



## **Pregnancy, Maternity and Parental Leave Guide**

Adding a new member to your family? Congratulations! This Pregnancy, Maternity and Parental Leave Guide is intended to provide eligible Eastern Washington University employees with information about leave and related issues during pregnancy, childbirth or bonding with a child following birth, foster placement and/or adoption. This guide is divided into six sections and will cover:

- 1. Leave Options**
- 2. Procedures for Requesting Leave**
- 3. Benefits Information**
- 4. FAQs**
- 5. Return to Work Information**
- 6. Map of Nursing Mother's Rooms**

### **Leave Options**

#### **Temporary Disability Leave (Pregnancy or Childbirth)**

Temporary Disability Leave provides women with a leave of absence for the period that she is sick or temporarily disabled because of pregnancy or childbirth. This leave begins the first day an employee is placed off work by their medical provider regardless of their due date. Most often, this leave is used the six (6) weeks immediately following childbirth for natural delivery and eight (8) weeks if the birth is by caesarean section. Additional leave may be approved if complications occur, and the health-care provider recommends a longer period. Temporary disability leave is an approved leave of absence rather than a type of accrued time off. If you wish to continue your pay during temporary disability leave for pregnancy and childbirth, employees may use:

- Accrued Sick leave
- Accrued vacation leave
- Personal Holiday/Personal Leave Day (Classified employees)
- Compensatory Time off
- Shared Leave

You may also have the option to take unpaid time off. The 12-week FMLA entitlement runs concurrently with pregnancy/childbirth disability leave.

To request temporary disability leave, employees must submit an Employee Leave Request Form and FMLA Medical Certification, if eligible for FMLA.



## **FMLA – Family Medical Leave Act**

FMLA is a federal leave and provides eligible employees up to 12 weeks of unpaid job protected and benefit protected leave in a 12-month period. If both spouses work for EWU, they may take a **combined** total of 12 weeks of FMLA leave in a 12-month period for the purpose of taking leave for the birth of the employee's child or placement of an adopted or foster child. This means that if your EWU spouse takes six (6) weeks FMLA time off you would have six (6) weeks of FMLA to use.

An employee's entitlement to FMLA leave for birth and bonding expires 12 months after the date of birth. Both mothers and fathers have the same right to take FMLA leave for the birth of a child. Employees who wish to take intermittent FMLA leave after the birth of a child or after adopting or fostering a child, assuming the child does not suffer from a serious health condition, can only do so if their manager/supervisor agrees to the intermittent leave or modified work schedule requested (for example: an employee would like to take intermittent FMLA of one day a week for 6 weeks).

### *ELIGIBILITY for FMLA:*

- Employee must have worked for EWU or another Washington State agency or Washington State institution of higher education for at least 12 months prior to the commencement of leave.
- The employee must have worked for at least 1,250 hours in the previous twelve-month period immediately preceding the commencement of the leave. Hours worked do not include paid leave hours (sick hours, vacation hours, etc.)

## **Paid Family and Medical Leave (PFML)**

This Washington State leave provides for partial wage replacement while on leave. All eligible parents can receive up to 12 weeks. If an employee is eligible and gives birth, they can receive up to 16 weeks of wage replacement benefits from the State of Washington (up to 18 weeks if there are pregnancy complications). Employees have 12 months from the date of a child's birth, adoption, or placement to take PFML. If you have worked for EWU for 12 months and 1,250 hours prior to taking PFML the leave will be job and benefit protected. Unlike FMLA, parents who are both employed at EWU may EACH take 12 weeks of PFML leave up to one year after birth or placement of child.

### *ELIGIBILITY for PFML:*

- Employee must have worked a minimum of 820 hours (at one job or combined from multiple jobs) in Washington State during the first four of the last five completed calendar quarters or, if that does not get the employee to the required 820 hours, the last four completed calendar quarters immediately preceding the application for leave.

## **Parental Leave (*Classified Employees Only*)**

Classified employees may request parental leave for up to four (4) months for the birth of the employee's child or the placement with the employee of an adopted or foster child. Parental leave, as defined by RCW 49.78, must be taken within one (1) year following the child's birth or placement. If a



classified employee qualifies for FMLA, parental leave and FMLA will run at the same time. Employees have the choice to use compensatory time, vacation leave, personal holiday, and unpaid leave in any combination during parental leave. During any period of parental leave not covered by Family Medical Leave, an employee who uses less than eight (8) hours of paid leave during a month may continue their health insurance coverage by paying the full premium cost for that insurance.

