

What is the Update?

Update (06/18/25): Beginning May 1, 2026, the Maine Paid Family and Medical Leave (ME PFML) program will provide up to 12 weeks of leave and pay benefits for covered employees. ME PFML will be administered by the Maine Department of Labor, while the program is funded by a 1% payroll tax split evenly between the employer and employee. Contributions began on January 1, 2025. Finalized rules applicable to the upcoming PFML program can be found [here](#).

Covered employees include all public, private full-time and part-time employees (including self-employed individuals) who have earned at least six times the state average weekly wage in the first four of the last five completed calendar quarters immediately preceding the first day an individual's benefit year. The current state average weekly wage for the period of July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026 is \$1,198.84, meaning if an individual has earned at least \$7,193.04 in the year prior to taking leave, they are covered. All employers are covered by the new PFML program. Although employers with less than 15 employees are not required to contribute toward the payroll tax, they must still collect and remit their employee's portions of the tax. Private employers that offer an equivalent or greater paid leave benefit may apply to the state for a waiver to avoid participating in the state program. Applications for a private plan may be made after April 1, 2025, with an application fee of \$250 for a review of the application.

An employee's notice to their employer of the need for PFML leave must be made in writing. Eligible employees or self-employed individuals may take up to 12 weeks of paid leave for the following reasons:

- To bond with a child during the first 12 months after the child's birth, placement, adoption, or foster care with the covered individual;
- To care for a family member with a serious health condition;
- To attend a "qualifying exigency";
- To care for a family member of the covered individual who is a covered service member;
- Safe leave (also known as sexual assault victim leave);
- as well as any reason covered under the Maine Family and Medical Leave Act (MEFMLA).

A "Family Member" under the ME PFML is a biological, foster, step, or adopted child (regardless of age); grandparent; grandchild; sibling; spouse or domestic partner; or an individual with whom the covered individual has a significant personal bond that is or is like a family relationship, regardless of biological or legal relationship. Additionally, the definition of health care provider includes those qualified under FMLA.

An employee may take up to 12 weeks of family leave and 12 weeks of medical leave, but not to exceed more than 12 weeks allotted per leave type in an applicant year. Leave may be taken intermittently in increments not less than one day or, with employer agreement, employees may take leave in smaller increments no less than one hour. Any leave taken under FMLA or Maine's Family and Medical Leave Act within the 12-month period preceding ME PFML leave that was not concurrently taken with ME PFML, will be reduced from ME PFML.

The ME PFML benefit will replace 90% of an employee's wages for income earned that is equal to or less than 50% of Maine's average weekly wage, and if the portion of the covered individual's average weekly rate is more than 50%, the state average weekly wage must be replaced at 66% up to the weekly maximum benefit. The maximum weekly benefit amount is capped at the state average weekly wage (\$1,198.84 from July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026) and may be adjusted each year. An employee's weekly benefit amount will be based on the state average weekly wage published on the July 1 date immediately preceding the starting date of the leave, or the date the application for benefits is made (whichever is earlier). The amount established will remain the same throughout the life of the claim.

Employees may file an application no earlier than 60 days before the anticipated start date of PFML, and no more than 90 days after the start date of leave.

The online system that employers can use to file wage reports and remit contributions became available on January 6, 2025. Please refer to the [one-page document](#) on what employers need to know related to program contributions. You can find more information like a Portal demo and Q&A on the [ME PFML website](#), under "Maine Paid Leave Contributions Portal".

ME PFML has released an updated version of the [required workplace poster](#). As a reminder, this poster should be provided to new hires within 30 days of hire and placed within the workplace where workers can easily see it.

Handbook/Policy Updates

Updates to your company handbook may need to be made if you include Maine state-specific leave benefits information.

Notice Requirements

Employers will be required to provide a [workplace poster](#) as well as a written notice to each employee within 30 days of the start of employment.

Larkin Maine - Leave Highlights	
Larkin Action	The Larkin Company will consider any law changes carefully, and update our internal resources and processes, as well as our employee leave information packets, if necessary. We will continue to monitor any updates regarding the laws and will keep our clients updated.
Further Company Considerations	N/A
Resources	ME PFML Website ME PFML Bill LD 258 ME Family and Medical Leave Statute What Employers Need to Know: Program Contributions

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