

No. The qualifying event must have occurred on or after Sept. 1, 2019. This date is set by the Governor's executive order. All births/placements that occurred prior to Sept. 1, 2019 are not eligible for PPL.

If I wasn't an eligible employee at the time of the birth, but I become an eligible employee within 12 months of the birth, can I use Paid Parental Leave (PPL)?

No. An employee must be an eligible employee at the time of the birth to qualify for Paid Parental Leave (PPL).

I gave birth Oct. 1, 2019, but will not have 12 months of State service until Feb. 2020. Am I eligible for Paid Parental Leave (PPL)?

No. At the time of the qualifying event (birth/placement), an employee must be an "eligible employee," which means:

- at least half-time appointment;
- permanent, probationary, or time-limited appointment;
- worked for the State for the 12 months preceding the qualifying event (in a temporary or permanent capacity collectively); and
- was in pay status for at least 1,040 hours within the 12 months preceding the qualifying event.

In this case, the employee's eligibility didn't occur until Feb. 2020, but needed to have been eligible as of Oct. 1, 2019 (the time of the birth/placement) to qualify for Paid Parental Leave (PPL).

I am an eligible employee. I give birth on Oct. 1, 2019. UNC-CH implements the policy on Jan. 13, 2020. Am I eligible for Paid Parental Leave (PPL)?

Yes, you could use the four consecutive weeks of Paid Parental Bonding Leave sometime between March 1, 2020 and Sept. 30, 2020 (12 months after the birth); however, you would not be eligible for the Paid Parental Recuperation Leave, which would have only been available for the four weeks immediately following the birth.

I am an eligible employee. I give birth on Jan. 2, 2020. UNC-CH implements the policy effective Jan. 13, 2020. Am I eligible for Paid Parental Leave (PPL)?

In this case, the period of Jan. 2-12 (immediately following the birth) would not be covered by Paid Parental Recuperation Leave because the policy had not been implemented yet; however, you would be eligible for the remainder of the four consecutive weeks of Recuperation Leave that immediately follow the birth starting with Jan. 13, 2020. You are also eligible to use the four consecutive weeks of Bonding Leave within 12 months of the birth (i.e., no later than Jan. 1, 2021), but remember that the Bonding Leave must be used when you are using any available Family & Medical Leave.

Requesting Paid Parental Leave

How do I apply for Paid Parental Leave (PPL)?

For step-by-step instructions, please review the "[How to Request Paid Parental Leave](#)" section of the Paid Parental Leave Toolkit. If you have questions or need assistance, please contact the Benefits & Leave Administration Unit at 919-962-3071 or leave@unc.edu.

What documentation do I need to provide to Benefits & Leave Administration in the Office of Human Resources when applying for Paid Parental Leave (PPL)?

- Completed Family & Medical Leave Request Form (if applicable)
- Completed Paid Parental Leave Request Form
- Certification of birth or placement of a child through adoption, foster care placement, or other legal placement:
 - **Birth of a child:** certification of health care provider, birth certificate or documented confirmation from hospital of delivery
 - **Adoption, foster care placement, or other legal placement of a child:** adoption order, custody order, or letter of placement

Using Paid Parental Leave

I am a spouse caring for the birth parent during their period of disability after childbirth. Am I able to use Paid Parental Leave (PPL) for that purpose?

No. Spouses cannot use Paid Parental Bonding Leave during the disability period for the purpose of caring for the spouse; however, they could choose to use Paid Parental Bonding Leave to bond with the child during the same period that the birth parent is taking Recuperation Leave or choose to use Family & Medical Leave (if eligible) to care for the birth parent during the recuperation period and then use the Bonding Leave at some other time within the first 12 months after the birth.

Can Paid Parental Bonding Leave be used for child placement due to a Guardian ad Litem assignment or for an *in loco parentis* arrangement?

