

## Benefits Reduced for District of Columbia Paid Family Leave

Issued date: 10/30/26

The District of Columbia (“DC”) recently passed the 2027 Budget Support Act (“the Act”), which, among other things, amends the Universal Paid Leave Amendment Act of 2016 to reduce benefits under DC’s paid family leave (“PFL”) program. These changes are effective for claims made on or after **October 1, 2026**.

### ■ Background

Beginning October 2022, eligible employees working for a covered employer could receive PFL for:

- 12 weeks of parental leave to bond with a child during the first year after birth, adoption, or foster care placement;
- 2 weeks of prenatal leave for care related to pregnancy;
- 12 weeks of medical leave for the employee’s own serious health condition; and
- 12 weeks of family leave to care for a family member’s serious health condition.

Benefits are provided through a government-run program funded by employer-paid taxes on covered workers’ wages. For 2026, this tax rate is set at 0.75% of employee wages and is not expected to change for 2027.

### ■ Changes to DC PFL Benefits

Effective October 1, 2026, DC PFL benefits have been reduced as follows:

- Medical leave has been reduced from 12 weeks to 10 weeks in a 52-week period; and
- Family leave has been reduced from 12 weeks to 6 weeks in a 52-week period.

In addition to reducing these leave durations, the Act also slightly reduced the maximum weekly benefit amount from \$1,190 to \$1,100.

The benefit durations for parental and prenatal leave remain unchanged. The employer contribution rate and wage replacement structure also remain unchanged.

Although these changes are temporary, they are scheduled to remain in effect for claims filed through September 30, 2030.

## Employer Action

- Employers should review and update their existing leave policies to ensure that they accurately reflect the changes to DC's PFL program.
- The required employee notice should be updated and distributed as necessary to reflect the changes to the program. The DC Office of Paid Family Leave has made an updated employee notice available.