



## Reporting a Family Medical Leave Claim:

1. Call your supervisor to report your absence. Failure to contact your supervisor may result in a policy violation.
2. Call CareWorks Absence Management, toll-free, at 1-888-436-9530. Failure to contact CareWorks Absence Management may result in a delay or denial of your claim.
3. Complete and return information provided to you as soon as possible.



Our **Employee Portal** provides a convenient and secure site for you to view your leave and absence information. Any time of day or night, you'll have quick access to all your documents, approvals, and how much time you have available for your leaves.

Please visit us at <https://timeoff.careworksabsence.com> to create your secure account or call our customer service team at **1-888-436-9530**.

- Self Registration • Interactive Messaging with Representative
  - Real Time Claim Status • View all Documentation
  - Displays Hours Available for all Leave Types
    - Tracks Multiple Leaves Simultaneously
    - FAQ Support • Utilization Calendar

# Follow these three easy steps when filing an FMLA claim:

1

**Call your supervisor to report your absence.**

Failure to contact your supervisor may result in a policy violation.

2

**Call CareWorks Absence Management, toll-free, at 1-888-436-9530.**

Failure to contact CareWorks Absence Management may result in a delay or denial of your claim.

3

**Complete and return information provided to you as soon as possible.**



## CareWorks Absence Management

5555 Glendon Court  
Dublin, Ohio 43016  
P.O. Box 182808

Columbus, Ohio 43218-2808

**1-888-436-9530**

Fax 1-888-436-9535

### EMPLOYEE PORTAL

Please visit us at  
<https://timeoff.careworksabsence.com>  
to create your secure account or  
call our customer service team at  
**1-888-436-9530.**



## Employee's Guide to Reporting a Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) Claim

Administered by



1-888-436-9530

## Your FMLA Benefits

As an employee, you may be entitled to a medical leave of absence under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

Your eligibility for FMLA leave is based upon certain guidelines and must be certified by your doctor. FMLA leave provides job protection should the need for you to take a leave of absence arise.

**Employees are required to notify their employer of the need for FMLA leave due to:**

- Your own serious health condition that prevents you from being able to perform your job.
- Your spouse, child or parent's serious health condition preventing you from being able to perform your job.
- The birth or adoption of your child.
- Care of a spouse, child, parent or next of kin with a serious injury or illness incurred or exacerbated within 5 years of active duty in the Armed Forces.
- Qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that a spouse, child or parent is on active duty in the Armed Forces or is deployed to a foreign country.

If the need for medical leave is foreseeable, for example, if you know you'll miss work due to scheduled surgery, please notify CareWorks Absence Management 30 days in advance.

If the need is unforeseeable, please notify CareWorks Absence Management within 2 days of the date you become aware of the need for leave.

## Who Qualifies for FMLA?

- Employees who have been employed with **Fairfield County** for 12 months or more AND
- Have worked 1,250 hours preceding the date of requested leave AND
- Have Available FMLA hours AND
- Have a Qualifying condition/reason certified by a health care provider.

## What if I am not sure if I have a qualifying condition?

If you are not certain your situation would qualify, here are some general guidelines on when you should contact CareWorks Absence Management regarding FMLA:

- Having an absence of more than 3 days for medical reasons and/or family care.
- Continued absences for the same reason and/or condition.
- Continued absences for a qualifying family member.
- Multiple doctor visits and/or treatment.

## Reporting Your Absence

If you become disabled from work or if there is a need for family leave, filing a claim for Family Medical Leave (FML) is as simple as one toll-free phone call, 24 hours per day, 7 days a week to:

**1-888-436-9530**

**CareWorks Absence Management's intake specialists will ask you questions such as:**

- What is your illness or injury?
- How long do you expect to be off work?
- What is the name of your doctor?

You will also be asked to sign and date the authorization to release medical information for your claim and give it to your doctor.

You will receive a packet of information you will need to complete and return to CareWorks Absence Management.

Your leave will not be approved until the information is received. Returning the information as quickly as possible will expedite your claim.

## The Claim Process

Once your claim is reported, CareWorks Absence Management will follow up with your Human Resources department to ensure timely and accurate processing.

A CareWorks Absence Management claim representative will maintain contact with you while on medical leave and assist you throughout the process.

A Nurse Case Manager may also contact you to assist in your return to work. You can expect that your claim will be handled professionally and confidentially.



# Family and Medical Leave Absence Program

Follow these three easy steps when filing a  
Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) claim:

**1**

Call your supervisor to report your absence.

*Failure to do so may result in a policy violation.*

**2**

Contact CareWorks Absence Management, toll free, at  
1-888-436-9530 immediately following step 1.

*Failure to contact CareWorks Absence Management  
may result in a delay or denial of your claim.*

**3**

Complete and return information provided  
to you as soon as possible.

**Please note, FMLA will run concurrent  
with workers' compensation, sick time  
and vacation time per county policy.**



**1-888-436-9530**

FMLA Services Administered by CareWorks Absence Management.



