

Frequently Asked Questions

PAID PREGNANCY LEAVE

WHEN DOES THE LEAVE GO INTO EFFECT?

»»» January 1, 2027

HOW MUCH LEAVE CAN I TAKE?

»»» The length of the leave for full pay shall be determined by the employee and the employee's doctor, but may be up to 14 weeks

WHO DOES THIS LEAVE APPLY TO?

»»» Academic employees (including part-time & temporary faculty) and classified employees employed by community college districts; and

»»» Certificated employees and classified employees employed by public school employers

»»» A "public school employer" is defined by the law as a school district, county office of education, charter school, or educational joint powers authority. PPL does not apply to employees of a school district, COE, charter school, or educational joint powers authority who are classified as temporary or substitute employees

WILL PPL BE DEDUCTED FROM MY SICK LEAVE BANK?

»»» No, this is separate from sick leave

WHAT DOES THIS LEAVE COVER?

- »» PPL covers periods when an employee is unable to work because they are experiencing or recovering from pregnancy, miscarriage, childbirth, termination of pregnancy, or related medical conditions. The leave may begin before childbirth and continue afterward, as long as the employee is actually disabled by one of these conditions. The length of the leave is determined by the employee and their doctor, up to a maximum of 14 weeks of paid leave

IF I AM THE NON-BIRTHING PARENT, CAN I TAKE THIS LEAVE?

- »» No. Paid Pregnancy Leave is available only to employees who are disabled due to pregnancy, childbirth, miscarriage, termination of pregnancy, or related medical conditions. It does not provide leave for baby bonding. Non-birthing parents may still be eligible for other leave entitlements, such as CFRA or FMLA leave for baby bonding, or parental leave under the Education Code or CBA, if they meet the applicable eligibility requirements

DO I NEED A DRS NOTE?

- »» Yes, you will need to provide a doctor's note to your district

DOES THIS 14 WEEK PAID PREGNANCY LEAVE NEED TO BE TAKEN WITHIN A CERTAIN TIMEFRAME?

- »» The length and timing of the paid leave shall be determined by the employee and their doctor, and may begin before and continue after childbirth if the employee is actually disabled by pregnancy, childbirth, termination of pregnancy, or related medical conditions

IS THIS SEPARATE FROM MATERNITY/PATERNITY LEAVE?

- » Yes, PPL is a separate benefit that provides paid leave when an employee is disabled due to pregnancy, miscarriage, childbirth, termination of pregnancy, or related medical conditions. It is not a baby-bonding or parental leave benefit. PPL is available only to the employee experiencing the pregnancy-related disability. If an employee is eligible for both types of leave, PPL may be taken for the period of pregnancy-related disability, and parental or baby-bonding leave may be available separately under a collective bargaining agreement or other applicable law

WOULD PPL EXTEND A PREGNANT EMPLOYEE'S LEAVE?

- » PPL could extend the amount of leave available to an employee who is disabled due to pregnancy-related conditions on or after January 1, 2027. The length of the leave would depend on the employee's medical needs, as determined by the employee and their doctor, for up to 14 weeks

HOW DO WE ENSURE THE EMPLOYER PROVIDES PPL INSTEAD OF CLAIMING IT IS OPTIONAL?

- » The California State budget trailer bill (AB 126, 2026) requires public school employers and community college districts to provide PPL beginning on January 1, 2027 and states that the "leave of absence shall be with full pay," making this a mandatory requirement, not an optional benefit

WHEN CAN I USE PPL? WHEN I'M PREGNANT? OR AFTER GIVING BIRTH?

- » PPL may be used before or after childbirth, as long as the employee is disabled due to pregnancy, childbirth, miscarriage, termination of pregnancy, or related medical conditions. The timing and duration of the leave are based on the employee's medical needs, as determined by the employee and their doctor, for up to 14 weeks of paid leave

DOES PPL RUN CONCURRENTLY WITH FMLA, CFRA, ACCRUED SICK LEAVE, OR EDUCATION CODE DIFFERENTIAL PAY LEAVE?

»» No, AB 126 provides that PPL “shall not be deducted from any other leaves of absence available to the employee for subsequent injury, illness, or disabilities” provided under state or federal law. The only statutory exception allows certain employers to coordinate State Disability Insurance benefits to satisfy part of their payment obligation, provided the employee still receives full pay without any reduction in vacation, sick leave, or other paid leave balances. As a result, PPL is a separate leave entitlement and does not reduce an employee's available FMLA leave, CFRA leave, accrued sick leave, or differential pay leave under the Education Code

CAN MY LOCAL UNION CHAPTER BARGAIN FOR AN EARLIER START DATE THAN 1/1/27?

