

*02.25.21*

# Town Hall For Employers

With Bill Alpine, Director of the  
Department of Family and Medical Leave



Paid Family &  
Medical Leave  
MASSACHUSETTS

# ***Paid Family & Medical Leave (PFML)***

**PFML is a benefit program for MA workers offered by the Commonwealth**

## **For Employers**

It's important to understand your role and responsibilities in the PFML process to help the process run smoothly.

## **For Employees**

If you employ anyone in Massachusetts, your workers are likely eligible to take up to 26 weeks per year of paid, job-protected time off from work when they need it most.

# *Important dates*

## **January 1, 2021**

Applications begin for Paid Medical Leave to **manage a serious health condition**.

Applications begin for Paid Family Leave to **bond with a child**, to **manage family affairs while a family member is on active duty**, or to **care for a family member who is a covered Service Member**.

## **July 1, 2021**

Applications begin for Paid Family Leave to **care for a family member with a serious health condition**.

# ***Timeline and payments***

Since PFML launched on January 1, 2021, DFML has been experiencing **high volumes in claims**. The Department is hard at work to process claims as quickly as possible and recognizes that some employees have **experienced delays in claims or payments being processed**.

Timelines are longer than originally estimated for a variety of reasons and we appreciate claimant patience as we work to process all claims in a timely manner.

# ***Communicating with employees***

## **Encourage an open dialogue**

**Employees are required to talk to their employer and/or Leave Administrator before beginning an application.**

- *30 days' notice before beginning the application for a planned event, like an elective surgery or the birth or placement of a child.*
- *As soon as possible for an unexpected or unplanned life event.*

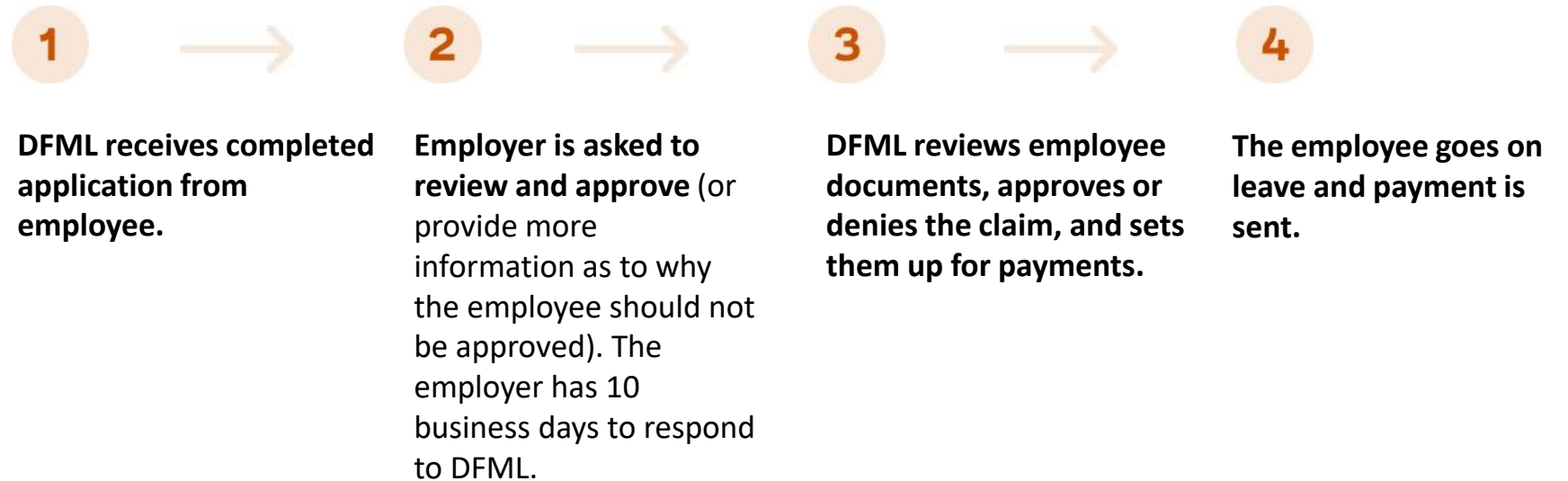
**We are encouraging employees and employers to have an open dialogue about PFML as part of current benefits conversations.**

- *Establishing an open dialogue early will help you better plan for employees taking leave.*
- *Providing employees with information on all available benefits options enables them to make the best choices when health issues arise.*

# *Employer's role in the process and timeline*

## **Before an employee applies**

**An employee must notify the employer and Leave Administrator** of the intended leave before beginning the application process.



# ***Leave Administrators***

## **An employer must have a registered Leave Administrator with DFML**

- A Leave Administrator is the person responsible for reviewing and processing employee claims on behalf of an organization.
- If you haven't registered a Leave Administrator, call the PFML contact center at (833) 344-7365.

*If you have not registered a Leave Administrator with DFML, you are relinquishing your role in providing information and approving claims.*

# ***Leave Administrators (cont.)***

## **Reviewing employee claims and what to expect**

- You will receive an email letting you know that an employee at the company you represent has started an application for PFML.
- Once the employee has completed their application, you will receive a second email to review the application.
- You will also be notified when the review process for the claim has been completed by DFML.

The next few slides contain some items to keep in mind about the review process.



# ***Leave Administrators (cont.)***

## **Reviewing employee claims and what to expect**

- **View application details and respond within 10 business days.**

If we don't hear from you or any other verified Leave Administrator from your organization in that time, we will proceed with the application using only the information the employee provided.

- **Confirm the information in the application is accurate and provide additional information.**

Some examples are:

- Other instances of paid and unpaid leave that the worker has taken in the past benefit year
- Work patterns and hours
- The worker's service time with the company and their wages
- Potential fraud

# ***The PFML application website***

## **What to expect now**

- The current functionality of the application website requires that employers retain their email notifications about employee claims in order to review them and provide response.
- Each FEIN requires a unique e-mail address.

## **Future improvements**

- Ability to associate a single e-mail address to multiple FEINS
- Dashboard view for the employer to log in and view employee claims all in one place
- Enhancements to the Request for Information, including ability to report other leaves and wage replacement.

*Additional features require enhanced security measures. In the coming months, DFML will be requiring Leave Administrators to provide additional information to add another layer of security to their accounts.*

# *Understanding employee time off*

## Leave schedules

- **Continuous (Full Time) Leave-** An employer needs to verify the employee's information and note any other leave taken during the benefit year.
- **Reduced (Part Time) Leave-** An employee's intermittent leave schedule must be approved by the employer ahead of time. An employer also needs to verify the employee's information and note any other leave taken during the benefit year.
- **Intermittent Leave-** An employee's intermittent leave schedule must be approved by the employer ahead of time. An employer also needs to verify the employee's information and note any other leave taken during the benefit year.

# *Calculating an employee's income*

## What to know about employees' income

- **To be eligible** for paid family or medical leave, a worker must have earned at least **\$5,400 and at least 30 times** their calculated weekly paid leave benefit amount in the last 4 completed quarters.
- If an employee has **more than one job**, their combined income within the past 4 quarters will be considered when calculating their income eligibility.

# Resources

## Employers

- **Call the PFML Contact Center at (833) 344-7365**  
*(Hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 8am to 5pm)*  
\*Multilingual agents are available
- **Visit [mass.gov/pfml](https://mass.gov/pfml)**
  - Refer to the regulations page for more detailed legal information and answers to your questions.

# Thank you



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