



Washington State University Human Resource Services

WSU PREGNANCY AND PARENTAL LEAVE RESOURCE GUIDE

Planning for a New Child

Washington State University (WSU) is committed to supporting faculty and staff when adding children to their families. New parents may consider a number of paid and unpaid time off/leave options when planning to welcome a new child by birth, adoption, foster care or legal guardianship.

It is important for employees to begin a conversation with their supervisor to plan as far in advance as possible. Be sure to review the [Pregnancy and Parental Leave Checklist](#) when planning for leave.

HRS Disability Services



hds.disabilityservices@wsu.edu

Phone: 509-335-9158

Fax: 509-241-9090

Pregnancy Accommodations

Under [state](#) and [federal](#) law, employers are required to provide specific civil rights protections for pregnant and postpartum employees. Examples:

- Modifications/adjustments to a job application process
- Providing frequent/longer/flexible restroom breaks and breaks to eat/drink, and rest
- Modifying a no food or drink policy
- Providing seating or allowing to sit more frequently
- Limiting lifting to 17 pounds or less

Additional modifications may require supporting medical documentation



**For information on Postpartum
accommodation keep reading!**

Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

WSU employees who have worked for a State of Washington institution of higher education or agency for a total of 12 months, in the past seven years and have at least 1,250 hours of service in the 12 months prior to the start of the leave are eligible for FMLA.

FMLA is a federal provision which provides eligible full-time employees up to 12 weeks or 480 hours of unpaid job and benefit protected leave in a 12-month period. The FMLA entitlement for bonding must be taken within one year of the child's birth or placement and must be taken as a continuous block of leave unless the employer agrees to allow part-time or intermittent leave.

If both spouses work for the state and are FMLA eligible, they may take a combined total of 12 weeks under FMLA, for parental/bonding leave purposes, in the initial 12-month period after birth or placement.

FMLA leave taken for adopting or fostering a child can be taken prior to the placement or adoption as outlined in the DOL Fact sheet [28Q](#).

HRS Disability Services designates approved leaves of absence (LOA) Employees may use any type of accrued time offs or leave without pay while on a FMLA LOA. Employees must account for all time off in Workday each pay period.

Disability Leave (DL) due to Pregnancy or Childbirth

WSU policy allows for a leave of absence for up to four months of unpaid leave for employees who are sick or temporarily disabled due pregnancy or childbirth. DL runs concurrently with FMLA and is only available for employees who require full time leave.

Employees may use any type of accrued time offs or leave without pay while on a Pregnancy or parental related DL LOA. Employees must account for all time off in Workday each pay period.

Did you know?

Licensed foster parents could be eligible for the state Shared Leave pool?

Parental (Bonding) Leave

WSU offers Parental (Bonding) Leave (PL) for [eligible employees](#) to bond with their newborn child or for the placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care. For birth parents, this leave may be in addition to any leave related to temporary disability due to pregnancy and childbirth. Employees are entitled to request up to six months of PL, however, the employer may deny requests for the portion of the parental leave that exceeds 12 weeks, due to operational necessity. PL must be taken within one year of the child's birth or placement.

PL runs concurrently with FMLA bonding leave.

Employees may use any type of accrued time offs or Leave Without Pay (LWOP) during a PL LOA leave running concurrently with FMLA.



Postpartum Accommodations

Under [state](#) and [federal](#) law, employers are required to provide specific civil rights protections for pregnant and postpartum employees. Examples:

- Reasonable break time for an employee to express breast milk for two years after the child's birth, each time the employee has need to express milk.
- A private location, other than a bathroom, which may be used by the employee to express breast milk if a location exists at the place of business or worksite. If the business location does not have a space for the employee to express milk, the employer will work with the employee to identify a convenient location and work schedule to accommodate their needs.

Did you know?
Paid Family Medical Leave (PFML) program is not a replacement for WSU Leave of Absence Designations?

Looking for a form? See the Disability Services [Find a Form](#) page.

How to Request Leave and Report Absence

Employees are to request a LOA in Workday for the entirety of the expected leave period. See [Workday Materials](#) reference guide [Employee Request a Leave of Absence](#).

If only requesting Parental (bonding) Leave, employees are to provide reasonable documentation of a family relationship (such as birth announcement, birth certificate, or placement documentation) to Disability Services.

