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New FAMLI plan offers fresh batch of leave coverage [1]



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The University of Colorado's self-funded and self-administered paid family leave program [3] will take effect on Jan. 1, 2024. This plan follows the Family and Medical Leave Insurance (FAMLI) program [4] established by the state of Colorado and will improve paid leave time for employees taking time off for family care or medical needs.

The CU FAMLI plan builds on existing leave options for employees, working in tandem with several existing paid leave options to give employees more time and greater flexibility in taking care of themselves or family members. Read on to learn how the FAMLI plan will work alongside CU's other paid leave programs.

Employees can apply now for FAMLI leave to start after Jan. 1 by following instructions in the FAMLI employee guide [5]. In addition, Employee Services is offering an on-demand course and Q&A sessions on Zoom to help CU employees learn more about FAMLI. See details below.

What does FAMLI provide?

Starting Jan. 1, 2024, CU's FAMLI program will provide all eligible employees a portion of their weekly salary for up to 12 weeks of leave to care for themselves or a family member, with an additional four weeks leave available for complications during pregnancy or childbirth.

Individuals can use FAMLI leave to take time away from work to:

- care for a new child, including adopted and fostered children.
- care for themselves or a family member if they have a serious health condition.
- make arrangements for a family member's military deployment.
- address the immediate safety needs and impact of domestic violence and/or sexual assault.

Only CU employees working in Colorado are eligible for FAMLI coverage, and they will become eligible to receive partial wage replacement on the first day of employment. To qualify for job protection under FAMLI, an employee must have worked at their position for more than 180 days (about six months). FAMLI also provides legal protections against retaliation.

How does FAMLI work with other paid leave?

FAMLI coverage will only offer a percentage of an employee's full wages, based on their weekly wage rate. See the table below for a broad view of how this is calculated based on sample weekly wage rates.

Weekly Wage	Weekly Benefit	Maximum Annual Benefit	Percentage of Weekly Wage
$500	$450	$5,400	90%
$1,000	$768	$9,216	77%
$1,500	$1,018	$12,216	68%
$2,000	$1,100	$13,200	55%
$3,000	$1,100	$13,200	37%

The state's premium calculator [6] can provide an estimate of your paycheck deductions and initial benefits paid if you take FAMLI leave.

Although FAMLI leave only offers partial wage replacement, other leave types may be used to supplement FAMLI and compensate an employee's full wages. See the leave categories below to better understand all your paid leave options.

Sick Leave and Vacation Leave

These leave types can be used at the employee's discretion to supplement FAMLI coverage to get to full wages. They can also be used after FAMLI coverage runs out or the maximum annual benefit is reached.

Paid Parental Leave

Pending approval and effective Jan. 1, 2024, the university's Paid Parental Leave policy will run concurrently with FAMLI for eligible employee populations, providing up to six weeks of compensation for the birth, adoption or foster placement of dependent children. Read our recent blog post [7]for more details.

Short-term Disability

Short-term Disability coverage is voluntary for university staff and faculty but mandatory for classified staff. It can only be used for the injury or illness of an employee (not their family) and will run concurrently with FAMLI. This is an especially valuable option for employees who work outside Colorado and therefore will not be covered by FAMLI. Employees must elect this coverage during CU's annual benefits open enrollment (typically held in mid-April through early May).

What about FMLA?

Despite the similar names, the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) [8] is distinct from

FAMLI. FMLA is a federal law passed in 1993 that provides job protection for up to 12 weeks per 12-month period for eligible employees who take leave for specific family care or medical reasons. While FMLA protects against some employer retaliation, it does not guarantee pay of any kind. In the event of an eligible absence, FMLA and FAMLI will run concurrently for eligible employees.

Learn more about FAMLI with on-demand course and Q&A session

Employee Services wants to ensure that all CU employees are familiar with FAMLI and its benefits. That's why we've created an on-demand course and slated Q&A sessions.

- Watch the on-demand course [9] about the CU FAMLI program.
- The University of Colorado Employee Services Leave Team invites supervisors and employees to attend our CU FAMLI Q&A Sessions, held on Zoom from Nov. 29 to Feb. 2. These sessions are a chance for employees and supervisors to learn about the new CU FAMLI program and its benefits, and to ask questions about using the program. See the full schedule and register for an upcoming session [10].

FAMLI [11], leave [12], [13], Parental Leave [14], Sick Leave [15], Vacation Leave [16]
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