

Benefits are Available Under D.C.'s Paid Family Leave Law Starting July 1

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Starting July 1, 2020, eligible employees may take paid leave under the District of Columbia's Universal Paid Leave Amendment Act.

The Act provides:

- Eight weeks of paid leave for the birth, adoption, or foster care placement of a child, or placement with an individual who assumes parental responsibility;
- Six weeks of paid leave to take care of a family member with a serious health condition; and
- Two weeks of paid leave for the employee's own serious health condition.

Although the D.C. Department of Employment Services hinted that entitlement to paid leave under the statute might be delayed due to COVID-19, benefits will be available to eligible employees starting July 1, as planned.

Paid leave under the Act is not paid out by employers. Instead, D.C.'s "Universal Paid Leave Fund" **began collecting employer contributions one year ago**, on July 1, 2019. Contributions are received from employers through a tax program similar to the one that funds unemployment benefits. The law requires that the Paid Family Leave Employee Notice be posted in all covered D.C. workplaces. The D.C. Department of Employment Services offers a copy of this poster, as well as other useful resources, on its dedicated **Paid Family Leave Website**.

To prepare for these new requirements, D.C. employers should:

- Ensure their employee handbooks are up to date;
- Revisit their existing leave policies to ensure coordination between their leave programs and these new benefits, particularly if they voluntarily offer paid leave benefits similar to those covered by the law;
- Include the requirements of this law in management training; and
- Ensure that HR and payroll staff and vendors are familiar with how to implement these new rules.

If you have questions or concerns about these, or other workplace law developments, please contact any Jackson Lewis attorney.

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