In the case of medically required leave, employees are to ensure the Health Care Provider (HCP) completes, signs, returns the [Medical Leave HCP Statement](#) to Disability Services, not the department. Please note, medical documentation in other formats identifying frequency and duration of medical leave needs will be accepted as long as they are noted on HCP letterhead and signed by an HCP. Generally, non-birthing parents will not require medical documentation.

Employees who have requested and are approved for a LOA, will see the LOA “designation” in their Workday Absence Calendar for the duration of the LOA, whether it be approved on a full-time, part-time, or intermittent basis. This designation allows an employee on the designated LOA(s) to have access to and utilize time offs specific to that LOA designation. When on a LOA, time offs, including Leave Without Pay (when applicable) must be entered in Workday for all absences. For more information, see [Steps to Enter a Time Off While on LOA](#).

APPLY



NOW!

Shared Leave

If an employee is sick or temporarily disabled because of a pregnancy-related (prenatal) medical condition, miscarriage, or needs leave for parental/bonding, they may be eligible for the WSU Shared Leave program. The Shared Leave program, requested through Workday, allows qualifying employees the opportunity to receive time off/leave donations from other state employees to utilize as if it were their own.

Pregnancy disability: Employees may be eligible for up to a maximum of 90 days or 522 hours (for full-time employees) from the date of eligibility for the qualifying event. Employees are to ensure that the HCP coordinating care for the event completes the Shared Leave Health Care Provider Statement – Medical Conditions and submits it to Disability Services.

Parental Leave: Employees may be eligible for up to a maximum of 16 weeks within the first year of birth or placement.

Employees must have exhausted their personal holiday and compensatory time but may maintain up to 40 hours of annual leave and 40 hours of sick leave in reserve.

Did you know?
Eligible WSU employees who are adopting/fostering may be eligible to utilize leave to attend counseling sessions, court appearances, consults, physical examination, or to travel to another country to complete an adoption?

Foster Parent Shared Leave Pool

The State of Washington Foster Parent Shared Leave Pool is available to any eligible employee who is a licensed foster parent, pursuant to RCW [74.15.040](#), needing to care for or preparing to accept a foster child in their home.

The Foster Parent Shared Leave Pool (FPSLP) is administered by the Department of Social and Health Services in consultation with the Office of Financial Management. More information regarding the pool may be found on the [FPSLP website](#).

Maintaining Benefits while on Leave

During an approved FMLA period: Employer-paid medical benefits will remain in effect as long as the employee portion is paid. If an employee chooses to utilize LWOP for the entirety of a calendar month, the employee will be billed for their share of the benefits cost. An employee may use accrued paid leave to cover their share of the cost.

During an approved DL due to pregnancy and/or childbirth period: Employer-paid medical benefits will remain in effect as long as the employee portion is paid. If an employee chooses to utilize LWOP for the entire calendar month, the employee will be billed for their share of the benefits cost. Employees may use accrued paid leave to cover their share of the cost.

During approved PL outside of FMLA provisions: If an employee chooses to utilize LWOP for the entire calendar month, eligibility for employer-provided benefits will be lost. However, options to continue coverage on a self-pay basis may be offered.

Contact hrs.benefit@wsu.edu or call 509-335-4589 for more information.

Washington State Paid Family and Medical Leave (PFML)

Employees may also be eligible for [WA Paid Family and Medical Leave \(PFML\)](#) during the periods of disability due to pregnancy or childbirth and parental (bonding) leave. To qualify for PFML, eligible employees must have worked a minimum of 820 hours in Washington over the last year. See WSU program overview at [HRS PFML](#) webpage or visit the state's Paid Leave website to apply.

Note: The PFML program does not replace WSU coordinated medical leaves. Employees must continue to follow WSU leave policies during all medical/parental leaves.

Employees may choose to claim accrued time off as supplemental benefit to PFML benefits.

