



# SEQUIM SCHOOL DISTRICT

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## Payroll & Benefits Newsletter

### Washington Paid Family & Medical Leave

#### **WHEN CAN YOU TAKE PAID LEAVE?**

Paid Family and Medical Leave is available when you need time off to care for yourself or a family member. There are three main types of paid leave available. Each one is related to a different type of “qualifying event”—the thing that happens to you or a family member that qualifies you for paid leave.

#### **MEDICAL LEAVE**

Medical leave is here for you when a serious health condition prevents you from working. Medical leave covers a wide range of serious health needs. For example, you can qualify because of a major surgery, after giving birth to a baby, for bed rest during pregnancy, to receive treatment for a chronic health condition, and to receive inpatient treatment for substance abuse or mental health.

#### **FAMILY LEAVE**

Family leave is here for you when you need to take time off to care for a family member. If your family member has a serious health condition that would qualify them for medical leave, or if you’re welcoming a new baby or child into your family, that’s when you can take family leave.

#### **MILITARY FAMILY LEAVE**

Military family leave is here for you to allow you to spend time with a family member in the military. If your family member is about to be deployed overseas or is returning from overseas deployment, that’s when you can take this type of family leave.

#### **Using paid leave to care for a family member**

If your family member has a serious health condition or injury or is in the military, you may qualify for paid leave to be with them.

#### **These are the family members you can take paid leave to care for:**

- Spouses and domestic partners
- Children (biological, adopted, foster or stepchild)
- Parents and legal guardians (or spouse’s parents)
- Siblings
- Grandchildren
- Grandparents (or spouse’s grandparents)

#### **Who can take paid leave?**

Nearly every Washington worker can qualify for paid leave as long as you work a minimum of 820 hours (about 16 hours a week) in Washington during the qualifying period, which is about the last year. The 820 hours can be at one job or combined from multiple jobs.

To be eligible, you only need to have worked in Washington the 820 hours, experienced a qualifying event and be able to provide proof of identification. Many documents can be used to prove your identity, including school transcripts and birth certificates from other countries. Download the full [list of accepted documents](#).

*“Every child deserves a champion, an adult who will never give up on them, who understands the power of connection and insists that they become the best that they can possibly be.” - Rita F. Pierson*

More →

## Send SEBB appeals to your payroll and benefits office

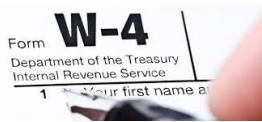
Starting March 1, 2020, most appeals about your School Employees Benefits Board (SEBB) Program eligibility or enrollment should go to your payroll or benefits office. You can learn more about when and how to request a review or file an appeal on the [SEBB appeals webpage](#) and the [SEBB Employee Request for Review/Notice of Appeal form](#).

You can confirm your current SEBB coverage by checking your Statement of Insurance, found under the Coverage summary tab in [SEBB My Account](#).

If you submit an appeal directly to the Health Care Authority (HCA) on or after March 1, 2020, you will be sent a letter explaining that your request should first be sent to your employer's payroll or benefits office for their action. You can read the [Health Care Authority's announcement](#) for more information.

**What if I already filed an appeal?** If you have already filed an appeal with HCA, you do not need to file another appeal with your payroll or benefits office. If your appeal is postmarked or received by HCA on or before February 29, you will be sent a letter with:

- Notification that your appeal was approved; OR
- Information about next steps in the appeals process.



The 2020 Form W-4, Employee's Withholding Certificate, is very different from previous versions. This is due to the federal tax law changes that took place in 2018. The IRS is not requiring all employees to complete the revised form and has designed the withholding tables so that they will work with both the new and prior year forms. However, certain employees will be required to use the new form: those hired in 2020 and anyone who makes withholding changes during 2020.

Even though the IRS does not require all employees to complete the revised form and even if your tax situation has not changed, we recommend you perform a "paycheck checkup" to see if you need to make adjustments to your current withholding. To conduct the checkup, you can use the IRS's Tax Withholding Estimator ([www.irs.gov/W4App](http://www.irs.gov/W4App)).

