

Navigate

Leave of Absence - FMLA (Family and Medical)

This United States policy allows you to take time off when you are unable to work because of your own serious health condition or to care for your child, parent, spouse, or domestic partner who has a serious health condition. You may also take time off for the birth of your child, for your adoption of a child or for the placement of a foster child in your home.

Applies To

This policy applies to employees in the United States who are:

- Exempt
- Non-exempt
- Full-time
- Part-time

In addition, the employee must:

- Have been employed for at least 12 months with UnitedHealth Group and
- Have worked at least 1250 hours in the 12-month period before the first day of absence for the leave.
 - Example: An employee would like to request an FMLA leave with a first day of absence of 6/1/2013. In order to meet eligibility requirements the employee must have been employed with the company for at least 12 months and also needs to have worked 1250 hours for the 12 month period leading up to 6/1/2013. In this example 1250 hours or more must have been worked between 6/1/2012-5/31/2013.

Overview

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) allows you (if you are eligible) to take up to a total of 12 workweeks of unpaid leave during a rolling 12-month period, measured backward from the first day you take any FMLA leave for any of the following reasons:

- for the birth and care of your newborn child

- FMLA time, when taken for your own recovery after the birth of a new born child and subsequent bonding or a combination of the two will be referred to by Sedgwick as "Maternity Leave". There is not a separate "Maternity Leave" policy for UnitedHealth Group.
- If you do not qualify for FMLA, please see the Parental Bonding Leave page for your options for leave for Maternity.
- for the placement of a foster child in your home
- for the adoption of your child
- for your own [serious health condition](#)
- to care for your [eligible family member](#) (child, parent or spouse) who has a serious health condition
- because of any qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that your spouse, son, daughter, or parent is on active duty (or has been notified of an impending call or order to active duty) in the Armed Forces in support of a contingency operation.

Note: FMLA leave may not be taken intermittently for the birth of a child, adoption of a child, or placement of a foster child.

Note: If you are an eligible employee who is the spouse, son, daughter, parent or next of kin of an Armed Forces service member or veteran with a qualifying serious injury or illness incurred during military service, different rules apply to your requested FMLA leave. Next of kin is defined as the nearest blood relative of that individual. See [Injured Service Member Family Leave](#) for more information.

You may also request leave to care for your eligible [domestic partner](#) (same sex or opposite sex) due to his or her serious health condition to care for your domestic partner's eligible child, for the birth of your domestic partner's child, or for your domestic partner's adoption of an eligible child ("domestic partner leave"). If you qualify for FMLA leave for the same event, you will not be eligible for additional domestic partner leave.

Requesting A Leave

You must provide at least 30 days of advance notice to your manager of the need to take FMLA Leave when the need is foreseeable. When it is not possible to give such notice, such as a premature birth or unexpected medical illness, the notice should be given as soon as practicable. After notifying your manager of your planned leave, you must request leave and receive approval from Sedgwick. You must notify [Sedgwick](#) of your need to take FMLA no more than 30 days prior to your first day of absence if your need for leave is foreseeable or within 2 business days following your first day of absence.

To be considered for the leave you must complete all of the following steps:

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- Call Sedgwick at 1-866-697-8122 from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. CT Monday-Friday, or
- Initiate your claim online through the mySedgwick online tool
- Complete and return the required medical certification and any other paperwork provided by Sedgwick by the deadline provided.
- See [Employee Actions for FMLA](#) for a step-by-step checklist.
- See the [Sedgwick Self Service Flyer](#) for more information on reporting and accessing your claim.

After you submit your request for leave, Sedgwick will communicate with you about the status of your request by phone or email, and/or U.S. mail. Sedgwick will also notify your manager by e-mail that you have requested leave. Once your leave has been requested through Sedgwick you can check the status of your request online using mySedgwick (formerly viaOne Express).