## Questions & Answers on Family Medical Leave Administration and CareWorks Absence Management

### 1. Do I have to call CareWorks Absence Management each time I am absent?

If you are on approved **INTERMITTENT Family Medical Leave**, you are expected to call CareWorks Absence Management each time you are absent for approved intermittent FML.

If you are or expect to be absent for more than **3 days due to an FML qualifying reason, YES**, you must contact CareWorks Absence Management as soon as you know of the absence. Once you are approved for a defined period of FML, you need not call in unless the expected duration of your approved leave changes.

If you are absent from your job for reasons not related to FML (i.e. child care issues {non-military related}, car won't start, or a onetime brief illness that does not qualify for FML) you are not required to call CareWorks Absence Management. When in doubt, please call CareWorks Absence Management and they will instruct you appropriately.

### 2. What if I do not call CareWorks Absence Management?

If you do not contact CareWorks Absence Management to report your qualified FML absence, you may experience a delay or denial of your protections under the FMLA. Approval of Sick Leave does not initiate an approved FML.

### 3. Should I still call my supervisor if I am unexpectedly absent from my job?

Yes, any time you are or expect to be absent from your job, you still need to call your supervisor so that your time off is properly accounted for and your department can make other arrangements for your job duties.

### 4. I understand my own physician provides medical certification to substantiate my FML. Can CareWorks Absence Management override my physician's statement?

CareWorks Absence Management will not override your personal physician's statement; however, they may ask your physician for additional or clarifying information in order to approve leave time based on the qualifying condition(s).

### 5. Whose responsibility is it to ensure all the paperwork is completed?

It is ultimately your (the employee's) responsibility to make sure the paperwork is completed by your health care provider and returned to CareWorks Absence Management prior to the applicable deadline.

### 6. I received a medical release form in my CareWorks Absence Management packet. Do I need to sign this form in order for my leave to be approved?

Signing the provided medical release will assist CareWorks Absence Management in obtaining the necessary medical information from your provider to make a determination on a claim with little or no delay. Signing the release is optional to you and is intended to expedite the leave approval process.

## 7. Who do I return the completed medical certification forms to?

Either you or your health care provider should return forms to CareWorks Absence Management via mail or fax. Medical forms are not to be returned to Human Resources or your supervisor.

## 8. Do I have to submit a doctor's note each time I take intermittent FML?

No, unless you exceed the frequency and duration as previously approved by CareWorks Absence Management. Should you exceed the frequency and duration of leave or the circumstances of your leave changes, you may be asked to provide additional medical certification.

## 9. Can I take FMLA in less than whole day increments?

Yes, FMLA can be taken in whole day, half day, hours or minutes.

## 10. How often do I have to re-certify for a lifelong condition?

Generally, every 6 months unless the circumstances surrounding your need for leave changes (i.e. you exceed the frequency and duration previously certified by your health care provider).

## 11. Why has Fairfield County decided to outsource the administration of Family Medical Leave?

- To assure compliance with increasingly complex federal regulations and tracking requirements.
- To better manage Fairfield County's FML policy with a more efficient and streamlined process.
- To assure the confidentiality and integrity of the medical information necessary for the administration of FMLA.
- To assure employees are returned to their job duties promptly and with full release from their physician if applicable.

## 12. What are the hours we can call CareWorks Absence Management?

You can call CareWorks Absence Management 24 hours a day, 7 days a week (1-888-436-9530). During CareWorks Absence Management's call center hours of 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. EST weekdays, you will speak to a leave application intake representative. After hours and on weekends, you have the opportunity to leave a voicemail message and expect a return call within one business day or you can be transferred to CareWorks Absence Management's answering service that will take your call and instruct the leave intake representative to return your call within one business day.

## 13. Where is CareWorks Absence Management located?

CareWorks Absence Management's headquarters are located in Dublin, Ohio, a suburb of Columbus. All calls will be answered by someone in Ohio.

## 14. Is my medical information secure with CareWorks Absence Management?

Yes, CareWorks Absence Management is HIPAA compliant and will maintain the privacy of your medical information. In addition, CareWorks Absence Management does not have access to your entire medical record. They only request supporting medical information to substantiate the reason(s) for which your physician has indicated you need to be absent from your job and/or work a reduced work schedule or transitional duty.

## 15. Who do I contact with questions about my FML application or whether I am qualified for FML?

Contact CareWorks Absence Management at 1-888-436-9530. Our Employee Portal provides you with secure access to all your leave documents and information. Visit <https://timeoff.careworksabsence.com> to register for access or call our customer service team at 1-888-436-9530.



# EMPLOYEE RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER THE FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

## Basic Leave Entitlement

FMLA requires covered employers to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to eligible employees for the following reasons:

- for incapacity due to pregnancy, prenatal medical care or child birth;
- to care for the employee's child after birth, or placement for adoption or foster care;
- to care for the employee's spouse, son, daughter or parent, who has a serious health condition; or
- for a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employee's job.

