

Know Your Rights in the District of Columbia

Work Leave for Family or Medical Purposes:

The District of Columbia Family and Medical Leave Act (DCFMLA) requires employers with 20 or more employees to provide eligible employees with 16 weeks of family leave and 16 weeks of medical leave during a 24-month period. However, the law does not require employers to specifically pay for leave under DCFMLA, except that employees may use accrued leave (i.e., sick, annual, PTO, etc.) and where applicable, for private sector, payment under the Universal Paid Leave Act, and for DC government employees, payment under the Paid Family Leave Act.

Family Leave

- Eligible circumstances for family leave under DCFMLA include the birth of a child, adopting a child, or caring for a child in foster care. Caring for a seriously ill family member is also eligible for family leave.

Medical Leave

- Eligible circumstances for medical leave under DCFMLA includes recovering from a serious illness rendering the employee unable to work.

Leave under DCFMLA may be taken in blocks of time, intermittently, and in certain circumstances, at a reduced schedule.

The employer may require medical certification and reasonable prior notice when applicable.

Employee Eligibility

An employee is eligible under the Act if she or he has been employed by the employer for at least 12 consecutive or non-consecutive months in the seven years immediately preceding the start of the family or medical leave, and worked at least 1,000 hours during these 12 months¹.

The District government is considered a single employer. The above eligibility requirements can be met by considering employment at more than one District agency.

Employer Posting Requirements

The employer must post and maintain this notice in a conspicuous place. An employer that willfully fails to post this notice may be ordered to pay a fine of up to \$100 for each day the employer fails to post the notice.

¹ For family or medical leave that began prior to November 13, 2021, an employee is eligible under the Act if she or he was employed by the employer for at least one year without a break in service, and worked at least 1,000 hours during the 12 month period immediately preceding the requested leave. The one year of service requirement did not need to have immediately preceded the request for leave.

Filing a Complaint of a Violation

If you believe an employer has wrongfully denied you family or medical leave, or retaliated against you under this statute, you can file a complaint within one year of the incident with the Office of Human Rights (OHR). To file a complaint, visit:

- Online at ohr.dc.gov; or
- In-Person at 441 4th Street NW, Suite 570N, Washington, DC 20001.

Questions about the OHR process can also be answered by phone at (202) 727-4559