## **PROCEDURES FOR REQUESTING LEAVE**

### **How to request FMLA and/or Temporary Disability Leave for Pregnancy Related Disability, Birth of Child, placement, or baby bonding:**

1. **Notice to Supervisors:** Supervisors must be notified of the need for leave including the anticipated timing and duration of the leave at least 30 days in advance if the need for leave is foreseeable. If the need for leave is not foreseeable, employees must provide notice as soon as possible.
2. **Notice to Benefits Office:** Employees are also responsible for notifying Benefits of their request for FMLA or Temporary Disability leave. Employees are strongly encouraged to contact the Benefits office of their request for this type of leave 30 to 60 days in advance, if the need for leave is foreseeable (e.g., delivery of a baby). Benefits will provide employees with FMLA/Temporary Disability paperwork including a Medical Certification form that needs to be completed by the appropriate health care provider and returned to the Benefits office. If the leave is for an adoption or placement of child a document from the adoption agency or a state agency is required. If requesting FMLA/Temporary Disability Leave for delivery of a baby, employees can identify the baby's due date as the start date of leave. When an employee does go out on leave (which is often different from the due date!) employees should notify Benefits of the first missed day of work and Benefits will update the leave paperwork as appropriate and send an updated leave confirmation letter.

If the need for leave is not foreseeable, (e.g., unanticipated medical issues arising during a pregnancy) employees must provide Benefits with notice as soon as possible, have the health care provider complete the Medical Certification, and return the form to Benefits.

### **How to request PFML Leave:**

1. **Application to the Washington State Employment Security Department (ESD):** PFML is managed and approved by ESD. You can apply for PFML benefits at <https://paidleave.wa.gov/>.
2. **Notice to Supervisors:** Employee shall notify their supervisor of the need for leave, including the timing and duration, not less than 30 days in advance if the need for leave is foreseeable. If the need for leave is not foreseeable, the employee shall provide such notice as soon as practicable under the facts and circumstances of their situation.



3. **Notification to Benefits:** Employee shall also contact Benefits and provide medical certification. Employees are strongly encouraged to contact Benefits of these types of leave requests 30 to 60 days in advance.
4. **Information regarding FMLA and PFML:** [Comparison of FMLA vs. PFML](#)

#### **Required Forms for FMLA:**

**EWU Leave of Absence Request:** [EWU Leave of Absence Request](#)

**FMLA Medical Certification:** [Health Care Provider Medical Certification](#)

- **How can I reach Benefits to provide required notification?**

**Megan Jasmer**  
**EWU Benefits Office**  
**318 Showalter Hall**  
**Cheney, WA 99004**  
**Fax: 509-359-2874**  
**509-359-4300**  
[mjasmer@ewu.edu](mailto:mjasmer@ewu.edu)

## **BENEFITS INFORMATION**

During FMLA, health insurance benefits will continue as if an employee is working. Employees are required to use a minimum of four (4) hours of their paid leave per pay period (eight hours a month) to maintain their eligibility for their current EWU benefits. Often, employees will need to use more than the four hours per pay period to pay the medical insurance premium; this will depend on the particular benefit package that the employee has. Benefits will share with the employee the minimum amount of paid leave hours that the employee will need for their situation.

If an employee does not have paid time available to them their deduction contributions towards benefits will be placed in an arrears account. Employees may choose to make payment arrangement towards arrears while on unpaid FMLA leave. If an employee does not make payment arrangements the balance in the arrears account will automatically be paid back via payroll deductions upon the employee's return to work.

Employees that are approved for FMLA concurrently with PFML or that have at least one (1) day of FMLA and PFML overlapping will continue to maintain benefit protection.

Employees have 60 days after birth to add their child to their EWU benefits. Please contact the EWU Benefit Office at 509-359-2488 or [benefits@ewu.edu](mailto:benefits@ewu.edu). Our benefits department will ask employees to provide a copy of the birth certificate (the hospital copy works just fine). For adopted children, the 60-day period starts the date the child's physical custody starts or the date the employee has the legal right to control the child's health care, whichever is earlier.



## **Update your beneficiaries:**

Employees may wish to make changes or updates to their retirement and/or life insurance beneficiaries due to the addition of a new family member. Please contact the Benefits Office for additional information at [benefits@ewu.edu](mailto:benefits@ewu.edu) or 509-359-2488.

## **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

### **Q. Once I establish my return-to-work date, can that be extended?**

**A.** We ask that you provide a solid estimation of your anticipated return to work date at the time of your request. We understand circumstances may change while you are out on leave, but an anticipated date for your return is helpful, so your manager may plan appropriate coverage.

### **Q. Do I need to complete my timesheet while out on parental leave?**

**A.** Yes, timesheets must be completely timely while out on parental leave. All time off must be entered (paid and/or unpaid) for each day of absence, even if receiving PFML payments from ESD.

### **Q. Can I return to work sooner than I originally anticipated?**

**A.** Yes, if you are outside of your documented disability/recovery time. Normally, this is six weeks for a natural delivery and eight weeks for a c-section.

