

FAQ on City of Seattle Paid Parental Leave (PPL):

1. What is the proposed Paid Parental Leave Benefit?

City employees would receive four weeks of continuous or intermittent paid parental leave commencing with the first instance of birth, adoption, or foster placement of a minor child or children in one 12 month period. This leave would be in addition to other accrued leave such as vacation and sick leave. This benefit will be available to all regular employees six months after their hire date consistent with the City's Family Medical Leave program eligibility.

2. Why is the City proposing to provide this benefit?

Providing paid time off for working parents to care for a new child allows time to create and strengthen bonds between the child and parents easing the transition to a larger family.

3. Have other local jurisdictions implemented a similar policy?

No other Pacific Northwest city has a Paid Parental Leave policy.

4. Nationally, have other jurisdictions implemented a similar policy?

Other cities, including San Francisco, Austin, Chicago and Washington D.C. provide a paid parental leave benefit.

5. Are employees able to take time off now?

Similar to the Federal FMLA the City Family Leave Medical Program provides that employees may take up to 90 calendar days of unpaid leave in a 12-month period following the birth, adoption or foster care placement of a child. Although FMLA provides unpaid leave, City employees may use their accrued sick leave and vacation.

6. How much paid time and unpaid time do new parents at the City currently take?

The following is the average use of leave in 2011 and 2012 by new parents employed by the City of Seattle in the year following the addition of a newborn child:

Average Annual Utilization of Time Off Benefits (both paid and unpaid)					
	New parents	Median Tenure	Total Time Taken	Paid Time Taken	Unpaid Time Taken
Females	59	6 years	18 weeks	9 weeks	8 weeks
Males	171	6 years	7 weeks	7 weeks	0
Total	230	6 years	10 weeks	8 weeks	2 weeks

7. How much will the new PPL policy cost the City?

The cost to the City will depend mainly on whether City departments need to hire a replacement for the employee on leave. Based on the number of new parents in 2011 and 2012, the new Paid Parental Leave could cost the City up to \$1.35 million annually. However, it is likely that the benefit would cost the City less than \$1.35 million because not every department would need a “temporary backfill” for every new parent using Paid Parental Leave.

8. When will the Paid Parental Leave benefit be implemented?

Legislation will be drafted in the next few weeks, and the City will continue to work with the labor organizations who represent City employees to implement this benefit.