Maine's Paid Safe Leave
Frequently Asked Questions

Safe Leave is part of Maine's Paid Family and Medical Leave (PFML) law. It provides paid time off for workers who need to take time off of work to care for themselves or a family member because of their experience with abuse and violence. Safe Leave offers you flexibility to take time off when you need it most.

How do I know if I could use Safe Leave?

- You might be eligible to take Safe Leave if all of the following apply:
  - You are a Maine employee;
  - You have earned 6 times the state average weekly wage. The State Average Weekly Wage (SAWW) is published on July 1 each year. Here is a link to Maine's state average weekly wage posting: Claims Management Unit.
  - You need to take time off from work because you, or a member of your family, experienced violence, assault, sexual assault, or stalking, including abuse or violence from a spouse, dating partner, or family member.

What activities are covered under Safe Leave?

- Maine's PFML Program provides Safe Leave for any of the following activities that you may engage in as a response to you or a family member having experienced violence, assault, sexual assault, or stalking, including abuse or violence from a spouse, dating partner, or family member:
  - **Medical Needs:**
    - To get medical care, like visiting the hospital, doctor, or dentist to take care of injuries from an assault.
    - To get mental health care, like going to a therapist or counselor or taking your child(ren) to counseling services.
  - **Safety Needs:**
    - To get help getting or staying safe, including making your home safe, like needing to be home from work so someone can install cameras, change locks, or fix damaged windows / doors.
    - Taking time off to look for or move to a safer location.
  - **Court / Legal Needs:**
    - Seeking legal assistance to address any issues related to this harm;
    - Meeting with a domestic violence/sexual assault advocate, an attorney, police, etc.;
    - To file a Protection from Abuse or Protection from Harassment case;
    - To prepare for or attend any related court proceedings, including criminal court, family court, or getting a protection from abuse or protection from harassment order.

How do I take Safe Leave?

1. Notify your employer in writing that you need to take Safe Leave.
    - You DO NOT need to provide detailed information to your employer about the abuse or violence that happened to you.
    - Here is the information you need to tell your employer in writing:
        - The reason for leave: which can be as simple as: "I need to take Safe Leave."
        - The type of leave you need: continuous (all at once, like a set number of weeks), reduced schedule (a planned number of reduced days or hours in your schedule), or intermittent leave (varying time off over a certain period of time).
        - The actual or anticipated timing and amount of time you'll need to take off.
        - Any other pertinent information – but this does not need to include details of the abuse or violence you experienced.

2. Next, file a claim with the Maine Department of Labor's PFML Administrator, Aflac, by submitting an application through their Worker Portal: **Aflac | Login**. If your employer has a private plan, you will need to file a claim using their form.
    - To create an account, you will need to provide the following information:
        - Social Security Number
        - Date of Birth
        - First and Last Name
        - Email address
        - Phone number
        - Mailing address
        - The dates you'll be away from work, including the first day of absence and anticipated return to work date. An estimate is fine if you're not sure.
        - Your (or your family member's) treating provider's contact information, if applicable.

According to the Maine Department of Labor, your employer will not receive any details from Aflac about why you needed to take Safe Leave. Any additional follow up in information that you are required to provide to Aflac will stay between you and Aflac.

MCEDV's member organizations are available to assist survivors in applying for Safe Leave. To connect with an advocate, reach out directly to one of the resources listed below, or call the **Statewide Domestic Abuse Helpline** to be connected with support near you: **1-866-HELP (4357). Deaf or Hard of Hearing? Call: 1-800-437-1220.**

We are the Maine Coalition to End Domestic Violence.

MCEDV. The Maine Coalition to End Domestic Violence

Through These DOORS

NextStep Domestic Violence Project Hancock & Washington Counties

SafeVoices

Partners for Peace

Caring Unlimited York County's Domestic Violence Program

Her Safety Net Silence Is Not An Option

Hope & Justice Project

Family Violence Project

NEW HOPE MIDCOAST