### **Q. Can I attend trainings and/or meetings while I am out on leave?**

**A.** You may not attend training or any other work-related duties during a medically documented birth and recovery time. If the Benefits Office has received a note from your health care provider, authorizing your return to work and you would like to attend a required training or other work-related function during your child bonding time we ask that you discuss this option with your supervisor. Any further questions can be directed to the Benefits Office.

### **Q. Can I stack FMLA and PFML leaves?**

**A.** If you use FMLA first, you can use your 12-week entitlement and then transition to PFML for the next 12-16 weeks. However, if PFML is used first, your FMLA will run concurrently (there are some exceptions to this for faculty). Please note that per current Washington State law FMLA and PFML must overlap by at least one (1) day in order to maintain benefits.

### **Q. Do I have to take my Parental Leave all at once?**

**A.** Parental Leave is generally taken as a continuous leave of absence. Leave may be taken intermittently if your manager approves it for up to one year after birth.

### **Q. How do I get paid while on leave?**

**A.** Employees may use the following types of paid leave: vacation, sick, personal holiday, personal leave (classified only), compensatory, shared leave, PFML (payment from the Employment Security Department - ESD). Time off work (paid or unpaid) must be noted on your timesheet for each day of your absence, even if receiving PFML payments from ESD. Please note that if employees take more



than 10 days of Leave Without Pay in a calendar month you will not accrue sick and vacation time for that calendar month.

**Q. Do I get paid for holidays and accrue full vacation and sick accruals?**

**A.** Employees are eligible for holiday pay if they are in a paid status of at least 30 minutes on their regular scheduled workday preceding the holiday. If an employee takes more than 10 days of Leave Without Pay in a calendar month, they will not accrue sick and vacation for that calendar month.

**Q. What is a supplemental benefit under the PFML?**

**A.** A supplemental benefit payment is a payment offered by an employer to an employee who is approved to take leave by ESD under the Washington PFML program. EWU has designated certain types of paid time off as supplemental benefits. This means employees can choose to use their EWU paid time off to supplement the money they receive as partial wage replacement from the PFML leave. Employers (including EWU) do not have access to the ESD database. We request that employees show us their PFML approval status and approval dates by either emailing us a screen shot of their approval from the ESD website and/or sending us the approval letter from ESD. Once EWU receives a copy of the ESD PFML approval documentation, employees may begin to use the supplemental benefit timesheet codes:

<b>PFML - Comp Taken</b>	<b>PFML - Personal Holiday</b>
<b>PFML - Pers Leave Day</b>	<b>PFML - Sick Leave</b>
<b>PFML - Shift Differential</b>	<b>PFML - Vacation</b>
<b>PFML - Holiday</b>	

**Q. What is parental shared leave?**

**A.** New parents can apply and be approved to receive donations of shared leave. Shared leave donations may be used once vacation and sick time balances are reduced to 40 hours or less. Employees are eligible to use any donated shared time during the sixteen (16) weeks immediately after the birth or placement of a child. If parental shared leave was also received due to a pregnancy disability, parental shared leave must be taken in the sixteen (16) weeks immediately after the pregnancy disability leave.

**Return to Work**

Two weeks prior to returning to work employees should reach out to their supervisor/manager and discuss their return-to-work plans. Employees returning to work after pregnancy disability leave have the right to be reinstated to the same position, in most circumstances. If you are returning from parental bonding leave under the FMLA you have the right to come back to the same position or, at the department’s discretion, an equivalent position.

**Resources for Nursing Mothers**

Nursing moms returning to work are encouraged to contact Benefits to identify and coordinate an appropriate location to express milk. Employees are entitled to take reasonable break times to express



breast milk for a nursing child each time the employee has need to express milk for up to two years after the child's birth. EWU has several lactation/family nurturing rooms on campus available to employees, students, and visitors. Each room is outfitted with privacy, comfortable seating, a power source, and locking door.

