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Additional FAMLI leave to be extended for parents with an infant in NICU [1]



November 20, 2025 by Employee Services [2]

The University of Colorado's Family and Medical Leave Insurance (FAMLI) [3]program provides partial wage replacement for employees who live and work in Colorado during leave for their own medical conditions or those of a family member. The implementation of this program also included the expansion of the university's Paid Parental Leave policy [4], and starting in 2026, the program will offer additional leave for parents with an infant admitted to a neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) or pediatric intensive care unit (PICU).

About the expanded leave coverage

Neonatal Care (NICU) Leave will allow parents to take up to 12 additional weeks of paid FAMLI leave while their newborns are receiving care in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. This leave will be offered in addition to the existing 12 weeks for pregnancy/maternity and bonding.

Twelve weeks is the maximum, but the leave can only be taken while the newborn is receiving care in a qualifying hospital facility. For example, if the newborn is admitted for 6 weeks and then discharged, the employee is eligible for 6 weeks of additional leave.

CU is expanding eligibility for this benefit and will also offer up to 12 additional weeks for parents with infants admitted to a PICU.

Eligibility for NICU Leave

As with other types of FAMLI leave, NICU Leave may be taken consecutively, intermittently or on a reduced schedule. Families will need to meet certain requirements to qualify for this specialized leave category.

- Leave will be available for parents with an eligible newborn in the NICU or PICU **on or after Jan. 1, 2026**.
    - A newborn is defined as the first 28 days of life.
- If the newborn was admitted prior to Jan. 1, 2026 but remains in the NICU or PICU as of Jan. 1, the parent may still be eligible to use NICU Leave starting Jan. 1.
- NICU Leave will run concurrently with FMLA and CU Parental Leave. Therefore, it is part of the existing benefit (26 weeks for staff, 18 weeks for faculty), not in addition to.

The Employee Services Leave team will begin accepting applications for NICU leave in December. The Leave team will conduct individualized outreach to employees with an active parental leave case to inform them of this benefit and provide application instructions.

To apply for NICU Leave, employees will be required to submit documentation that:

1. Confirms the infant's admission to a neonatal or pediatric intensive care unit.
2. Establishes parental status or in loco parentis status, which may include but is not limited to:
    - neonatal intensive care unit admission forms listing the claimant.
    - a birth certificate.
    - records from a health care provider who provided care during the birth or recovery.
    - other vital records verifying parenthood.
    - or a signed written statement attesting to in loco parentis status.

Anyone with questions about this new program can contact the leave team directly at leave@cu.edu [5] or 303-860-4353.

leave [6], FAMLI [7], Parental Leave [8], Sick Leave [9]
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