

MEDICAL LEAVE WORKFLOWS

1. PREGNANCY & BONDING WORKFLOW

This is the most common "stacked" leave in California. Unlike other states, California treats pregnancy disability and baby bonding as two separate entitlements.

Phase A: Pregnancy Disability (PDL + FMLA)

- Employee provides notice or a medical note for pregnancy-related disability (typically 4 weeks before due date).
- HR issues a Notice of Eligibility and Rights & Responsibilities (within 5 business days).
- PDL starts. FMLA runs concurrently (at the same time) with PDL. CFRA does not start yet.
- Up to 17.3 weeks (4 months) or until the doctor releases the employee to "Full Duty."

Phase B: Transition to Bonding (CFRA)

- The doctor releases the employee from disability (typically 6-8 weeks post-partum).
- PDL and FMLA end. HR designates the start of CFRA Bonding Leave.
- 12 weeks of CFRA. Because CFRA was "paused" during the disability phase, the employee has a fresh 12-week block for bonding.
- **Note:** *Parental/Bonding Leave: If you have been employed at the District for 12 months, you are eligible for up to 12 weeks of paid parental leave under the Ed Code and applicable CBA language – this is paid at half pay for the full 12 weeks, and covers: Birth, Adoption, or Foster Care Placement*

Phase C: Return to Work

- Employee provides a "Return to Work" certification for the disability portion (if required by CBA).
- Reinstatement: Guaranteed to the same or comparable position under Education Code and CFRA (exception – if position is part of a layoff action).

[Maternity Leave California: FMLA, CFRA, PDL, PFL & SDI Explained](#)

This video provides a detailed breakdown of how California's overlapping leave laws specifically interact for pregnancy and bonding, which is essential for your calculation and workflow resources.

2. FMLA & CFRA WORKFLOW (EMPLOYEE'S OWN SERIOUS HEALTH CONDITION)

For non-pregnancy medical leaves (e.g., surgery, chronic illness), the two laws almost always run concurrently.

1. Employee submits a leave request by informing their immediate supervisor and via Colleague Self-Service, then contacts HR.
2. HR verifies if the employee has 12 months of service and 1,250 hours worked in the last 12 months.
3. HR provides employee with the appropriate Certification of Health Care Provider. The employee has 15 calendar days to return it.
4. Designation: HR sends a Designation Notice. Both FMLA and CFRA banks are reduced simultaneously.
5. Coordination of Pay: * Classified/Faculty: Check CBA for "Differential Pay" or "Half-Pay" rules.
 - a. Under Ed Code, once sick leave is exhausted, many employees move to 100 days of differential pay.

6. Interactive Process: If the medical note has restrictions, HR initiates an ADA/FEHA Interactive Process Meeting to determine if reasonable accommodations allow for a return to work.

3. CFRA-ONLY WORKFLOW (FAMILY CARE/DESIGNATED PERSON)

As of 2023–2026, CFRA is broader than FMLA. You will have cases where an employee uses CFRA but **not** FMLA.

- **Scenario:** Caring for a "Designated Person" (anyone the employee identifies who is the equivalent of a family member) or a grandparent/sibling.
- **Workflow:**
 1. Employee identifies the "Designated Person" (limited to one per 12-month period).
 2. FMLA is denied (since FMLA doesn't recognize these relations), but CFRA is approved.
 3. The 12-week CFRA bank is reduced. The 12-week FMLA bank remains full and available for the employee's own future medical needs.

SUMMARY COMPARISON

Feature	PDL	FMLA	CFRA
Eligibility	Day 1 of Hire	12 mo. + 1,250 hrs	12 mo. + 1,250 hrs
Reason	Pregnancy Disability	Self/Family/Military	Self/Family/Bonding
Concurrent?	With FMLA	With PDL or CFRA	<u>Never</u> with PDL
Max Duration	17.3 weeks (4 months)	12 weeks	12 weeks