

# FAQs - Oregon Paid Family and Medical Leave

## 1. What is Oregon Paid Family & Medical Leave (OPFML)?

Oregon Paid Family & Medical Leave is a State of Oregon mandated program available to employees who primarily work in Oregon. The program ensures that individuals, employers, and families have the time and support they need to care for themselves and their loved ones when life's important moments affect their health and safety. OPFML will serve most employees in Oregon by providing paid leave for the birth or adoption of a child, you or a loved one's serious illness or if you experience sexual assault, domestic violence, harassment, or stalking.

This program is in addition to other OSU leave programs, such as Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), Oregon Family Leave Act (OFLA), and collective bargaining agreement provisions, which are administered by the Office of University Human Resources.

## 2. What types of leave will be covered under OPFML?

Oregon Paid Family & Medical Leave will provide paid time off and job protection for medical, family and safe leave.

- Medical Leave is for when you need time off to care for yourself due to a serious medical condition.
- Family Leave is for when you need time off to care for a member of your family during the birth of a child, to bond with a child in the first year after birth, adoption or foster care or due to a serious medical condition.
- Safe Leave provides time off for survivors of sexual assault, domestic violence, harassment or stalking.

## 3. Who is considered a family member under Oregon Paid Family & Medical Leave (OPFML)?

A family member under OPFML can be any of the following:

- Your spouse or domestic partner
- Your child (biological, adopted, stepchild, or foster child), your spouse or domestic partner's child, or the child's spouse or domestic partner
- Your parent (biological, adoptive, stepparent, foster parent, or legal guardian), the parent of your spouse or domestic partner, or your parent's spouse or domestic partner
- Your sibling or stepsibling or their spouse or domestic partner
- Your grandparent or your grandparent's spouse or domestic partner
- Your grandchild or your grandchild's spouse or domestic partner
- Anyone you are related to by blood
- Anyone who is connected to you and has a family relationship

## 4. When does Oregon Paid Family and Medical (OPFML) Leave begin? September 3, 2023

**5. When can employees begin applying for OPFML?**

As of August 14, 2023 applications for future dated leave were accepted. Employees can file early, but benefits will not be issued or calculated before the effective date based on The Standard's rules.

**6. Is OSU participating in the State plan or an equivalent plan?**

OSU has decided to provide an equivalent plan. OSU's equivalent plan will follow the same rules, but payments will be administered through The Standard.

**7. Why is OSU providing an equivalent plan?**

Choosing an equivalent plan allowed required contributions for employees and employers to be delayed to September of 2023 instead of starting in January of 2023. Funding and response times for paid family leave plans in other states resulted in extreme payment delays and exhaustion of pooled state funds. OSU is seeking to avoid these challenges for employees through an equivalent plan

**8. How do OSU employees apply for OPFML?**

**Step 1: Request a protected leave case in EmpCenter (for all leave types, including OPFML) -**

The official process for initiating **ALL TYPES of protected leave** is via EmpCenter request.

*You can request protected leave through EmpCenter by:*

-Logging into My Time website located at: <https://mytime.oregonstate.edu/>

-Click My Time Off

-Click Create new request

-Select Absences for FMLA, OFLA and military leave

-Answer the questions and submit the request

**Step 2: Call The Standard to initiate OPFML claim (if you live and/or physically work in**

**Oregon):** Employees will call The Standard's phone number and speaking with a claims representative. **They can be reached at: 1-800-242-1888 | Policy #762197.** Employees will go through an intake process with The Standard. The Standard will send e-mail or paper forms to complete the process. Online application is not an option currently.

Hours of operation for the claim intake service center at The Standard are:

*- Monday-Friday 5am-5pm, Pacific Time.*

**\*Please note:** Due to the volume of claims we receive, the OSU Protected Leave office will only be completing the electronic employer statements sent directly from The Standard. Please do not send your supervisor or our office the paper employer statement to complete. You can simply annotate on that portion of the form "Employer will complete electronic Employer Statement request".

**Step 3: Complete this [form](#) to let OSU know how you wish to be paid from OSU during your OPFML claim.** Please do not complete this form if you do not live and/or physically work in Oregon – you will be sent next steps based upon your specific job location.

