

Leave & Accommodations FAQ

General Questions Regarding Leave

What types of leave are available?

Employees may be eligible for various types of leave, including:

- Vacation Leave
- Sick Leave/Healthy Families Workplaces Act (HFWA)
- Military Leave
- Jury Duty / Court Leave
- Domestic Violence/Abuse Leave
- Bereavement/Funeral Leave
- Voting
- Paid Holiday
- Personal Holiday Leave
- Family and Medical Leave (FMLA)

Check the Personnel Policies Manual (PPM) Section 4 for details on eligibility and accruals.

How do I request leave?

Absences are subject to your department or office reporting procedures or guidelines. If you are unsure, please confirm with your leadership.

All time off is processed in UKG.

How much notice do I need to give for leave?

Refer to your department or office procedures or guidelines.

FMLA

What is FMLA?

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) provides eligible employees with up to 12 weeks (or an eligible employee may take up to 26 workweeks of unpaid leave to care for a covered servicemember) of job-protected, **unpaid** leave for certain family and medical reasons.

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Am I eligible for FMLA?

Typically, you must:

- Have worked for the employer for at least 12 months (does not have to be consecutive)
 - Have worked at least 1,250 hours in the past 12 months
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Do I need to provide medical documentation?

Yes, medical certification may be required for extended medical leave or FMLA. Documentation should be completed by a healthcare provider. Generally, the employee must provide 30 days' notice if foreseeable. Reach out to LeaveandAccommodations@elpasoco.com or call 719-520-7486 option 1 to request further information on how to start a claim.

Accommodation

What is a workplace accommodation?

A workplace accommodation is a modification or adjustment that enables an employee with a disability or medical condition to perform essential job functions.

How do I request an accommodation?

If you have a qualifying disability, you can request an accommodation by contacting LeaveandAccommodations@elpasoco.com or by calling 719-520-7486 option 1.

What is the interactive process?

This is a collaborative, good-faith discussion between the employer and an employee (applicant) with a disability to identify reasonable accommodations to enable them to perform essential job functions. It may involve reviewing medical documentation and exploring options.

What types of accommodations are available?

Some examples include:

- Sit/Stand desk
- Ergonomic equipment
- Leave as an accommodation may be considered

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Pregnant Workers Fairness Act

provide reasonable accommodations to qualified employees or applicants with known limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions, unless doing so would impose an undue hardship.

Religious Accommodations

reasonably accommodate the sincerely held religious beliefs and practices of employees, so long as an accommodation would not cause undue hardship or direct threat to the employer.

Will my medical information be kept confidential?

Yes. Medical information related to leave or accommodation requests is maintained separately from personnel records and will only be shared when necessary to support the leave or accommodation process, ensure workplace safety, or meet legal and operational requirements.

Can my leave or accommodation request be denied?

Requests may be denied if:

- You are not eligible under applicable laws/policies.
- The accommodation is deemed not reasonable.*
- The accommodation would cause undue hardship to the organization. *

**HR will work with you to explore alternatives where possible.*

Lactation Space

What if I need breaks and a lactation space to express milk?

- Please reach out to HR at LeaveandAccommodations@elpasoco.com or call us at 719-520-7486, option 1, when needed. We have various spaces throughout the County for employees to express milk.

Return to Work

Do I need a doctor's note to return to work?

In some cases, yes—especially after extended medical leave. HR will inform you if a Return to Work certification is required.

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What if I need additional support when I return?

You may request accommodations at any time, including when returning from a medical leave of absence. HR can help assess your needs.

Compensation While On Leave

It depends on the type of leave and eligibility; you may have different options:

- Accrued paid leave (e.g. Sick, Vacation, Personal). See the PPM for details.
- While utilizing FMLA, the County does require you to utilize pay, i.e., accruals, STD, etc.
- Short Term Disability (STD), if enrolled and eligible.
- Colorado Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program, individually elected with the State.

What is Colorado Family & Medical Leave Insurance Program (CO FMLI)?

Colorado's Family and Medical Leave Insurance (FMLI) program provides eligible workers with paid leave for qualifying life events, helping them balance work and personal or family care needs. Employees may receive up to 12 weeks of paid leave per year, with up to 4 additional weeks available for pregnancy or childbirth complications.

FAMLI leave may be used for:

- Bonding with a new child
- The employee's own serious health condition
- Caring for a family member with a serious health condition
- Military exigency leave
- Safe leave (for domestic violence, stalking, sexual assault, or related issues)
- Neonatal care leave (additional 12 weeks)

Most Colorado employees become eligible after earning at least \$2,500 in wages subject to FAMLI premiums during the previous year. Leave may be taken continuously, intermittently, or on a reduced work schedule.

Note: Employees who voluntarily opt into FAMLI when their local government employer has opted out may receive FAMLI benefits, but their job is not protected under FAMLI.

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Job protection may still be available through the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), if applicable.

Are FMLA and FAMLI utilized separately?

FAMLI is designed to run concurrently with FMLA. If FAMLI leave is used for a reason that also qualifies as leave under FMLA (if eligible), then the leave also counts towards FMLA leave.

Does the County participate in Colorado FAMLI?

El Paso County and its supported entities have decided NOT to participate in the Colorado FAMLI program, per a vote of the El Paso County Board of County Commissioners.

Can I still enroll in Colorado FAMLI on my own?

Yes. While we have voted to opt out of the state-run FAMLI program, you may voluntarily opt in to FAMLI. An individual will apply directly through the State of Colorado.

Will the County help pay for my FAMLI premiums or manage my claim?

No. If you opt into FAMLI individually, you are responsible for:

- Enrolling with the state
 - Paying any required premiums
 - Filing and managing your claim directly with the state
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What is Short-Term Disability (STD)?

Short-Term Disability (STD) is a voluntary benefit that provides partial income replacement if you are unable to work due to a qualifying medical condition. Please review the STD Policy for details on eligibility, benefit amounts, and waiting periods.

Can I use Short-Term Disability (STD) with other leave?

STD typically runs concurrently with approved medical leave, such as FMLA (if applicable). You may also be required or allowed to use accrued leave to supplement during the STD elimination period.

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Can I use both FMLI and STD at the same time?

Please note that our organization has opted out of participation in the CO FMLI program. As such, we are not subject to the State's guidance or provisions, including any information they may have provided regarding benefit coordination.

Accordingly, you will need to select one source of income to use during your leave. You will need to confirm whether you intend to proceed with Short-Term Disability benefits or another available option so we can coordinate accordingly.

Who should I contact with questions?

Contact your Leave and Accommodations Team in the HR department for guidance and support. Email us at LeaveandAccommodations@elpasoco.com or call 719-520-7486, option 1.