

# FAMILY CARE & MEDICAL LEAVE & PREGNANCY DISABILITY LEAVE



Civil Rights  
Department  
STATE OF CALIFORNIA



**Under California law, an employee may have the right to take job-protected leave to care for their own serious health condition or a family member with a serious health condition, or to bond with a new child (via birth, adoption, or foster care). California law also requires employers to provide job-protected leave and accommodations to employees who are disabled by pregnancy, childbirth, or a related medical condition.**

Under the California Family Rights Act of 1993 (CFRA), many employees have the right to take job-protected leave, which is leave that will allow them to return to their job or a similar job after their leave ends. This leave may be up to 12 work weeks in a 12-month period for:

- the employee's own serious health condition;
- the serious health condition of a child, spouse, domestic partner, parent, parent-in-law, grandparent, grandchild, sibling, or someone else with a blood or family-like relationship with the employment ("designated person"); or
- the birth, adoption, or foster care placement of a child.

If an employee takes leave for their own or a family member's serious health condition, leave may be taken on an intermittent or reduced work schedule when medically necessary, among other circumstances.

**Eligibility.** To be eligible for CFRA leave, an employee must have more than 12 months of service with their employer, have worked at least 1,250 hours in the 12-month period before the date they want to begin their leave, and their employer must have five or more employees.

**Pay and Benefits During Leave.** While the law provides only unpaid leave, some employers pay their employees during CFRA leave. In addition, employees may choose (or employers may require) use of accrued paid leave while taking CFRA leave under certain circumstances. Employees on CFRA leave may also be eligible for benefits administered by the Employment Development Department.

Taking CFRA leave may impact certain employee benefits and seniority date. If employees want more information regarding eligibility for a leave and/or the impact of the leave on seniority and benefits, they should contact their employer.

**Pregnancy Disability Leave.** Even if an employee is not eligible for CFRA leave, if disabled by pregnancy, childbirth or a related medical condition, the employee is entitled to take a pregnancy disability leave of up to four months, depending on their period(s) of actual disability. If the employee is CFRA-eligible, they have certain rights to take *both* a pregnancy disability leave and a CFRA leave for reason of the birth of their child.

**Reinstatement.** Both CFRA leave and pregnancy disability leave contain a guarantee of reinstatement – for pregnancy disability it is to the same position and for CFRA it is to the same or a comparable position at the end of the leave, subject to any defense allowed under the law.

**Notice.** For foreseeable events (such as the expected birth of a child or a planned medical treatment for the employee or of a family member), the employee must provide, if possible, at least 30 days' advance notice to their employer that they will be taking leave. For events that are unforeseeable, employees should notify their employers, at least verbally, as soon as they learn of the need for the leave. Failure to comply with these notice rules is grounds for, and may result in, deferral of the requested leave until the employee complies with this notice policy.

**Certification.** Employers may require certification from an employee's health care provider before allowing leave for pregnancy disability or for the employee's own serious health condition. Employers may also require certification from the health care provider of the employee's family member, including a designated person, who has a serious health condition, before granting leave to take care of that family member.

Want to learn more?

Visit: [calcivilrights.ca.gov/family-medical-pregnancy-leave/](https://calcivilrights.ca.gov/family-medical-pregnancy-leave/)

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**If you have been subjected to discrimination, harassment, or retaliation at work, or have been improperly denied protected leave, file a complaint with the Civil Rights Department (CRD).**

## TO FILE A COMPLAINT

### Civil Rights Department

[calcivilrights.ca.gov/complaintprocess](https://calcivilrights.ca.gov/complaintprocess)

Toll Free: 800.884.1684 / TTY: 800.700.2320

California Relay Service (711)

Have a disability that requires a reasonable accommodation?  
CRD can assist you with your complaint.