

MATERNITY LEAVE

It is our policy to treat pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions according to the leave requirements outlined in the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) and the Pregnancy Discrimination Act. The County also complies with all applicable local and state laws, in spirit as well as in specific detail.

Should any provision of this policy be found to be inconsistent with an applicable legal requirement, the law shall prevail. All other provisions of this policy that are consistent with the law will remain in effect.

Employees who are granted a leave of absence under FMLA for maternity leave will be entitled to all appropriate benefits, including sixteen (16) weeks of unpaid leave, continued payment of medical benefits, etc. Pregnant employees are expected to review this policy with the department head soon after they become aware of their pregnancy. To be eligible for this leave, the employee must give at least three (3) months advance notice, except in cases of medical emergency.

In order to qualify for a maternity leave, we ask that employees make such a request in writing to their supervisors within the first three months of the pregnancy. Their personal physician's certification of their condition, plus the expected date of delivery, must be included in the written request. With the doctor's approval, employees may continue to work up to their expected delivery date, depending upon their medical circumstances and the nature of their jobs.

In case an employee is physically unable to perform her regular job duties at any time during her pregnancy, either she or her supervisor may request that she be placed on maternity leave. The employee must give an advance notice of a minimum of two (2) days to her supervisor of her condition, along with a statement from her physician attesting to her medical condition.

At no time will a maternity leave of absence be required of an employee. If a pregnant employee is unable to perform the duties of her position in a safe and/or efficient manner, the employee may be involuntarily placed on sick leave. In no instance will an employee be involuntarily terminated because of pregnancy.

The return to active employment should be no sooner than considered medically safe by a physician. It may sometimes be necessary to consult with an employee's physician regarding any question of medical propriety that may arise. After the maximum legal leave period is exhausted, an extension may be granted if a medical condition exists that is substantiated by a physician and approved by the County doctor.

The County will return the employee who meets stated conditions in conjunction with federal and state law to the same or equivalent job she had prior to her pregnancy. We cannot guarantee the exact same job; however, the employee will suffer no loss in employment status.

The maximum length of pregnancy leave allowed is sixteen (16) weeks. If the employee needs a longer leave due to medical complications, the employee should notify her supervisor as soon as possible. The additional leave will be treated the same as any other medical or disability leave.

To return to work, employees must have a doctor's verification.

Maternity leaves of absence are without pay unless the employee has sick or annual accumulated leave and may be granted for a period not to exceed sixteen (16) weeks. An employee may not accept other employment while on maternity leave.

Employees must return to their job with the appropriate release and approval of their personal physician no more than sixteen (16) weeks after FMLA begins. After this period, an extension may be granted if medical conditions exist that are substantiated by their physicians. This extension ends the maternity leave and becomes a leave of absence.