

Expanded Military Parental Leave for Service Members

JAN. 10, 2023



WE ARE EXPANDING MILITARY PARENTAL LEAVE FOR SERVICE MEMBERS

FAST FACTS:

- **WHAT IS IT?** The Expanded Military Parental Leave Program builds on the Defense Department's support of military families by streamlining and enhancing parental leave.
- **WHAT DOES IT DO?** The benefit provides 12 weeks of non-chargeable, paid parental leave to service members who welcome a child into their family through birth, adoption or long-term foster care placement. For birth mothers, parental leave is available after completion of any medically necessary convalescent leave.
- **WHAT CHANGES HAVE BEEN MADE?** Primary and secondary caregiver categories are eliminated, as well as the specified category of "maternity convalescent leave," which means birth and nonbirth parents are now eligible for the same amount - 12 weeks - of parental leave. The new policy allows leave to be taken in multiple, non-consecutive increments and adds placement of a minor child for long-term foster care as a qualifying event for parental leave eligibility.
- **WHO IS ELIGIBLE?** Active-duty and reserve service members (on active duty for 12 consecutive months or more) who have a qualifying event on or after December 27, 2022.
- **WHAT ARE THE QUALIFYING EVENTS?** The birth of a child to the service member, adoption of a minor child by the service member or the placement of a minor child with the service member for adoption or long-term foster care.
- **WHAT ABOUT CONVALESCENT LEAVE?** A birth parent may be authorized convalescent leave to recover from childbirth. Convalescent leave is in addition to the standard 12 weeks of parental leave. The amount of convalescent leave will be determined on an individual basis.
- **WHO QUALIFIES TO TRANSITION TO EXPANDED PARENTAL LEAVE FROM MATERNITY CONVALESCENT LEAVE AND/OR CAREGIVER LEAVE?** Service members who welcomed a child into their families through birth or adoption prior to December 27, 2022, and as of that date, still had unused maternity convalescent leave and/or caregiver leave remaining may immediately transition to leave under the new policy.
- **HOW DOES THE TRANSITION WORK?** Service members who qualify to transition from caregiver leave to the new policy are authorized 12 weeks of parental leave minus any used caregiver leave. Service members who qualify to transition from maternity convalescent leave to the new policy are authorized 12 weeks of parental leave when they complete their convalescent leave.

- > **DO I HAVE TO TAKE ALL 12 WEEKS OF LEAVE AT ONCE?** No, eligible parents may request to take leave in multiple increments of at least one week, subject to command approval and mission requirements.

POLICY EXAMPLES:

- > **CAN I HAVE A FEW EXAMPLES OF HOW THE TRANSITION POLICY WORKS?**

EXAMPLE 1	A service member gives birth and begins six weeks of maternity convalescent leave on Dec. 1, 2022, to be followed by six weeks of primary caregiver leave. As of Dec. 27, 2022, the service member has 15 days of convalescent leave and 42 days of primary caregiver leave remaining. In transitioning to the new policy, the service member will remain on convalescent leave until Jan. 11, 2023, then transition to the expanded parental leave, receiving 12 weeks of parental leave.
EXAMPLE 2	A service member began three weeks of secondary caregiver leave under the old policy when their child was born Nov. 27, 2022. The 21 days of leave were used up by Dec. 18. That service member is NOT eligible to transition to parental leave under the new policy.

For details on the expanded Military Parental Leave Program, visit <https://www.esd.whs.mil/DD/DoD-Issuances/DTM> and search "DTM 23-001."