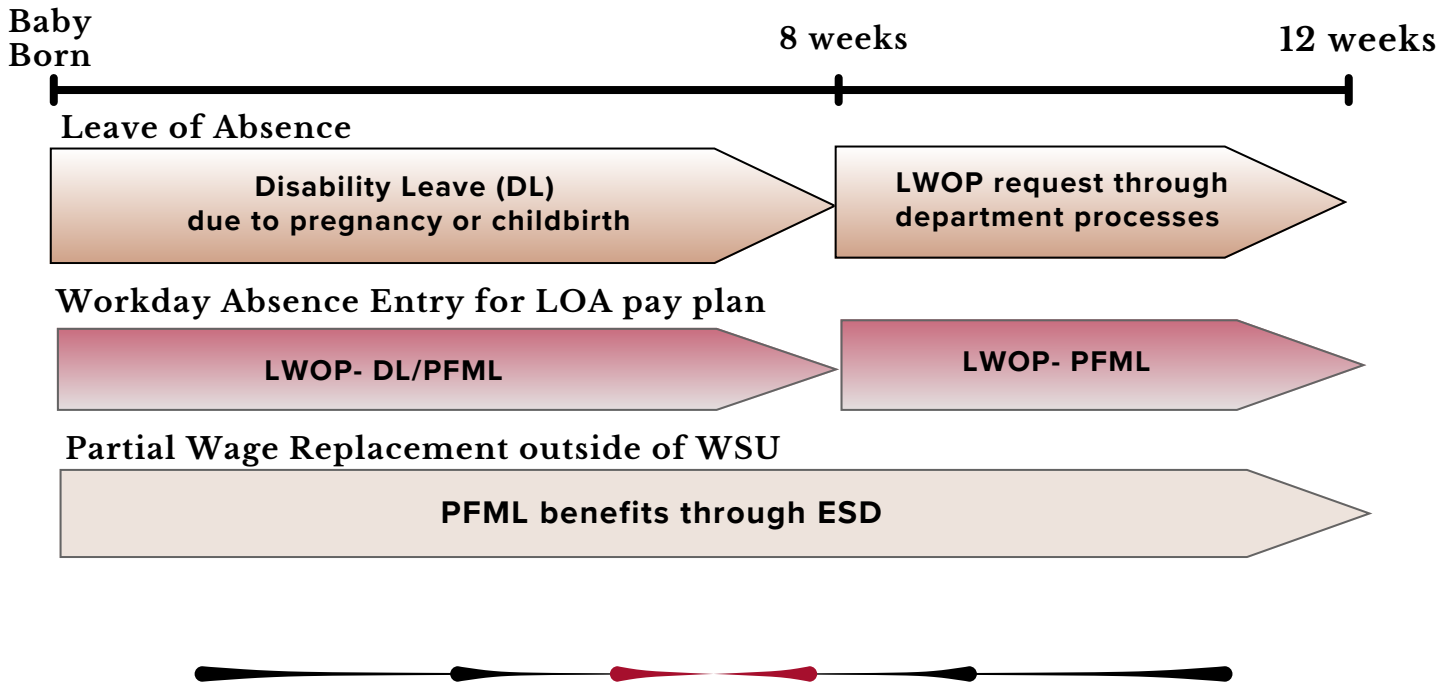
*Please note: If your work is not "localized" (you do not work) in the state of Washington you may not be eligible for PFML benefits. Please [contact ESD](#) for specific information and eligibility rules. If you are localized in a state other than the state of Washington and your home location/state has a paid leave program, you may be eligible for benefits through the associated program. Other jurisdictions with paid leave programs: [California](#), [Colorado](#), [Connecticut](#), [Delaware](#), [Maine](#), [Maryland](#), [Massachusetts](#), [Minnesota](#), [New Jersey](#), [New York](#), [Oregon](#), [Rhode Island](#), [Washington](#), and [Washington, DC](#).

Did you know?
You could get overpaid if you do not enter absences in Workday during your LOA!