Before completing the 2020 Form W-4, please read the instructions that are included with the form. You must complete Steps 1 and 5. Steps 2, 3, and 4 are optional, but completing them will help ensure that your federal income tax withholding will more accurately match your tax liability.

**Know before you go! Check your [Collective Bargaining Agreement](#) to verify the amount and type of leave that you are entitled to and [Employee Access](#) for your leave balance.**

**Para Educators** receive 3 Personal Days per year (prorated for late hires or LWOP), unused Personal Days are cashed out in July at the hourly rate.



**Teachers** receive 2 Personal Days per year (prorated for late hires or LWOP). Personal Leave may be accrued up to a maximum of 5 days. Employees have the option of cashing out 2 unused Personal Leave Days in July at the substitute rate.

**Custodians/Maintenance** 260 day employees receive 1 Personal Day per year, at the beginning of their 5th year of service they will receive 2 days, and at the beginning of their 10th year of service they will receive 3 days. 199 day employees hired after September 1, 2016 receive 2 Personal days. Personal Leave days are "use it or lose it", as there is no roll over to the next year.

**Secretaries** receive 3 Personal days per year (prorated for new hires or LWOP), to a maximum of 4 days. Any excess will be cashed out at Step 1, Range A of Schedule A at the end of the fiscal year.

**Administrators** receive 3 Personal days per year (prorated for new hires or LWOP), to a maximum of 4 days. Any excess is rolled over to sick leave at the end of the fiscal year, if applicable.

**Teamsters** receive 3 Personal Days per year, (prorated for new hires or LWOP). to a maximum of 5 with a rollover to sick leave at the end of the fiscal year, if applicable.

**Non represented** receive 2 Personal days per year (prorated for new hires or LWOP), to a maximum of 4 days. Any excess is rolled over to sick leave at the end of the fiscal year, if applicable.



## Nearing Retirement?

### Plan 2/3 Teachers and School Employees ask: What's the best retirement month for me?

When it comes to retirement planning, teachers and school employees in Plans 2 and 3 often ask whether it's better to retire in July (when you stop working) or in September (when your contract ends).

There are several factors to weigh in choosing your retirement month, including what's gained from an earlier start to benefits and [cost-of-living adjustments](#) (COLAs) compared to what's earned from two extra months of service. And, starting this year, there's a new consideration: the impact of an earlier retirement on your health care costs.

***This additional consideration relates to the recent launch of the School Employees Benefits Board (SEBB) program, which offers employer-supported health insurance options for teachers and school employees. While SEBB provides enrollment for working employees, it does not offer coverage for retirees.***

These two scenarios illustrate how these various factors come into play:

**July retirement scenario** (resign your position effective June 30 to retire starting in July 2020):

- You'll receive your pension benefit plus your salary for July and August.
- Your COLA will start in July of the following year (July 1, 2021).
- You won't receive service credit for July and August.
- **Your health care coverage via SEBB will be discontinued after June 30.**

**September retirement scenario** (resign your position effective Aug. 31 to retire starting in September 2020):

- You'll receive your pension benefit starting in September.
- Your COLA won't go into effect until July 2022.
- You'll earn service credit for July and August.
- **You'll continue to receive SEBB health care coverage in July and August.**

In both scenarios, eligible individuals can purchase retiree health insurance through the Public Employees Benefit Board (PEBB) program once their SEBB coverage ends. Both programs are administered by the state Health Care Authority (HCA), which provides online information on [SEBB plan costs](#) and [PEBB retiree plan costs](#).

### Payroll and Benefit Contact Info

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In order to give our employees up to date information the [Payroll page](#) on the Sequim School District website is continuously updated.

For your convenience you can find links to Employee Access, Direct Deposit form, Green Timesheet, Pre-Authorization for additional work hours, Para EI hours timesheet, Class Size Overage claim form & the 2020 W-4.

You'll also find very useful and helpful information and links for the Department of Retirement Systems, SEBB, Health Savings Accounts, Washington State Paid Family Medical Leave, COBRA, FMLA, & VEBA.