
health condition of the employee or family member.

Is medical certification required?

Employees applying for *Family and Medical Leave* will be required to provide medical certification to support any requests for use of FML because of a serious health condition. Additionally, WCPS may require a second or third medical opinion (at WCPS's expense) to support the request. Further, WCPS will require the employee on FML for personal illness to provide a medical fitness report prior to returning to work. Failure to provide adequate medical certification will result in a denial of reinstatement of employment until such certification is provided by the employee.

How much *Family and Medical Leave* can I take?

An eligible employee is entitled to receive a total of 12 weeks of *Family and Medical Leave* during a 12 month period which is measured from July 1 through June 30.

Does *Family and Medical Leave* have to be taken all at once, or can it be taken in parts?

Leave may be taken intermittently or on a reduced work schedule for personal illness or to care for the illness of a child, spouse, or parent only when there is a certified medical necessity to do so. Leave for reasons related to the birth or placement of a child for adoption or foster care must be taken all at once.

What about my health benefits while I am on unpaid *Family and Medical Leave*?

Employees on *Family and Medical Leave* will continue to receive the same benefits as they would if they were working. Employees will be billed for the normal contributions they were making to maintain these benefits.

What happens to my job when I return from *Family and Medical Leave*?

Employees returning from *Family and Medical Leave* will be returned to the same position that they held prior to the leave or to an equivalent position with equivalent benefits, pay and conditions of employment.

How do I apply for *Family and Medical Leave*?

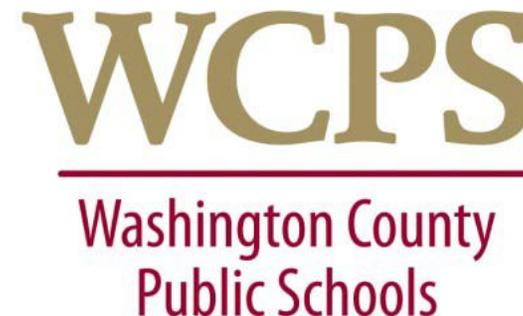
If you wish to obtain more information and procedures for applying for Family and Medical Leave, please contact the Benefits Office at 301.766.8783. Information can also be found in Board policy GCBDA., and at www.dol.gov.



Benefits Office
Washington County Public Schools
Center for Education Services
10435 Downsville Pike
Hagerstown, MD 21740

FMLA Contact:
Krista Forsyth forsykri@wcps.k12.md.us
301.766.8783

FACTS ABOUT THE FAMILY & MEDICAL LEAVE ACT FOR EMPLOYEES OF WASHINGTON COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS



This Act went into effect February 5, 1993. The benefits offered under the Family and Medical Leave Act are set out more specifically in Board policy GCBDA.

THE FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT OF 1993

THE FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT OF 1993 (FMLA) IS LEGISLATION SIGNED INTO LAW BY PRESIDENT CLINTON ON FEBRUARY 5, 1993, WHICH AFFECTS THE AMOUNT OF UNPAID LEAVE EMPLOYEES MAY TAKE FOR FAMILY AND MEDICAL REASONS. GENERALLY, THE LAW ALLOWS ELIGIBLE EMPLOYEES TO TAKE UP TO 12 WEEKS OF UNPAID LEAVE PER YEAR FOR REASONS RELATED TO FAMILY AND MEDICAL ILLNESS. SPECIFICALLY, ELIGIBLE EMPLOYEES OF THE BOARD MAY TAKE FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE BECAUSE OF A:

- BIRTH OR PLACEMENT OF A CHILD FOR ADOPTION OR FOSTER CARE WITHIN ONE YEAR OF BIRTH OR PLACEMENT;
- NEED TO CARE FOR THE EMPLOYEE'S SPOUSE, CHILD, OR PARENT WHO HAS A SERIOUS HEALTH CONDITION;
- SERIOUS HEALTH CONDITION THAT PREVENTS THE EMPLOYEE FROM PERFORMING THE ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS OF THE EMPLOYEE'S JOB; OR
- ANY QUALIFYING EXIGENCY ARISING OUT OF THE FACT THAT THE EMPLOYEE'S SPOUSE, CHILD OR PARENT IS A COVERED MILITARY MEMBER ON "COVERED ACTIVE DUTY"

26 WEEKS OF LEAVE CAN BE GRANTED TO CARE FOR A COVERED SERVICE MEMBER WITH A SERIOUS INJURY OR ILLNESS IF IT IS THE EMPLOYEE'S SPOUSE, CHILD, PARENT OR NEXT OF KIN.

Who is eligible to use *Family and Medical Leave*?

An eligible employee is an employee who has:

- been employed Washington County Public Schools for at least 12 months; and
- worked at least 1,250 hours during the 12-month period immediately preceding the commencement of the leave.

How does *Family and Medical Leave* affect my existing accumulated leave?

The total time an employee may use for *Family and Medical Leave* is 12 weeks. This 12 week period includes any sick leave, personal business days, vacation days, or any other paid leave employees are granted by WCPS for purposes of family or medical leave. Employees who have not accumulated 12 weeks of leave may apply for unpaid *Family and Medical Leave* for the balance.

How are my existing leave days used with *Family and Medical Leave* if I need to care for my child, spouse, or parent during a long term illness?

Each year WCPS grants contracted employees a certain number of accumulated sick days for illness in the immediate family. If additional days are needed, employees must use their personal leave days, accumulated vacation days, or sick leave days available to them. If more time is needed for this care, employees may then apply for unpaid *Family and Medical Leave* for the number of days that would bring their total amount of leave to 12 weeks, including the number of WCPS granted days used.

What about maternity leave?

Employees who wish to use *Family and Medical Leave* for reasons related to the birth of a child or adoption, must first use all other leave granted by WCPS, including sick days, personal business days, vacation days, or any other appropriate paid leave, before they are eligible for *Family and Medical Leave*. After exhausting this paid leave, employees may then apply for the number of days of *Family and Medical Leave* that would bring their total leave to 12 weeks.

What about personal illness?

Employees who are not able to perform the essential functions of their job due to personal illness, must first use all leave provided by WCPS, including any accumulated sick leave, personal business leave, accumulated vacation leave, or any other paid leave, before applying for unpaid *Family and Medical Leave*. If the number of WCPS granted leave days available to the employee is less than 12 weeks, the employee may then apply for unpaid *Family and Medical Leave* for the balance.

How do I notify the school system that I wish to apply for *Family and Medical Leave*?

Eligible employees must notify the Employee Benefits Office in writing that they wish to apply for *Family and Medical Leave*. Please call 301.766.8783 to request a form. When the leave is foreseeable, employees must give written notice to the Benefits Office at least 30 days prior to the commencement of the leave if the leave is based on an expected birth or placement of a child in adoption or foster care, or planned medical treatment for the serious