



Paid Family and Medical Leave is almost here.
Get ready to apply today.

Applying for leave in 2020?

Maybe you had a child in 2019, have a family member to care for next year or are having surgery. While you cannot apply until after Jan. 1, 2020, there are some steps you can take now to get ready today.

Get ready in 1-2-3

1. Assess your eligibility. Check out the quick eligibility questionnaire to see if you should apply. [Download eligibility questionnaire.](#)
2. Notify your employer at least 30 days before you plan to take leave.
Tip: Ask your employer if they offer a supplemental benefit. [Download sample notification.](#)
3. Get your proof of ID documents ready to upload with your application. Valid ID includes a driver's license, passport or utility and phone bills. Download the [complete list of accepted forms of ID.](#) Have these scanned and saved to your computer or phone to upload when you apply online or printed to be mailed with your paper application.

How to apply

After Jan. 1, 2020, you can apply for benefits in two ways – online or on paper by postal mail.

When you apply for benefits online (desktop or mobile):

- You may submit your weekly benefit claims online or over the phone
- You can choose to receive your benefit payments either by direct deposit to your bank account or with a prepaid debit card

When you apply for benefits with a paper application by postal mail:

- You can only submit your weekly benefit claims over the phone
- You can only receive your benefit payments with a prepaid debit card
- You can get a paper application after Jan. 1, 2020 by calling the Customer Care Team

January 1,
2020



What to expect

- **Creating accounts takes about 30 minutes:** You only need to create a Paid Family and Medical Leave account once. You will also need to create a SAW account if you don't already have one. You can create a SAW account at any time and a Paid Family and Medical Leave account after Jan. 1, 2020.
- **Online application takes between 30 minutes and 2 hours:** You will be asked to provide basic information about yourself including your full name, date of birth, contact information, leave type and verification of your employment history. You will also upload your medical certification or other required documentation.
- **Being prepared helps:** Following the "Get ready" steps above will make the application process easier. It is also important to make sure you double check your information as you input it. Incorrect or missing information will likely mean we'll have to contact you, which will extend processing time.

Getting a medical certification

Certification is required to take medical leave for your own [serious health condition](#) or family leave to care for a family member with a serious health condition. You do not need certification for family leave to bond with a new child, but if you plan to first use medical leave to recover from giving birth you will need to get certified.

Can I get certified before the event has taken place?

For planned events, like after the birth of a child or an upcoming surgery, you can get the medical certification form filled out before the event occurs. If anything changes, like the leave start date, you may need to update or get a new form filled out (e.g. you cancel your surgery).

Please remember, we can only approve applications after a qualifying event has taken place – so you may get ready to apply before your event, but you should not submit your application until afterward.

Will my doctor give me the form?

It is your responsibility to provide the form to your [healthcare provider](#). We recommend you ask your healthcare provider, or your family member's, how they prefer to process the certification as soon as you know you'll be applying for medical or family caregiving leave.

Accepted forms of certification:

- Our program's [Certification of a Serious Health Condition form](#)
- FMLA certification paperwork
- Other documentation that meets the requirements

How can I learn more?

You can find more information at www.paidleave.wa.gov/workers. Additional resources to walk you through applying will be available when benefit applications open after Jan. 1, 2020:

Benefit Guide: The Paid Family and Medical Leave Benefit Guide will provide information on how to apply for benefits and submit weekly claims. It will also explain your rights and responsibilities under the law. The guide will be posted in December 2019, after which you will be able to download the guide at paidleave.wa.gov/benefit-guide or request a copy by calling 833-717-2273.

How-to-apply video: A step-by-step walk-through of the online application will be available after Jan. 1, 2020.

Detailed application instructions: Downloadable step-by-step instructions of the online application will be available after Jan. 1, 2020.