

**PM 26-2 Paid Parental Leave for Staff**

Effective December 1, 2022

This policy for benefits-eligible staff employees will be in effect for birth, adoptions or placements of foster children occurring on or after December 1, 2022.

**1.0 Purpose**

Caltech will provide up to eight (8) weeks of paid parental leave to eligible employees following the birth of an employee's child or the placement of a child with an employee in connection with adoption or foster care. The purpose of paid parental leave is to enable the employee to care for and bond with a newborn or a newly adopted or newly placed child. Paid parental leave may be used during a pregnancy disability leave. This policy will run concurrently with Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leave, California Pregnancy Disability Leave (CA PDL), California Family Rights Act (CFRA), Washington Paid Family and Medical Leave Program (WPFML), and any other federal or state mandated leave as applicable. Benefits for Caltech Faculty and Postdoctoral Scholars are found in the Faculty Handbook and Postdoctoral Scholar Handbook, respectively.

**2.0 Definitions**

Parental Leave is defined as leave for an employee to bond with a newborn child, recently adopted child, or recently placed foster child and is -inclusive of pregnancy-related medical leave.

"Spouse" is defined as a person to whom the employee is legally married.

"Registered Domestic Partner" is defined as two people who have registered with the California Secretary of State or other applicable state agency.

**3.0 Eligibility**

Eligible employees must meet the following criteria:

- Have been employed with Caltech for at least 12 months (the 12 months do not need to be consecutive).
- Have worked at least 1,250 hours during the 12 consecutive months immediately preceding the date the leave would begin.
- Be a full- or part-time, regular benefit-based employee (temporary and occasional employees, student employees and interns are not eligible for this benefit).
- An employee who is eligible for parental leave will have the job protections consistent with state and federal legal requirements based on their state of residence.

- An employee who has exhausted federal and state leave entitlement (FMLA, CFRA, WAPFML, etc.) for reasons other than pregnancy or bonding in the 12 rolling-months preceding the pregnancy related medical disability, birth or placement may be eligible. Cases will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the disability and leave group.

In addition, employees must meet one of the following criteria.

- Have given birth to a child.
- Be a parent of a newborn child.
- Have adopted a child or been placed with a foster child (in either case, the child must be age 17 or younger). The adoption of a new spouse's or registered domestic partner's child is excluded from this policy.

#### **4.0 Amount, Time Frame and Duration of Paid Parental Leave**

- Eligible employees will receive a maximum of eight (8) weeks of paid parental leave per birth, adoption, or placement of a child/children. The fact that a multiple birth, adoption or placement occurs (e.g., the birth of twins or adoption of siblings) does not increase the eight-week total amount of paid parental leave granted for that event. In addition, in no case will an employee receive more than eight weeks of paid parental leave in a rolling 12-month period, regardless of whether more than one birth, adoption or foster care placement event occurs within that 12-month time frame.
- Paid leave will be integrated with applicable state plans (e.g., CA PFL, CA SDI, WPFML, etc.).
- Eligible employees will receive 100% of base pay without using paid time off accruals for the eight weeks.
- Paid parental leave, when integrated with state and federal leave, will provide approximately 100% of the employee's regular, straight-time weekly pay. Paid parental leave will be paid on a biweekly basis on regularly scheduled pay dates.
- Employees who qualify for parental leave who do not have state-paid options may be eligible for parental leave at 100% their straight-time pay for a maximum of eight (8) weeks.
- Paid parental leave may be taken at any time during the 12-month period immediately following the birth, adoption, or placement of a child with the employee. Paid parental leave may not be used or extended beyond this 12-month time frame.
- Employees must take paid parental leave in full weekly increments; it is not available to be used on an intermittent basis.
- All paid parental leave is to be used during the 12-month time frame indicated above. Any unused paid parental leave will be forfeited at the end of the 12-month time frame.

- Employees on part-time work schedules are eligible for a prorated amount of Paid Parental Leave, which equates to 8 work weeks based on their weekly scheduled hours as long as eligibility requirements are met.
- Upon termination of the individual's employment with Caltech, they will not be paid for any unused paid parental leave for which they were eligible.

## 5.0 Coordination with Other Policies

- Paid parental leave taken under this policy will run concurrently with leave under the applicable state and federal laws and any other federal and state mandatory leave requirements as applicable; thus, the leave will be counted toward the 12 weeks of available FMLA, CA PDL, CFRA and WPFML leave in a 12-month period. All other requirements and provisions under the applicable laws will apply. In no case will the total amount of leave—whether paid or unpaid—granted to the employee under the applicable laws exceed the legal time limit during the 12-month period. Please refer to Personnel Memorandum 26 (PM26) for further guidance.
- Once paid parental leave is exhausted, eligible employees may use accrued paid time-off benefits, including vacation hours and unused personal holiday time.
- Once paid parental leave and paid time-off accruals are exhausted, the employee will be on an unpaid leave. Please refer to Personnel Memorandum 26 (PM26) for further guidance.
- Caltech will maintain all benefits and continue the employers' portion of the benefits for employees during the paid parental leave period; individuals will continue to be responsible for their portion of the benefit premiums.
- If a holiday occurs while the employee is on paid parental leave, such day will be charged to holiday pay; however, such holiday pay will not extend the total paid parental leave entitlement.
- Personal or other leave will not extend the paid parental leave entitlement.

## 6.0 Requests for Paid Parental Leave

- The employee will provide Human Resources with the notice of the request for leave at least 30 days prior to the proposed date of the leave (or if the leave was not foreseeable, as soon as possible).
- The employee must complete the necessary HR forms and provide all documentation as required by the HR department to substantiate the request.
- The employee should also inform their supervisor as soon as practicable but, in most cases, no less than 30 days prior to the proposed date of the leave.

## 7.0 Transition

This policy covers the birth of an employee's child or the placement of a child with an employee in connection with adoption or foster care that have occurred 30 days prior to December 1, 2022.

## 8.0 Exceptions

As is the case with all policies, Caltech has the right to change the policy at any time and interpret it. Any exception to this policy requires the approval of the Associate Vice President for Human Resources or designee for Campus staff, or the Director for Human Resources at JPL or designee for JPL staff.

### **Related Policies**

[PM 15-2 Paid Time Off for Benefit Based Employees](#)

[PM 26 Employee Medical and Family Care Leaves](#)

[PM 26-2 Frequently Asked Questions](#)

[JPL Frequently Asked Questions](#)