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Dear Clients and Friends:

In April 2016, Governor Cuomo signed into law the New York State Paid Family Leave Program under the current Disability Benefits Law. Beginning January 1, 2018, the program will provide New York workers job-protected, paid leave to bond with a new child, care for a loved one with a serious health condition or to help relieve family pressures when someone is called to active military service.

Timeline

Paid Family Leave is designed to phase in over four years, beginning January 1, 2018. Below is the phase-in schedule:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Weeks Available</u>	<u>Max % of Employee Average Weekly Wage</u>
1/1/2018	8	50%
1/1/2019	10	55%
1/1/2020	10	60%
1/1/2021	12	67%

Employees may take the maximum benefit length in any given 52-week period. The 52-week period starts on the first day the employee takes Paid Family Leave.

- Paid Family Leave (PFL) coverage will be included under the disability policy. **The premium will be fully funded by employees through payroll deductions and may begin on or after July 1, 2017.** The maximum rate of employees' contribution will be established each year by the NYS Department of Labor using the statewide average weekly wage (SAWW). The SAWW, which was set by the NYS Department of Labor on March 31, 2017, is currently \$1,305.92. The current deduction is 0.126% of the employees weekly gross wage with a maximum rate of \$1.65 per week. For example, if an employee's wage is \$1,000 per week, the maximum payroll deduction for PFL would be \$1.26 in this given week.
- The SAWW is calculated annually on March 31st based on the previous calendar year, so the maximum PFL employee contribution will most likely increase in March 2018.
- This is in addition to the current NYS Disability deduction.

- Every full-time or part-time private employee in New York State will be eligible for Paid Family Leave.
 - Full-Time (20 or more hours/week) – must be employed full-time for 26 weeks to be eligible for the benefits.
 - Part-Time (less than 20 hours/week) – must be employed for 175 days to be eligible for the benefits.
 - Part-time employees may opt out of PFL with a waiver.

Benefits

- **Length** - The maximum benefit is eight weeks during the first year, 10 weeks during the second and third years and 12 weeks the fourth and subsequent years.
- **Payment** - First year payment would be 50% of the employee's weekly wage with a maximum of \$648. The maximum benefit is based on the New York State's Average Weekly Wage (NYSAWW), which is set every year by the New York State Department of Labor.
- Employees do not have to take all their sick and/or vacation before using the paid family leave.
- **Maternity and Paternity Leave**
 - Available for birth, fostering or adopting a child.
 - Begins only after birth and is not available for prenatal conditions.
 - May take during the first 12 months following the birth, adoption, or fostering a child.
- **Caring for a close relative with a serious health condition**
 - Close relatives include spouse, domestic partner, child, parent, parent in-law, grandparent or grandchild.
 - A serious health condition is an illness, injury, impairment or physical or mental condition that involves:
 - Inpatient care in a hospital, hospice or residential health care facility; or
 - Continuing treatment or continuing supervision by a health care provider.
- **Active Duty Deployment**
 - Available when a spouse, child, domestic partner or parent is on active duty or has been notified of an impending call or order of active duty.

Please contact your current disability insurance provider to add the NYS Paid Family Leave as a rider to your policy.

◆ **Agency internet web sites:**

--<https://www.ny.gov/programs/new-york-state-paid-family-leave>