



**Frequently asked "Q & A" Regarding Maternity/Paternity and Bereavement Leave
For AFSCME Contract Changes**

1. Is it true there is a new bereavement leave and when did it become effective?

Yes. Article XXIII defines the new benefit, and what it entails. This benefit became effective June 22, 2019.

2. Is there a limit on how many times can an employee utilize bereavement leave?

Yes. These two days are limited to one instance per calendar year.

3. Does travel time count in the new bereavement leave?

Yes. An employee is allowed up to two days of bereavement leave (per calendar year) to attend a funeral of an immediate family member, and that includes travel time. Employees may continue to utilize sick time as well, in accordance with Article XXIII, Section 16, Sick Leave.

4. Can a Supervisor ask for documentation of the bereavement leave?

Yes. A Supervisor/Agency may request documentation of attendance at the funeral or similar service and the relationship to the deceased.

5. What is the definition of Immediate family for this benefit?

Immediate family is defined for this Section as: father, mother, sister, brother, spouse, children, grandparent and grandchildren including relationships established by marriage.

Divorce will terminate the benefit for those relationships established by marriage.

6. If I have an employee currently on a maternity/paternity leave, will they be allowed to have ten (10) weeks of paid leave?

Effective June 22, 2019 employees currently on the four (4) weeks paid maternity/paternity leave will be eligible for the ten (10) weeks.

- 7. If an employee returned from their four (4) weeks of paid maternity/paternity leave prior to the new contract becoming effective, are they entitled to the ten (10) weeks of paid leave?**

No.

- 8. If a pregnant employee's spouse is also a state employee, are both employees eligible for ten (10) weeks of maternity/paternity leave?**

Yes. Employees will no longer need to "split" or "share" the time. Each employee is entitled to ten (10) weeks of paid leave, either consecutive or concurrently.

- 9. If an employee is currently splitting the four (4) weeks of maternity/paternity paid leave with their partner and has recently returned to work from maternity/paternity leave but their spouse/partner is currently utilizing the remaining four weeks of maternity/paternity leave, are both employees now eligible for ten (10) weeks of paid leave?**

Yes. Example: Christina works at Dept. of Veterans Affairs and she is sharing the current four weeks of paid maternity/paternity leave with her husband, Jack, who also works at a State Agency/Department under the Governors jurisdiction. Christina returned to work on June 17th, while her husband is currently utilizing the remaining two weeks of paid maternity/paternity leave. Since this increased benefit went into effect during this "shared" maternity/paternity leave, both employees will be eligible for ten (10) weeks. Since Christina has utilized two weeks of maternity/paternity leave, she is eligible for the remaining eight (8) weeks. Jack will also be eligible for the increased benefit of ten (10) weeks. Since both employees are entitled to their "own" leave, they may choose to take their leaves consecutively or concurrently.

- 10. If an employee that took the 4 weeks of maternity/paternity and wanted to extend that ma/pa and now they are on an unpaid Family Responsibility Leave (FRL)? Do we now convert that FRL back to the maternity/paternity?**

No. If they were no longer on the paid 4 weeks of maternity/paternity as of June 22, 2019, they do not get the time extended.

- 11. Under the new benefit language, if an employee has a full-term stillborn child, will they qualify for the ten (10) weeks of paid maternity/paternity leave?**

No. However, both parents will qualify for five (5) weeks of paid leave (see Article XXIII, Section 26).