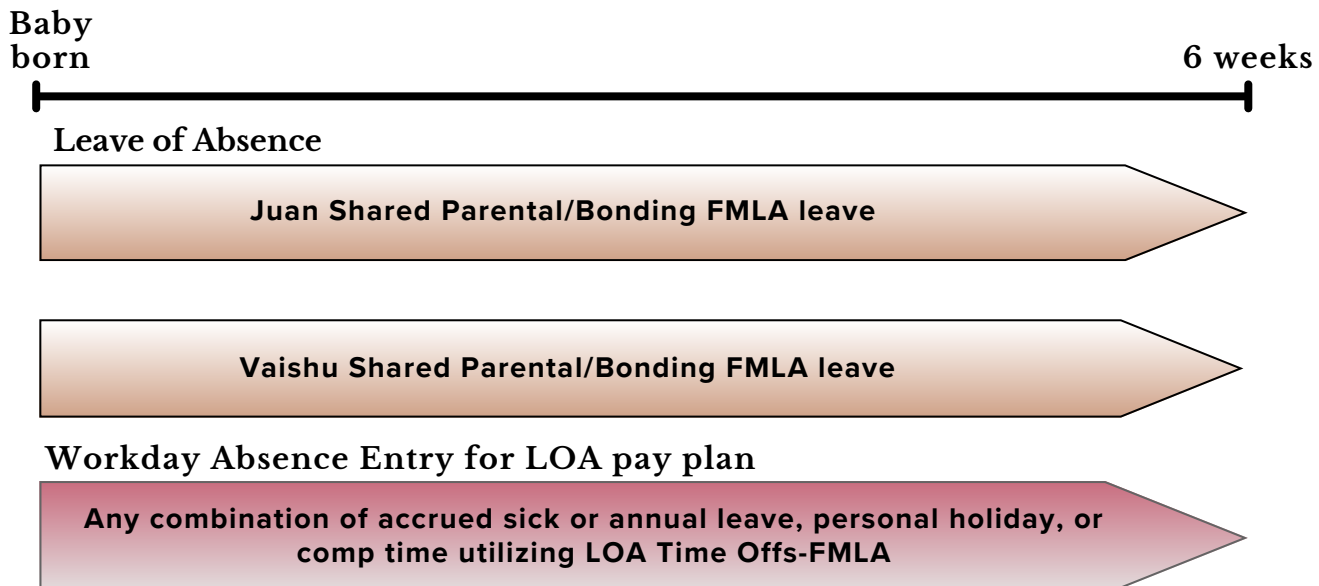
Did you know?
WSU provides [designated lactation rooms](#) across the WSU system to support mothers of young children as they return to work.

Examples

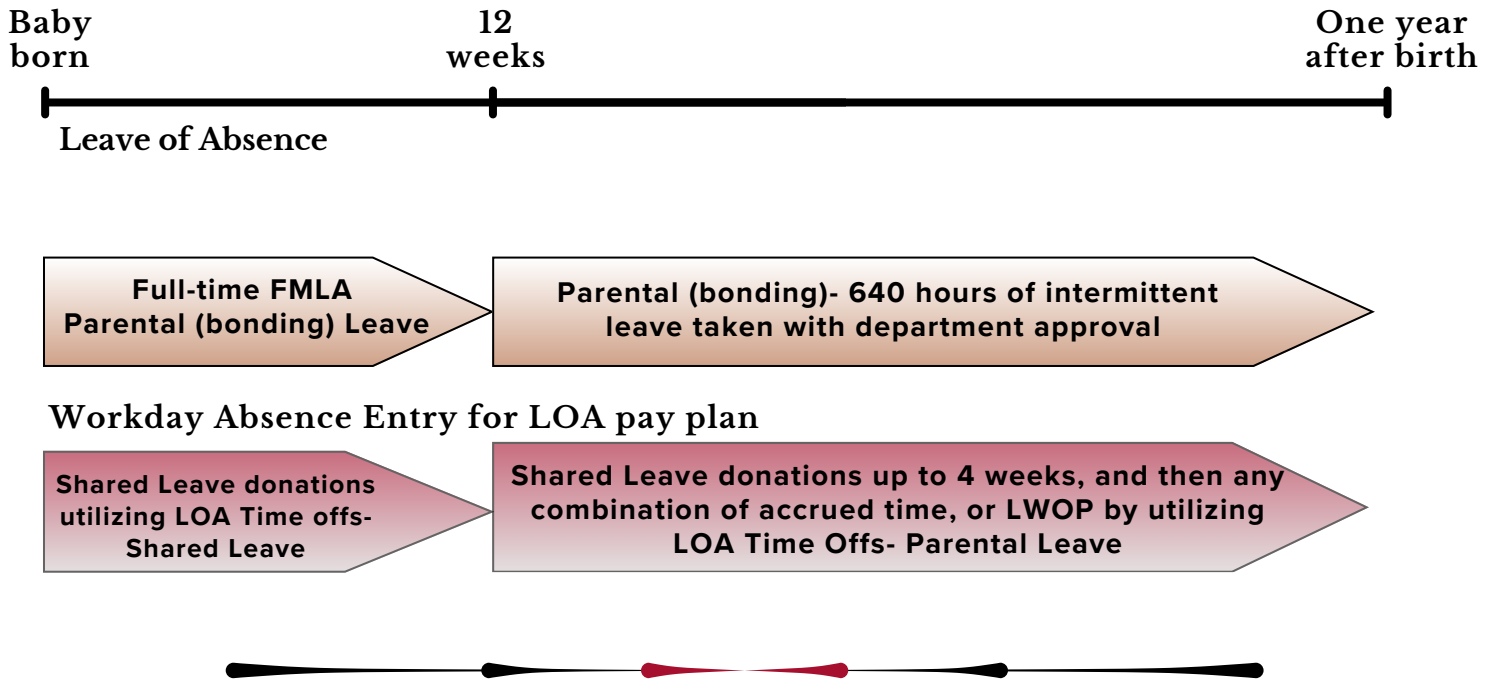
Nala is civil service employee who is pregnant and does not meet FMLA eligibility, however, does meet PFML eligibility. Per WSU policy, Nala submits a Workday Leave of Absence request 30 days prior to the due date requesting to take leave for 12 weeks after the birth. Based on medical documentation from the Healthcare Provider (HCP), Nala will need eight weeks for recovery from the birth. The remaining four weeks of leave requested would not qualify for a University leave provision, therefore, will need to be requested through normal departmental processes. For a pay plan while on leave, Nala utilizes Leave Without Pay (LWOP) to account for all absences and applies for PFML benefits through ESD. To maintain her employment benefits through WSU while on leave, Nala contacts HRS Benefits to set up self-pay for premiums.