In loco parentis is eligible under Paid Parental Leave (PPL). *In loco parentis* refers to a relationship in which a person is placed in the role of a parent by assuming and discharging the obligations of a parent to a child who is the age of 18. Although no legal or biological relationship is necessary, grandparents or other relatives, such as siblings, may stand *in loco parentis* to a child as long as the relative satisfies the *in loco parentis* requirements and provides necessary documentation. Guardian ad Litem (GAL) assignments **are not** eligible under PPL.

Can Paid Parental Bonding Leave be used for required Social Service visits, court dates, doctor visits, or following a child being placed with me through foster care?

Paid Parental Bonding Leave may only be used for bonding with the child. Social Services and doctor visits as well as court dates that occur prior to the placement of the child may be scheduled by using other sources of leave. Once the child is placed, incidental appointments that may occur during the four-week Bonding Leave are included within the Bonding Leave.

As an adoptive or foster parent, am I able to use Paid Parental Bonding Leave prior to the actual adoption, foster care placement, or other placement, such as travel to a foreign country to meet the child prior to the actual adoption?

No. Paid Parental Bonding Leave is not available until the qualifying event occurs. Once the child is placed, incidental appointments that may occur during the four-week Bonding Leave are included within the Bonding Leave.

Under what circumstances can employees request intermittent or delayed Paid Parental Leave (PPL)?

Employees must use PPL (Recuperation or Bonding) for continuous blocks of up to four weeks. The four weeks of Recuperation Leave for the birth parent must be used immediately following the birth. Either eligible parent may use the four-week Bonding Leave with the child for any continuous block of time within the 12 months following the birth or legal placement. For the birth parent, the four-week Bonding Leave does not have to occur immediately following the four-week Recuperation Leave. Although the Bonding Leave cannot be used intermittently, parents are not required to use the entire four weeks of Bonding Leave.

If a child is stillborn or miscarried, can Paid Parental Leave (PPL) still be used?

If the pregnancy results in a stillbirth at 20 weeks or greater into the pregnancy, then the birth parent is allowed to use up to four weeks of Paid Parental Recuperation Leave immediately following the event. Miscarriages or other issues related to a pregnancy are not qualifying events under PPL, but may be covered under FMLA for one or both parents.

I am an eligible employee and I have not used any FMLA in the past year. I give birth on May 1, 2020 (after UNC-CH's policy implementation date). I am instructed by my physician to go on bed rest for two weeks prior to the birth, and then my physician determines that my period of disability following the birth will be for eight weeks. How would Paid Parental Leave (PPL) be applied to this situation?

In this case, the employee is eligible for PPL only at the time of the qualifying event (the birth). There are four periods of time to review in terms of FMLA and PPL:

- **Weeks 1-2:** Covered by FMLA. The employee may use available leave to cover the absence (sick, vacation, bonus, comp time, etc.). This period is not covered by PPL because it occurs prior to the birth.
- **Weeks 3-6:** The qualifying event (birth) occurs at the beginning of Week 3. Covered by FMLA and four consecutive weeks of Paid Parental Recuperation Leave. FMLA and Recuperation Leave must run concurrently when FMLA is available.
- **Weeks 7-10:** Covered by FMLA. The employee may use available leave to cover the absence (sick, vacation, bonus, comp time, etc.). The employee may choose to exhaust their available Paid Parental Bonding Leave during the remaining period of disability, but is not required to do so during the remainder of the period of disability.
- **Weeks 11-12:** The employee may choose to use their remaining two weeks of FMLA consecutively with the previously applied FMLA (that is, a solid block of 12 weeks of FMLA) or wait to use it later (within 12 months of when they started using FMLA for the event). Once the employee chooses to use this FMLA, then the employee must also use the four consecutive weeks of Paid Parental Bonding Leave if not already used. The employee would still be allowed to use four weeks of Bonding Leave even though only two weeks of FMLA were remaining.

Length and timing of Paid Parental Leave

How long can I be on Paid Parental Leave (PPL)?

The length of leave depends on whether you are the birth parent or the non-birth parent.

- Up to eight weeks for the birth parent.
- Up to four weeks for the non-birth parent.