»» Yes. Although AB 126 does not require public school employers and community college districts to provide Paid Pregnancy Leave until January 1, 2027, a local union may bargain for a more generous benefit, including an earlier implementation date. California law generally permits collective bargaining over contractual provisions that provide employees with greater rights or benefits than those guaranteed by the Education Code, as long as the negotiated agreement does not conflict with or reduce the statutory protections

MY LOCAL CHAPTER NEGOTIATED PAID BABY BONDING LEAVE IN OUR CONTRACT. CAN THE EMPLOYER SUPPLANT THE CONTRACTUAL BABY BONDING LEAVE WITH PPL?

»» Generally, no. AB 126 provides that PPL does not diminish an employer's obligation to comply with a collective bargaining agreement that provides greater disability or parental leave rights than those established by AB 126

HOW IS STRS IMPACTED?

- ▶▶▶ Because PPL is provided with full pay, employees should continue to earn full CalSTRS service credit while on leave. In addition, because PPL may not be deducted from an employee's accrued sick leave, employees may preserve more unused sick leave. Under existing CalSTRS rules, eligible unused sick leave may be converted to additional service credit at retirement. This will help address the long-standing inequity where women make an average of \$100,000 less in retirement, due in part to reduced sick leave banks as a result of childbirth

WHAT IF I AM A PART-TIME EMPLOYEE?

- ▶▶▶ Part-time employees are also eligible for Paid Pregnancy Leave. The amount of pay you receive during the leave depends on your work schedule:
 - ▶▶▶ If you work a fixed number of hours per week, you will receive your regular weekly pay based on the number of hours you are normally scheduled to work
 - ▶▶▶ If your hours vary from week to week, your PPL benefit will be based on your average weekly earnings during the six months before your leave begins. If you have worked for the employer for less than six months, your PPL benefit will be based on your average weekly earnings during your entire period of employment before the leave begins
- ▶▶▶ Eligible part-time employees may receive PPL for up to 14 weeks, calculated using these formulas

IS THERE A WAITING PERIOD FOR COVERAGE?

- ▶▶▶ No. There are no waiting periods or eligibility requirements, like minimum hours worked or length of service, before an employee may use PPL

IS IT RETROACTIVE TO BEFORE JANUARY 1, 2027?

 **No, it is not retroactive**

WHAT HAPPENS WITH MY CTA VOLUNTARY DISABILITY INSURANCE THROUGH THE STANDARD?

 **CTA-endorsed Voluntary Disability insurance through The Standard provides a benefit if you are unable to work your regular, contracted schedule due to illness, injury, pregnancy and childbirth**

 **Eligible members participating in the CTA Voluntary Disability Insurance plan who receive PPL while on an approved claim may receive:**

 **The minimum benefit of \$30 per regular day of required attendance (RDRA)**

 **Any other benefits to which you are entitled, such as Hospital Benefit, Student Loan Benefit, Cancer Benefit, Summer Benefit, or Dependent Education Benefit**

HOW DOES PPL INTERACT WITH REGULAR DISABILITY BENEFITS? CAN I TAKE THEM SEQUENTIALLY OR IS IT CONCURRENT?

 **Disability benefits are based on the date of disability. Under the terms of the CTA-endorsed Voluntary Disability plan, for most pregnancy-related disability claims you may be eligible for benefits starting 4 weeks prior to delivery and continuing for 6 or 8 weeks after delivery, depending on your specific situation. PPL is considered Deductible Income and would reduce any Disability Benefits you receive or are eligible to receive from The Standard. The minimum benefit you would receive on an approved claim is \$30 per Regular Day of Required Attendance, plus any other additional benefits to which you are entitled**

WHAT IF I START PREGNANCY LEAVE BEFORE THIS GOES INTO EFFECT, CAN I USE SOME LEAVE (EXAMPLE, I'VE ALREADY HAD 7 WEEKS OF LEAVE. START DATE IS JANUARY 1ST. CAN I USE THE REST OF THIS LEAVE?)



AB 126 does not specifically address how PPL applies to a pregnancy disability leave that begins before January 1, 2027, and continues after that date. However, the statute provides leave to an employee who is “required to be absent from duty because the employee is experiencing or has experienced pregnancy, miscarriage, childbirth, termination of pregnancy, or recovery from those conditions.” This language supports the use of PPL on or after January 1, 2027 for an employee who remains disabled because the employee “has experienced” pregnancy, childbirth, miscarriage, termination of pregnancy, and/or “is experiencing” “recovery from” those conditions for the portion of the leave occurring on or after January 1, 2027. If your employer denies PPL in this type of situation, please contact your local chapter. If you have insurance through The Standard, and you begin receiving PPL on or after January 1, 2027, while on an approved disability claim related to pregnancy or childbirth, please contact The Standard to ensure your benefits are correctly calculated.