- [mySedgwick online tool](#)
- mySedgwick Employee Reference Guide

Documentation Supporting Your Need For Leave

If you are requesting the leave for your own serious health condition or to care for your spouse, domestic partner, child or parent who has a serious health condition, medical certification is required for the entire period you are unable to work. United Health Group also requires periodic reports regarding your status and intent to return to work and may also require periodic recertification of the need for leave.

You are responsible for ensuring that the attending [health care provider](#) completes and returns the appropriate form. The health care provider's certification must include:

- the need for leave based on the criteria for a "serious health condition"
- the probable duration of the serious health condition
- the frequency of expected absences if you need intermittent leave (taking leave in blocks of time instead of all at once)

The health care provider's certification of a serious health condition should be returned to Sedgwick as soon as possible after you request a leave. The certification must be returned no later than 20 calendar days after Sedgwick requests the certification from you.

UnitedHealth Group reserves the right to require you to be seen by a health care provider chosen by UnitedHealth Group for the purpose of obtaining a second medical opinion. UnitedHealth Group will pay the cost of obtaining the second opinion. If the second opinion does not confirm the need for the requested leave, UnitedHealth Group may require you to be seen by a third health care professional, at UnitedHealth Group's expense, for a third opinion. The third health care professional must be approved jointly by you and UnitedHealth Group. The third opinion will be final and binding.

If you are requesting leave for a reason other than a serious health condition (such as adoption of a child or to bond with a newborn child, or because of any circumstance related to your qualified family member's active duty or call to active duty in the Armed Forces), UnitedHealth Group may request documentation regarding the need for leave.

Length And Timing Of Your Leave

If your leave is for the birth, adoption or foster care placement of a child, the leave must conclude within 12 months after the birth or placement. If you and your spouse both work for UnitedHealth Group, the length of your leave is limited in certain situations. See "[Couples working for the same company](#)".

If your leave is for your own or a family member's serious health condition, the length of your leave approval will be based on the "probable duration" certified by the attending health care professional (up to 12 weeks). For example, if your child has surgery and the attending physician certifies that the child will need your care and assistance for two weeks, your leave will be approved for two weeks.

The length of time approved can be extended if circumstances change. If you will not be able to return to work on your approved return-to-work date, you must contact Sedgwick before that date to request an extension. Additional certification will be required. If you do not return to work at the end of your approved leave, and do not request an extension in a timely manner, you may be terminated for job abandonment.

If you work 40 hours per week, you may use up to 480 hours of FMLA leave in a rolling 12-month period measured backward from the date you take any leave. This amount is prorated for employees who work less than 40 hours per week. For example, if you work 32 hours per week, you may use up to 384 hours in a rolling 12-month period.

UnitedHealth Group reserves the right to designate an absence as FMLA and count it as part of your leave entitlement during a rolling 12-month period. For example, if

it as part of your leave entitlement during a rolling 12-month period. For example, if you were absent because of bronchitis that developed into bronchial pneumonia and caused you to miss many days of work, the entire absence may be counted as FMLA leave.

If you are unable to return to work when your period of federally mandated job-protected leave ends, you may seek additional leave if you qualify under another UnitedHealth Group Leave policy.

Taking Intermittent Leave

Depending on the circumstances, you may be able to take FMLA intermittently (in blocks of time). See [Taking Intermittent Leave](#).

Job Status

If you return to work within the federally mandated job-protected time frame, you can expect to return to your same or an equivalent position. However, the FMLA does not give you more job protection than employees who are not on leave. For example, if your position were eliminated while you were on an FMLA leave because of job elimination, you would not be entitled to job restoration at the end of the FMLA leave. Another example is if a shift were eliminated or overtime decreased, you would not be entitled to return to work during that shift or work the original overtime hours.

Once your leave expires, your job protection ends unless a longer period of leave is required by law. If job protection ends, and a longer period of leave is not required by law, UnitedHealth Group may fill your job on a regular, full-time basis.

In the event an employee's request for a leave of absence is not approved, any time away from work will be considered an unplanned absence(s) and the [Attendance Policy](#) may apply. The first five (5) days away from work will count as one (1) unplanned absence and each subsequent day will count as one (1) additional unplanned absence.