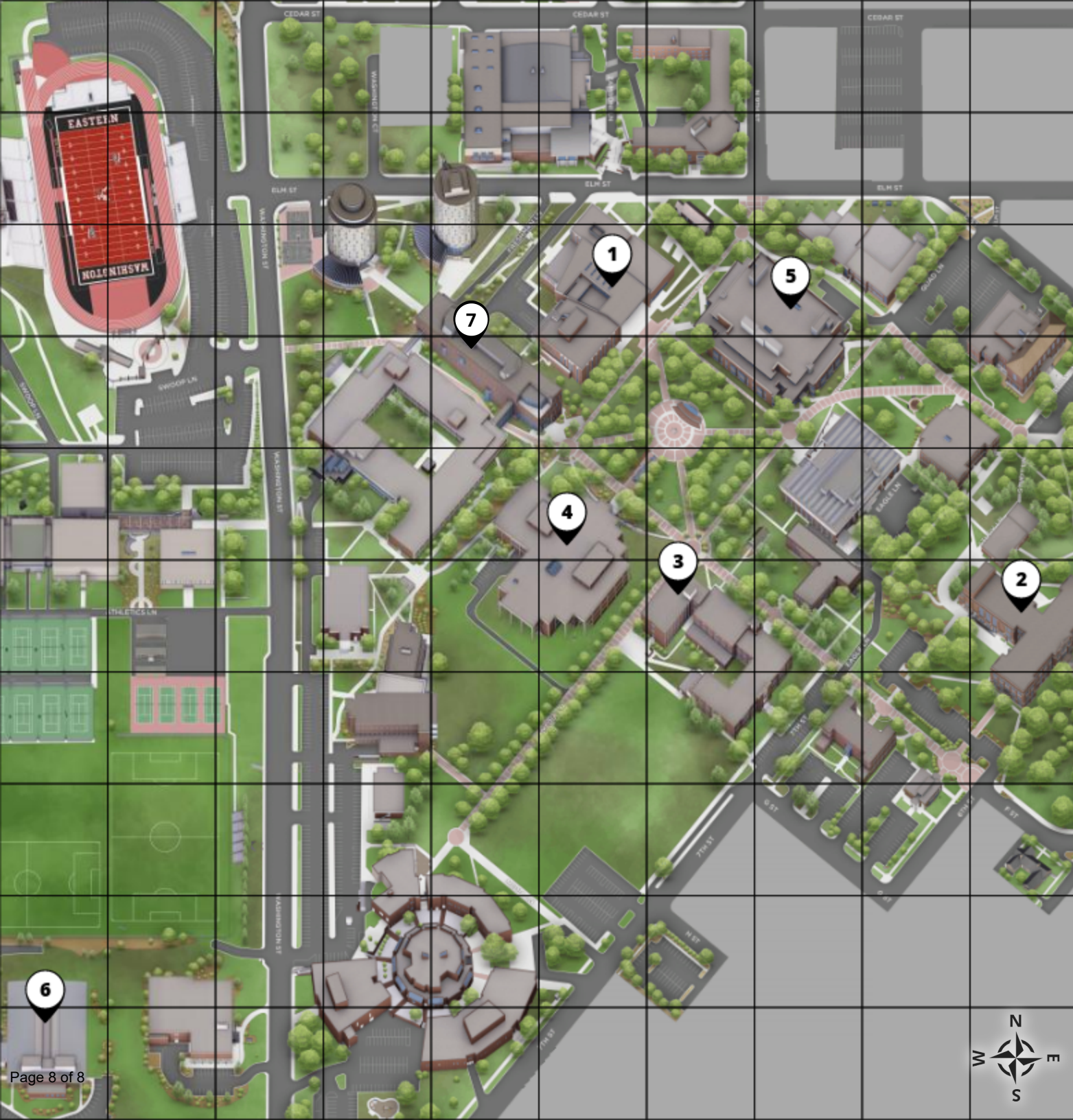
- PUB 112 - Key available through the PUB Welcome Desk on the 2nd floor. Located in walkway across from Panda Express on 1st floor.
- Showalter Hall room 202 - Key available in Human Resources in room 314.
- Williamson Hall 100A - On left side from front door, next to bathroom.
- JFK Library - On the lower level across from the stairs with a giraffe outside (No sink).
- Patterson Hall L231B – Next to the faculty offices. Above vending machines in room 131A.
- Crime Lab – Room 177
- Interdisciplinary Science Center – Ground floor near bathrooms
- Spokane Campus – Catalyst Center: Wellness Room (ground floor, west side)

Benefits can work with employees to identify alternative private locations on campus that are not bathrooms in accordance with RCW 43.10.005.

### **EWU Children's Center**

EWU's Children's Center is a day care center on the Cheney campus which provides child-centered programming and care for children of EWU students, faculty, staff, and community members who are 6 weeks to 10 years old. The center is an Early Achievers Participant with a level 4 rating. The program works closely with many departments at EWU to help sponsor books, read to children, and provide a wide range of activities. The volunteers in the classrooms are often students from EWU who come to learn more about our program and working with children. You may call 509-359-2025 for availability and hours.

Please note: While every attempt is made to align this packet with current Washington and Federal Leave laws, it is important to remember these laws are ever-changing and information within this packet is subject to change without notice.



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2. **Showalter Hall room 202** - Key available in Human Resources in room 314.

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6. **Crime Lab** - Room 177

7. **Interdisciplinary Science Center** - Ground floor

Spokane Campus has one in the Catalyst Center: Wellness Room (ground floor)