## Military Family Leave Entitlements

Eligible employees whose spouse, son, daughter or parent is on covered active duty or call to covered active duty status may use their 12-week leave entitlement to address certain qualifying exigencies. Qualifying exigencies may include attending certain military events, arranging for alternative childcare, addressing certain financial and legal arrangements, attending certain counseling sessions, and attending post-deployment reintegration briefings.

FMLA also includes a special leave entitlement that permits eligible employees to take up to 26 weeks of leave to care for a covered servicemember during a single 12-month period. A covered servicemember is: (1) a current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation or therapy, is otherwise in outpatient status, or is otherwise on the temporary disability retired list, for a serious injury or illness\*; or (2) a veteran who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable at any time during the five-year period prior to the first date the eligible employee takes FMLA leave to care for the covered veteran, and who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy for a serious injury or illness.\*

**\*The FMLA definitions of "serious injury or illness" for current servicemembers and veterans are distinct from the FMLA definition of "serious health condition".**

## Benefits and Protections

During FMLA leave, the employer must maintain the employee's health coverage under any "group health plan" on the same terms as if the employee had continued to work. Upon return from FMLA leave, most employees must be restored to their original or equivalent positions with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms.

Use of FMLA leave cannot result in the loss of any employment benefit that accrued prior to the start of an employee's leave.

## Eligibility Requirements

Employees are eligible if they have worked for a covered employer for at least 12 months, have 1,250 hours of service in the previous 12 months\*, and if at least 50 employees are employed by the employer within 75 miles.

**\*Special hours of service eligibility requirements apply to airline flight crew employees.**

## Definition of Serious Health Condition

A serious health condition is an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves either an overnight stay in a medical care facility, or continuing treatment by a health care provider for a condition that either prevents the employee from performing the functions of the employee's job, or prevents the qualified family member from participating in school or other daily activities.

Subject to certain conditions, the continuing treatment requirement may be met by a period of incapacity of more than 3 consecutive calendar days combined with at least two visits to a health care provider or one visit and

a regimen of continuing treatment, or incapacity due to pregnancy, or incapacity due to a chronic condition. Other conditions may meet the definition of continuing treatment.

## Use of Leave

An employee does not need to use this leave entitlement in one block. Leave can be taken intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule when medically necessary. Employees must make reasonable efforts to schedule leave for planned medical treatment so as not to unduly disrupt the employer's operations. Leave due to qualifying exigencies may also be taken on an intermittent basis.

## Substitution of Paid Leave for Unpaid Leave

Employees may choose or employers may require use of accrued paid leave while taking FMLA leave. In order to use paid leave for FMLA leave, employees must comply with the employer's normal paid leave policies.

## Employee Responsibilities

Employees must provide 30 days advance notice of the need to take FMLA leave when the need is foreseeable. When 30 days notice is not possible, the employee must provide notice as soon as practicable and generally must comply with an employer's normal call-in procedures.

Employees must provide sufficient information for the employer to determine if the leave may qualify for FMLA protection and the anticipated timing and duration of the leave. Sufficient information may include that the employee is unable to perform job functions, the family member is unable to perform daily activities, the need for hospitalization or continuing treatment by a health care provider, or circumstances supporting the need for military family leave. Employees also must inform the employer if the requested leave is for a reason for which FMLA leave was previously taken or certified. Employees also may be required to provide a certification and periodic recertification supporting the need for leave.

## Employer Responsibilities

Covered employers must inform employees requesting leave whether they are eligible under FMLA. If they are, the notice must specify any additional information required as well as the employees' rights and responsibilities. If they are not eligible, the employer must provide a reason for the ineligibility.

Covered employers must inform employees if leave will be designated as FMLA-protected and the amount of leave counted against the employee's leave entitlement. If the employer determines that the leave is not FMLA-protected, the employer must notify the employee.

## Unlawful Acts by Employers

FMLA makes it unlawful for any employer to:

- interfere with, restrain, or deny the exercise of any right provided under FMLA; and
- discharge or discriminate against any person for opposing any practice made unlawful by FMLA or for involvement in any proceeding under or relating to FMLA.

## Enforcement

An employee may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Labor or may bring a private lawsuit against an employer.

FMLA does not affect any Federal or State law prohibiting discrimination, or supersede any State or local law or collective bargaining agreement which provides greater family or medical leave rights.

**FMLA section 109 (29 U.S.C. § 2619) requires FMLA covered employers to post the text of this notice. Regulation 29 C.F.R. § 825.300(a) may require additional disclosures.**



For additional information:  
1-866-4US-WAGE (1-866-487-9243) TTY: 1-877-889-5627  
[WWW.WAGEHOUR.DOL.GOV](http://WWW.WAGEHOUR.DOL.GOV)

U.S. Department of Labor | Wage and Hour Division



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