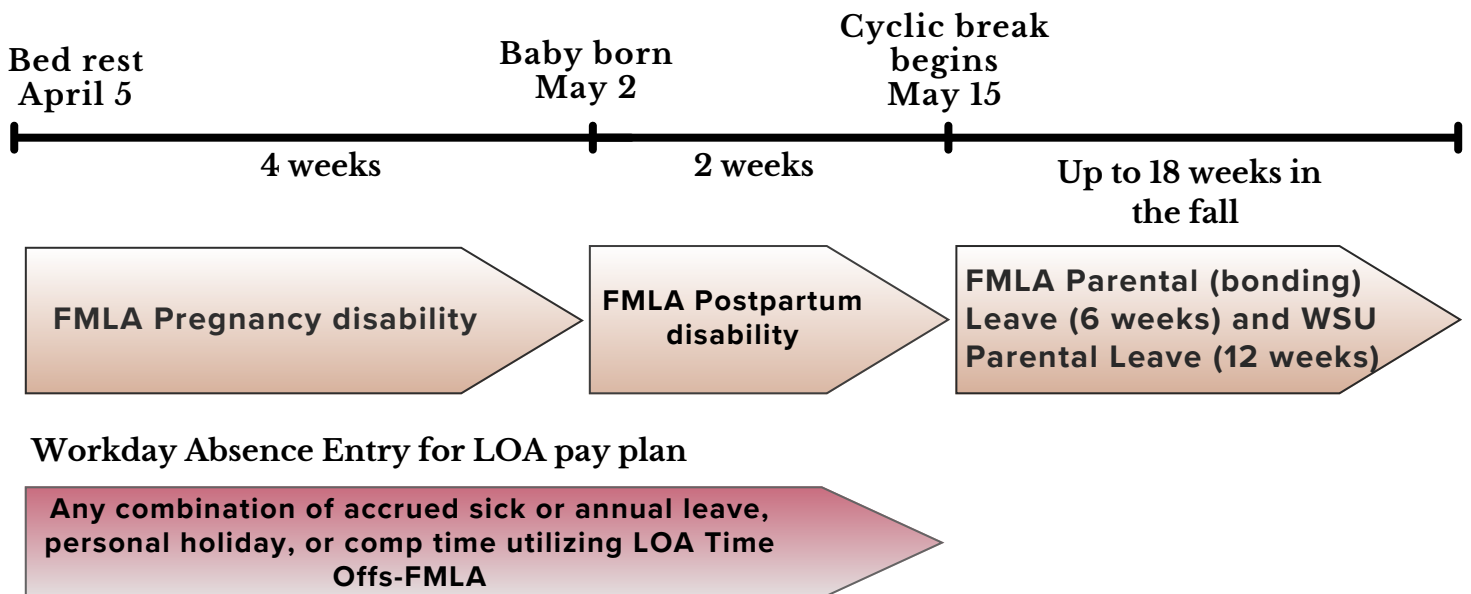
Vaishu and Juan are married, and both work for WSU. Their baby is born on September 18th. Each is eligible for six weeks of shared FMLA Parental (bonding) Leave. Each of them has six weeks of FMLA leave left for future FMLA qualifying leave events. Vaishu and Juan both choose to utilize their own accruals or LWOP for their LOA pay plan.



