



Paid Parental Leave (PPL) Reference Guide

To request PPL, complete the *Paid Parental Leave (PPL) Request Form* and return it to the Office of Human Resources (OHR). If you have any questions, contact the OHR Time/Leave Unit at Leave@SCDPS.gov.

What is PPL?

Paid Parental Leave (PPL) is a supplemental paid leave benefit granted by the State of SC to eligible parents. It grants eligible state employees paid leave following qualifying events without requiring them to draw from their accrued leave banks or take unpaid leave. The state's PPL law - originally implemented effective October 1, 2022 - was amended effective October 1, 2026, to expand eligibility and entitlements. Qualifying events which occurred prior to October 1, 2026, remain subject to the previous provisions of the law.

Who is eligible for PPL?

- Any State of SC employee occupying any portion of a full-time equivalent (FTE) position **or**
- Any State of SC employee occupying a temporary grant or time-limited project position which is eligible to earn annual leave.

What events qualify for PPL?

To qualify for PPL, an eligible employee must experience a qualifying event during their State of SC employment. Qualifying events include:

- birth or stillbirth of a biological child; per SC Code § 44-63-55, stillbirth is defined as: "delivery resulting in a fetal death of twenty completed weeks of gestation or more or a weight of three hundred fifty grams or more". This excludes instances which are medically regarded as miscarriage.
- adoption of a child.
- fostering of a child in state custody.

How much PPL is allotted?

Leave entitlements are calculated based on the eligible employee's average workweek (though they may be scheduled for longer daily shifts):

Assigned Workweek	Average Workday	PPL Entitlement
37.5 hours/week <u>or</u> 75 hours every 2 weeks	7.5	4 weeks = 150 hours 6 weeks = 225 hours
40 hours/week <u>or</u> 80 hours every 2 weeks	8	4 weeks = 160 hours 6 weeks = 240 hours
43 hours/week <u>or</u> 86 hours every 2 weeks	8.6	4 weeks = 172 hours 6 weeks = 258 hours



Effective October 1, 2026, PPL is available in the following amounts:

Birth or Stillbirth

- Birthing parent: six (6) continuous weeks of PPL
- Non-birthing parent: four (4) continuous weeks of PPL

Adoption

- Primary parent: six (6) continuous weeks of PPL
- Secondary caregiver / Co-parent: four (4) continuous weeks of PPL

If two eligible state employees request PPL for the same adoption, one parent must be designated as the primary caregiver and the other as the secondary caregiver/co-parent.

Fostering

- All foster parents: four (4) weeks of PPL

For fostering only, eligible employees may elect to take PPL for either one continuous four-week period or in four one-week increments.

When can PPL be taken?

- PPL eligibility begins on the date of the qualifying event and must be taken within 12 months.
- Any unused PPL will be forfeited upon the employee's return to work.
- PPL may be taken only once in any 12-month period. If an employee experiences more than one qualifying event in the same 12-month period, he or she may still be eligible for PPL for the second event.

At what rate will PPL be paid?

Effective October 1, 2026, PPL is paid at the employee's rate of pay at the time the leave is taken.

What documentation do I need to submit for PPL?

- In addition to the *Paid Parental Leave (PPL) Request Form*, the eligible employee must submit one (1) form of supporting documentation within thirty (30) days of starting PPL to verify the qualifying event. Failure to do so may result in denial of PPL. If PPL is denied, any PPL already applied will be replaced with other applicable paid leave from the employee's accrued leave banks or the employee will be placed on leave without pay (LWOP).
- Acceptable forms of documentation are listed in the table below. Supporting documentation is subject to review; OHR may request additional documentation before eligibility for PPL is determined.



Qualifying Event	Required Supporting Documentation (submit one)
BIRTH	• Birth Certificate • Certified DNA Results • Custody Order • Other acceptable written medical documentation which indicates the date of birth and identifies the employee as a parent
STILLBIRTH	• Certificate of Birth Resulting in Stillbirth • Other acceptable written medical documentation which indicates the date of delivery and identifies the employee as a parent
ADOPTION	• Official documentation indicating the date of initial legal placement
FOSTER	• Foster Care Placement Agreement • Custody Order

Please contact the OHR Benefits Unit at OHRBenefits@SCDPS.gov for assistance with adding a child to PEBA benefits.

In addition to PPL, what other types of leave may be used during an absence for parental leave?

Upon receipt of an employee's PPL request form, OHR will send an eligibility notice via email. This notice will indicate what type(s) of leave the employee is eligible to use during their absence for parental leave (including and in addition to the 4 or 6-week PPL entitlement). Employees are not permitted to voluntarily take leave without pay (LWOP) if PPL is available but may choose to apply other paid leave types before using PPL. Approval to use accrued paid leave is at the discretion of the employee's chain of command, and medical certification may be required to approve the use of sick leave.

In most circumstances:

- **Birthing parents** are eligible to use their accrued annual leave, sick leave, compensatory time, and/or holiday compensatory time.
- **Non-birthing parents of a biological child** are eligible to use their accrued annual leave, compensatory time, holiday compensatory time, and/or up to 10 days of sick leave (coded as family sick leave). Use of sick leave to care for a family member is limited to 10 days per calendar year.
- **Adoptive and foster parents** are eligible to use their accrued annual leave, compensatory time, and/or holiday compensatory time. Use of sick leave is not permitted for adoption/bonding purposes alone but may be permitted if the child is actually ill. Use of sick leave to care for a family member is limited to 10 days per calendar year.

Will my PPL be covered under the Family & Medical Leave Act (FMLA)?

Any leave taken in relation to pregnancy, birth, adoption, or fostering of a child qualifies for FMLA protection through 12 months after the birth/placement. If the employee is eligible for FMLA coverage, all parental leave (PPL or otherwise, and regardless of paid/unpaid leave status) will run concurrently with FMLA coverage and will be deducted from the total FMLA coverage entitlement for the calendar year.