

# PARENTAL LEAVE ACT & DC FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

## PARENTAL LEAVE ACT



- Know Your Rights in the District of Columbia -

## DC FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

### Work Leave for Parenting Purposes

The District of Columbia Parental Leave Act allows employees who are parents or guardians to take 24 hours of leave (paid or unpaid) during a 12 month period to attend school-related activities. School events include but are not limited to: parent-teacher conferences, concerts, plays, rehearsals, sporting events, and other activities where the child is a participant or the subject of the event, not a spectator.

The employee must notify the employer 10 days before the requested leave unless the school-related activity was not reasonably foreseeable. The leave can be unpaid or paid family, vacation, personal, compensatory or leave bank leave.

The employer may deny the leave if granting the leave would disrupt the employer's business and make the achievement of production or service unusually difficult.

### Definition of Parent or Guardian

An employee is considered a parent or guardian for purposes of this Act if he or she is:

- biological mother or father of a child;
- person who has legal custody of a child;
- person who acts as a guardian of a child;
- aunt, uncle, or grandparent of a child; or is
- a person married or in a domestic partnership to a person listed above.

### Employer Posting Requirements

The employer must post and maintain this notice in a conspicuous place. An employer that willfully fails to post this notice may be ordered to pay a fine of up to \$100 for each day the employer fails to post the notice.

### Filing a Complaint of a Violation

If you believe an employer has wrongfully denied you parental leave under this statute, you can file a complaint within one year of the incident with the Office of Human Rights (OHR). To file a complaint, visit:

- **Online** at [ohr.dc.gov](http://ohr.dc.gov); or
- **In-Person** at 441 4th Street NW, Suite 570N, Washington, DC 20001.

Questions about the OHR process can also be answered by phone at (202) 727-4559.

### Work Leave for Family or Medical Purposes

The District of Columbia Family and Medical Leave Act (DCFMLA) requires employers with 20 or more employees to provide eligible employees with 16 weeks of unpaid family leave and 16 weeks of unpaid medical leave during a 24 month period.

Family Leave Eligible circumstances for family leave under DCFMLA include the birth of a child, adopting a child, or caring for a child in foster care. Caring for a seriously ill family member is also eligible for family leave.

Medical Leave Eligible circumstances for medical leave under DCFMLA includes recovering from a serious illness rendering the employee unable to work.

Leave under DCFMLA may be taken in blocks of time, intermittently, and in certain circumstances, at a reduced schedule. Employees can also use any accrued time instead of unpaid leave.

The employer may require medical certification and reasonable prior notice when applicable.

### Employee Eligibility

An employee is eligible under the Act if she or he has been employed by the employer for at least one year without a break in service, and worked at least 1,000 hours during the 12 month period immediately preceding the requested leave. The one year of service requirement does not need to have immediately preceded the request for leave.

The District government is considered a single employer. The above eligibility requirements can be met by considering employment at more than one District agency.

### Employer Posting Requirements

The employer must post and maintain this notice in a conspicuous place. An employer that willfully fails to post this notice may be ordered to pay a fine of up to \$100 for each day the employer fails to post the notice.

### Filing a Complaint of a Violation

If you believe an employer has wrongfully denied you family or medical leave, or retaliated against you under this statute, you can file a complaint within one year of the incident with the Office of Human Rights (OHR). To file a complaint, visit:

- **Online** at [ohr.dc.gov](http://ohr.dc.gov); or
- **In-Person** at 441 4th Street NW, Suite 570N, Washington, DC 20001.

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phone: (202) 727-4559

fax: (202) 727-9589

441 4th Street NW, Suite 570N, Washington, DC 20010

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