Impact On Pay

FMLA and domestic partner leave are unpaid. However, you may be approved for benefits which will run concurrently with your approved leave, such as:

- [Short Term Disability \(STD\) Benefits](#)
- [Workers' Compensation Benefits](#)
- [Paid Parental Leave](#)

- Use of your paid time away from work balances. See other policies regarding

Other Pay While on Leave of Absence:

- [PTO While on Leave of Absence](#)
- [Disability Reserve Bank](#)
- [PTO Donation Policy](#)
- [Holiday Pay While on a Leave of Absence](#)

If your FMLA leave also meets the criteria of a [state disability](#) benefit program or [state leave law](#), your FMLA will run concurrently with leave covered by the state program or law as applicable by law. New York employees may be eligible for the [New York Paid Family Leave](#).

System Access While On Leave

If you are on a continuous leave of absence, please be aware that your access to secured UnitedHealth Group systems may be revoked for the duration of your leave.

Access to these systems will be restored within two business days of the date you report your return to work to Sedgwick. Employees are able to report their planned return to work date to Sedgwick up to 5 business days in advance.

System access will not be impacted if you are on an intermittent leave of absence.

Note: Your access to The Hub (hub.unitedhealthgroup.com) and employee benefit websites (benefitsinfo.uhg.com) will not be impacted. These websites may be accessed at any time via the internet.

Corporate Credit Card Access While On Leave

If you are on a continuous leave of absence, please be aware that your access to any UnitedHealth Group corporate credit card may be revoked for the duration of your leave. This includes all salary grades and both exempt and non-exempt employees. Access to the card will be restored upon your return to work.

Corporate credit card access will not be impacted if you are on an intermittent leave of absence.

For questions about corporate credit card access please contact UHGCopCard@uhc.com.

Returning To Work

You must return to work no later than your first scheduled workday after the date

You must return to work no later than your first scheduled workday after the date through which your leave was approved, unless you have requested and/or received approval for an extension. If you are ready to return to work sooner than your approved return-to-work date, contact Sedgwick and your manager. **UnitedHealth Group does not require a medical release from your doctor in order to return to work.**

In general, you should contact your manager and Sedgwick at least one week before you return to work, so that your manager can prepare.

If your performance review date occurred during your leave, your performance review will take place after you return to work.

If you will not be able to return to work on your approved return-to-work date, you must contact Sedgwick before that date.

If you do not return to work on your approved return-to-work date and you don't contact Sedgwick, or you don't provide requested documentation to support the need for continued leave, your employment may be terminated.

If you will require an accommodation, such as modifications to your job or schedule to enable you to return to work, you must contact Sedgwick to request an accommodation. Sedgwick will work with UnitedHealth Group and your manager to determine whether an accommodation can be made.

Contacts

For more information, contact Sedgwick at 1-866-697-8122, Monday – Friday 7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. Central Time.

For questions about company policies, medical accommodations, timesheet entry and system access, refer to the information on The Hub or [contact HRdirect](#).

Additional Resources

- [Frequently Asked Questions regarding FMLA](#)
- [Returning from Leave – Time and Attendance Access](#)
- [Release of Medical Information](#)
- [Release of Medical Information \(FMLA\)](#)
- [Benefits Summary for Leave of Absence and Disability](#)
- [OptumCare Benefits Summary for Leave of Absence and Disability](#)
- [Sedgwick Self Service Flyer](#)

Related Policies:

- [Benefits while on a Leave of Absence](#)
- [Other State and Municipal Leaves](#)
- [Reasonable Accommodation Policy](#)
- [Time and Attendance Instructions while on Leave](#)

Sedgwick Instructional Videos:

- When you file a claim
 - When you receive your initial packet
 - When your claim is approved
 - Returning to work
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Manager Notes

Additional information can be found in Manager Center under [Leaves & Pay](#), including:

- Leader's Guide to Supporting a Leave in Four Steps
- Leader's Guide to Supporting a Parental Leave in Four Steps

Updated: Dec 30, 2019