



Protected Leaves Newsletter



Introduction to Protected Leaves What You Need to Know Before You Need to Take it

Life can present unexpected challenges that require taking time away from work. Before those situations occur, it is important to know your rights and options for taking a leave of absence from work. In honor of **Protected Leaves Awareness Month** in the County of Los Angeles (County), we will be publishing four newsletters about protected leaves. Each newsletter will focus on a different aspect of protected leaves that you should understand.

In this week's newsletter, we will provide you with an introduction to protected leaves to help ensure that you can navigate the leave process with confidence should the need arise.



What is a Leave of Absence?

A leave of absence is a formal, approved period of days off from work taken for a specific reason. This can be due to serious health conditions (yours or a qualified family member), certain family emergencies, military exigency needs, or bonding with a child. The County offers various types of protected and unprotected leave options depending on the reason for leave.



Protected Leave vs. Unprotected Leave

A protected leave guarantees job security and maintains your benefits during the leave, as required by laws such as the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), the California Family Rights Act (CFRA), and California Pregnancy Disability Leave Act (PDL). Unprotected leaves (e.g., bereavement leave, personal leave of absence, educational leave) do not offer the same protection, meaning your position (and benefits, if any) may be affected. Another difference is that unprotected absences may be reflected in your performance evaluations, whereas protected absences cannot be counted towards absenteeism.



Who Qualifies for a Protected Leave of Absence?



Your eligibility to take a protected leave of absence depends on a number of factors. To be eligible for FMLA or CFRA, you must have worked a minimum of 1,250 hours in the last 12 months and earned 12 months of County service within the last seven years. PDL does not have an eligibility requirement, and it can be taken as early as the first day of employment.

How Do I Request a Protected Leave of Absence?

To request a leave, talk to your supervisor or reach out to your departmental [Protected Leave Coordinator](#). It's best to give as much notice as possible so the County can best support you in the process. You will need to submit required documentation to support your leave request. If your leave is approved, you are required to follow your department's call-out procedures.



Time Limits and Duration of Protected Leave

The duration of a leave of absence varies based on the leave type. FMLA and CFRA protected leaves can last up to 12 weeks. Other types of leaves may be shorter or longer. For specific information, please click on each leave linked below.

- [Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\)](#)
- [California Family Rights Act \(CFRA\)](#)
- [Family and Medical Leave Act \(FMLA\)](#)
- [Jury Duty](#)
- [Kin Care](#)
- [Military Family Leave](#)
- [Military Service Leave](#)
- [Organ & Bone Marrow Donation Leave](#)
- [Pregnancy Disability Leave \(PDL\)](#)
- [Reproductive Loss Leave](#)
- [Safe Leave](#)
- [School Appearance & Activities Leave](#)
- [Voting Leave](#)
- [Witness Leave](#)

Each week, we will include quick tips for employees and strategies for supervisors to assist in navigating the protected leave process.



Employee Quick Tips



[Leave with Confidence - Understanding the Interaction between FMLA, CFRA, PDL](#)

Supervisor Strategies

[Compliance Essentials - Steering Clear of Protected Leave Pitfalls](#)



In the next newsletter, we will discuss how taking leave to care for yourself or your family, when a qualifying event arises, can help you maintain a healthy work-life balance and thrive both at home and at work.