**9. When I report my claim to The Standard, what information will I need to provide?**

- Employer Name: Oregon State University
- Group Policy Number: 762197
- Name & Social Security Number
- Last day you were at work or plan to work
- Reason for leave
- Estimated duration of your leave

**10. How long with claim determinations take?**

Once all pieces of information are received by The Standard (employee claim documents, employer statement, leave documentation from employee or physician if medical leave), the claim is assigned, with a decision rendered within 5 business days.

**11. How will payments work?**

Paper checks will be mailed on a weekly basis. Because of the typically short timeframes, direct deposit is not an option. Payments for intermittent leaves differ. Intermittent approved leave dates are paid as an employee reports time. Leave is must be taken in a minimum of full day increments. Benefits are issued within 3 business days of the payable date. Employees can supplement their OPFML benefit with other accrued paid leave.

**12. Who should I call with questions about my OFML claim?**

If you have already filed an OPFML claim, please call **The Standard at: 1-800-242-1888**

**13. Who is responsible for notifying my employer of my absence?**

It is your responsibility to keep your timesheets up-to-date while you are on any protected leave claim and notify your supervisor of your absence.

**14. How will The Standard and OSU coordinate pay if employees are using accrued leave?**

Since Oregon PFML payments happen once a week, OSU pays once a month and timesheets are processed before the end of the month employees may experience pay adjustments in the proceeding months as payments are reconciled and leave is topped off.

If the employee has not indicated that they desire to supplement their OPFML payments with accrued leave by they have been paid for their first month on leave, the default will be LWOP from OSU for the duration of their OPFML or STD claim.

**15. Can employees choose not to supplement with accrued leave?**

Yes, employees can make this choice. If employees choose not to use accrued leave or they do not use accrued leave to supplement by default, they will need to work with the Employee Benefits team in University Human Resources to make arrangements to self-pay their portion of their health care benefits each month. They can be reached at 541-737-2805 or [employee.pebbbenefits@oregonstate.edu](mailto:employee.pebbbenefits@oregonstate.edu).

All determinations of how the employee would like to be paid will be done by employee completion of this [form](#).

**16. Is there a calculator I can use to see what my weekly benefit amount will be?**

The Standard has provided a [calculator](#) for employees to estimate their benefit payment amount.

**17. What are the benefits of having both OPFML & Short-Term Disability (STD) coverage?**

- If you plan to use more than 12 weeks of short-term leave per year
- If you live out of state and need STD coverage
- If you earn more than 10,000 per month

Starting September 2023, your STD premiums will be reduced by about 80% automatically.

**18. How will OPFML be funded?**

The payroll tax rate matches the State plan as a percentage of wages and withheld through payroll.

- The rate for 2023 is 1% of total wages.
- The rate is jointly funded by the Employee and OSU.
  - Employee pays 60% of the 1% tax
  - OSU pays 40% of the 1% tax
  - **Please note:** The employer tax share is not centrally funded.
- For example, if an employee's gross pay totals \$1,000 dollars, then the tax is 1% of the \$1,000, which means the employee pays \$6, or 60% of the tax rate, and OSU pays \$4, or 40%.
- If an employee elects to supplement the OPFML benefits with their OSU accrued leave, the supplemented hours would go through the normal payroll process. There is not a central fund for the use of accrued leaves and would follow the normal labor distribution pattern that is in place for that employee.

**19. How can I learn more about OPFML?**

The Standard partnered with OSU to provide training in September 2023. We have provided the recorded information session below:

- [Oregon Paid Family & Medical Leave presented by The Standard](#) (recorded 9/20/23)

**These additional resources provide information about OPFML:**

- [OSU's Protected Leave Website](#)
- [FAQ – How to File an OPFML Claim with The Standard](#)
- [OPFML Notice for OSU Employees](#)
- [OSU's Protected Leave Handbook](#)
- [Paid Leave Oregon Brochure](#)

Employees may also contact OSU's Protected Leave Officers at: [medical.leave@oregonstate.edu](mailto:medical.leave@oregonstate.edu) or 541.737.5946 with additional questions.