



## **Know Your Rights: Mississippi's Paid Parental Leave for State Employees**

As of January 1, 2026, if you are a full-time employee of the state of Mississippi and the primary caregiver of a child, you have new protections to take care of your child and maintain your economic security. Mississippi's [HB 1063](#) now allows eligible employees to take up to 6 weeks of paid parental leave for the birth of a child or the legal adoption of a child under the age of 18.

### **What does HB 1063 do?**

- HB 1063 provides full time state employees and employees of any agency, department, or institution of the state with 6 weeks (240 hours) of paid parental leave. Employees will receive 100% of their regular salary during this leave.

### **Am I covered?**

- The law covers state employees in Mississippi who...
  - Are classified as full-time,
  - Have been employed for 12 consecutive months, and
  - Are the primary caregiver of a child.
- The following employees may be eligible:
  - Full-time employees who are employed by the state of Mississippi or
  - Full time employees of any agency, department, or institution of the state.

### **What constitutes a qualifying life event?**

- The birth of a child or the legal adoption of a child under the age of 18 constitutes a qualifying life event for paid parental leave.
- The paid parental leave must be taken within 12 weeks of the birth or adoption of the child.
- Paid parental leave may only be taken once in a 12 month period, no matter how many qualifying events you experience in a year.
- Any leave that remains 12 months after your initial qualifying life event can not be carried over for future use.

### **What is a primary caregiver?**

- A primary caregiver is the parent who has the primary responsibility for the care of a child following the birth or adoption of a child (ex. A father who is a state employee may be entitled to 6 weeks of paid parental leave if he currently is primarily responsible for the care of his child after their birth or adoption, and his spouse does not work for the state).



### **How do I request paid parental leave benefits?**

- You should contact your supervisor or human resources manager to request paid parental leave at least 30 calendar days before the anticipated leave start date, where foreseeable.
- If advance notice is not possible due to exigent circumstances, then you should notify your supervisor or human resources manager at the earliest available opportunity.

### **Can this leave be used for my pregnancy-related health needs prior to giving birth?**

- No. Paid parental leave cannot be used for prenatal medical appointments or absences due to medical conditions during pregnancy, but can be used for the birth of your child or to bond with your new baby.
- You may be able to use other forms of accrued time off, major medical leave, or request time off or other accommodations under federal laws such as the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA), or Pregnancy Discrimination Act (PDA). Learn more [at this link](#).

### **If both parents work for the state, can they each take 6 weeks of leave?**

- Only one parent can be the primary caregiver of a child at the *same* time. The paid parental leave must be used within 12 weeks of the qualifying life event.

### **How does paid parental leave interact with FMLA and major medical leave?**

- If you qualify for FMLA and paid parental leave, FMLA will run concurrently with paid parental leave.
- After using paid parental leave, an employee may use up to 6 weeks of earned major medical leave for the birth of the employee's biological child or the placement of a child for adoption or foster care with the employee and to care for the newly placed child within 1 year of placement.

### **Do I have to use sick or vacation days beforehand?**

- No. Under this law, paid parental leave is provided in addition to any accrued paid or unpaid sick, vacation, or medical leave.
- You do not have to use your vacation or sick days before taking paid parental leave.

**Questions?** Call A Better Balance's free, confidential legal helpline at 1-833-NEED-ABB (1-833-633-3222) to speak with an attorney about your workplace rights.