I am regularly scheduled to work 20 hours per week. Can I take 40 hours of Paid Parental Leave (PPL) each week?

No. Leave for part-time employees will be awarded on a pro-rated basis corresponding to the percentage of hours they normally are scheduled to work.

Can I use 6-8 weeks of sick leave during the period of disability after a birth and then take 8 weeks of Paid Parental Leave (PPL) after to remain out for a total of 14-16 weeks?

No. The birth parent must use Paid Parental Recuperation Leave prior to using sick or vacation leave for the birth. All PPL must be used concurrently with available Family & Medical Leave.

I am an eligible employee. My spouse gives birth on May 1, 2020. When can I use my four weeks of Bonding Leave? I have not used any FMLA in the past year.

You would be eligible to use up to 12 weeks of FMLA for the birth. Once you begin using FMLA, you must use the four consecutive weeks of Paid Bonding Leave concurrently with the FMLA. The remaining FMLA time used can be covered with available leave (vacation, bonus, comp time, etc. but not sick leave). The leave must be used within 12 months of the birth date.

I am an eligible employee. My partner gives birth on May 1, 2020 (after UNC-CH's implementation effective date). My partner has a difficult pregnancy resulting in a ten-week period of disability that requires me to use FMLA to care for them. How is Paid Parental Leave (PPL) applied in this situation?

If your FMLA documentation shows that you must provide care to your partner for their ten-week period of disability, then you can use available leave (sick, vacation, bonus, comp time, etc.) to cover your absence for the ten weeks. You could then use your remaining two weeks of FMLA within 12 months of the birth for the bonding period with the child (the birth is a separate FMLA event from caring for your partner), but you can only use a total of 12 weeks of FMLA within a 12-month period. You would exhaust your remaining two weeks of FMLA once you begin using your four consecutive weeks of Bonding Leave.

Coordination Paid Parental Leave with Other Leave Programs

Is Paid Parental Leave (PPL) in addition to leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act?

No. PPL runs concurrently with FMLA. The four weeks of Recuperation Leave and four weeks of Bonding Leave are counted towards the 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected FMLA leave in a 12-month period.

Are employees eligible for Voluntary Shared Leave when using Paid Parental Leave (PPL)?

Voluntary Shared Leave (VSL) has specific eligibility rules that may allow for some portion of the absence to be eligible. VSL cannot be used for the bonding period with a child for either parent under PPL or Family & Medical Leave. VSL may be used during Family & Medical Leave if the birth parent has exhausted the four-week Paid Parental Recuperation Leave and exhausted all other available leave, but has further medical issues associated with the birth.

If VSL is being used to cover the remainder of the disability period associated with the birth, then the birth parent is not required to apply the four-week Bonding Leave until after the available VSL has been applied. Regardless, the four-week Recuperation Leave must be used prior to using VSL for the disability period following the birth.

Are paid holidays or adverse weather closings included when counting time used for Paid Parental Leave (PPL)?

Paid holidays occurring during a full week of PPL count toward the PPL entitlement. Paid holidays occurring during a partial week of PPL do not count against the PPL entitlement, unless the employee was otherwise scheduled and expected to work during the paid holiday. Condition 3 Adverse Weather closings with pay are counted as part of an employee's use of PPL, consistent with other leave programs, and would not extend the PPL period.

If I have exhausted my 12 weeks of my Family & Medical Leave, am I still eligible for Paid Parental Leave (PPL)?

Yes. PPL runs concurrently with Family & Medical Leave. However, if FMLA has been exhausted, an employee is still eligible for PPL so long as all other criteria are met.

Where can I learn more about Paid Parental Leave?

You can find details about your Paid Parental Leave benefits at go.unc.edu/paid-parental-leave. You can also prepare for your Paid Parental Leave by attending a Planning for Parental Leave course. More information available at hr.unc.edu/training/catalog/.

For More Information

Complete information and additional resources are available at go.unc.edu/paid-parental-leave. For questions, please call the Benefits & Leave Administration unit in the Office of Human Resources at 919-962-3071 or email leave@unc.edu.