



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 18, 2023

Media Contact:

Angela Yeager, communications officer,
angela.l.yeager@employ.oregon.gov

Paid Leave Oregon applications start Aug. 14; benefits begin Sept. 3

SALEM – Employees who need to take time off for important life events can apply for benefits for [Paid Leave Oregon](#) starting Aug. 14, 2023.

Paid Leave Oregon covers paid family leave, medical leave, and safe leave for working Oregonians. Employees can apply for the following reasons:

- To care for themselves or members of their family during the birth of a child, or to bond with a child after birth, adoption, or placement of a child in their home through foster care
- To care for themselves during a serious health condition
- To care for a family member when they have a serious health condition
- If they or their child experience sexual assault, domestic violence, harassment, or stalking

To apply for leave, employees will use the Oregon Employment Department's (OED) new online system called [Frances Online](#).

“We’re excited to give working people the financial support they need to care for themselves and their families,” said Karen Madden Humelbaugh, director of Paid Leave Oregon. “Employees can take the time they need without worrying about losing their job, and employers retain their skilled and experienced workers.”

The state Legislature created Paid Leave Oregon in 2019 (House Bill 2005), making Oregon one of 11 states (plus Washington D.C.) to offer paid family and medical leave. Oregon's unique program also covers safe leave in addition to family and medical leave. Safe leave supports survivors of sexual assault, domestic violence, harassment, or stalking so they can take time to seek safety.

"We did our due diligence, learning from other programs around the country, and we added our own innovations," said David Gerstenfeld, director of the Employment Department. "Oregon's paid leave program provides more protection for employees, with additions like safe leave, and offers grants to support small employers."

In January 2023, employers and employees started contributing to a trust fund that will pay for employee paid leave benefits. During the 2023 legislative session, the Legislature passed Senate Bill 31, which requires OED to make sure the Paid Leave Oregon trust fund is solvent before launching benefits.

Based on current trust fund data and projections, Employment Department leaders have decided the trust fund is ready to launch benefits the week of Sept. 3, as planned. This will be the first week employees can take paid leave, with payments going out within two weeks.

"Just like any new statewide program of this size, we know we will have to adjust along the way," Humelbaugh said. "SB 31 was good contingency planning, and we will continue to work with the Legislature and other key partners as we monitor the program's progress after launch."

Detailed information for employees, including eligibility requirements, tutorial videos, a benefits calculator, and much more, will be available on the Paid Leave website on Aug. 14. Employees can now go to the [employee overview page](#) and find many resources, including a guidebook.

###

The Oregon Employment Department (OED) is an equal opportunity agency. OED provides free help so you can use our services. Some examples are sign language and spoken-language interpreters, written materials in other languages, large print, audio,

and other formats. To get help, please call 503- 947-1444. TTY users call 711. You can also send an email to communications@employ.oregon.gov