Terran is adopting a child. Terran submits a Workday Leave of Absence request for one year to be used to appear in court, attend counseling sessions, doctor appointments, to complete adoption, and to bond with baby. As a 100% FTE civil service employee, Terran is eligible for 12 weeks or 480 hours of Parental Leave under the protections of FMLA and an additional 12 weeks of Parental (bonding) Leave outside of FMLA protections for the first FMLA rolling year. Terran utilizes Shared Leave for Parental Leave as an LOA pay plan and receives the maximum donations of 16 weeks or 640 hours.



Esme is a nine-month faculty that meets FMLA eligibility. Esme's submits medical documentation indicating bed rest due to high-risk pregnancy starting April 5th. Baby is born on May 2nd and medical documentation submitted to HRS indicates six weeks recovery. Esme's cyclic break begins May 16th, therefore, FMLA will end May 15th. Esme will have the remaining six weeks of FMLA for Parental (bonding) Leave available as well as and 12 weeks of Parental (bonding) Leave outside of FMLA provisions available for request in the fall.





Washington State University Human Resource Services

WSU PREGNANCY AND PARENTAL LEAVE CHECKLIST

- Notify your supervisor, HRS, or department representative as soon as you are aware you may need time off related to adding a child to your family.
- Make a plan of the dates and frequency of leave you would like to utilize within the 12 months post the child's birth or placement for adoption, foster care or legal guardianship.
- Request a Leave of Absence (LOA) in Workday for the entirety of the expected leave period. See [Workday Materials](#) reference guide [Employee Request a Leave of Absence](#).
- Complete Supplemental Questionnaire in Workday.
- Submit accrued time offs or LWOP, with the appropriate LOA tag, each pay period for every absence during your approved LOA to avoid overpayment and to assure accuracy in LOA reporting. For more information, see [Steps to Enter a Time Off While on LOA](#). For assistance contact your Supervisor or your departmental HR Partner (On your profile > Contact > Supporting Roles)
- If applicable, ensure the Healthcare Provider completes, signs, and returns the Medical Leave Health Care Provider Statement via the contact information on the form as soon as possible. HRS will accept HCP medical documentation in other format. If possible, send documents electronically to Disability Services at hds.disabilityservices@wsu.edu or via fax 509-241-9090. If electronic submission is not possible send via US mail to: HRS Disability Services, PO Box 641014, Pullman, WA, 99164-1014. Medical documentation is not to be submitted to your department. Generally, medical documentation is not necessary for a non-birthing parent.
- Provide notification and documentation (such as birth announcement or certificate, placement documentation) of your child's date of birth or placement date for adoption, foster care or legal guardianship to Disability Services at hds.disabilityservices@wsu.edu or via fax 509-241-9090.
- If you plan to add your child to your WSU health, dental, or vision plan, you must do so within certain timeframes. See the [Newborn/Adoption/New Dependent with Disability/Extended Dependent](#) website and [Requirements to enroll eligible dependents](#) for details.
- Keep in contact with your supervisor and Disability Services as needed to communicate any changes to your LOA schedule (such as to request an extension) or discuss your return to work.



For complete information on paid leave options related to birth, adoption, foster placement and legal guardianship of a child, please see the [Pregnancy and Parental Leave Resource Guide](#).