



### Welcome back to the PFMLI Newsletter and Update!

Can you believe that we're already halfway through 2021? Wow does time fly! We are busy working on implementing Paid Family and Medical Leave Insurance (PFMLI) and want to make sure we update you about our progress. This newsletter is your resource to find out about everything PFMLI. We believe that your involvement and knowledge of the program will help us build a program everyone can easily access and use.

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### So What's New?

**[HB 3398](#), the bill that requests a change to the implementation timeline, has passed the Oregon Legislature and is waiting to be signed by Governor Kate Brown.** So what does this mean for you? PFMLI contributions are set to be collected starting January 2023 with people being able to use the program starting September 2023. This implementation change allows us to do a number of things, including develop rules, policies, and processes; hire necessary staff and set up facilities; plan outreach events to raise awareness about the program; and build a technology system that will fully support the PFMLI program.

**The Oregon Legislature also approved our budget, which among other things, allows us to hire additional staff over the next two years to help implement the program.** If you or someone you know is interested in joining our team, you can always apply for one of our open positions on our [website](#).

**Starting now, we are beginning work on the technology system that will collect employee and employer contributions for PFMLI.** The department is modernizing its technology, and decided earlier this year to include PFMLI contributions within the project that is also delivering the modernized Unemployment Insurance (UI) system. In May, the UI Modernization Project received a green light from the State's technology oversight process to proceed in this direction. This means the department has begun work on developing the technology that will collect both UI taxes and PFMLI contributions.

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### Why is PFMLI important?

Many of us know all too well what it's like to juggle work responsibilities with caregiving, like helping a family member get to their doctor's appointments or caring for our newborn child. Paid Family and Medical Leave would have helped many of us to stay economically stable while relieving the stress of managing life's big events and work at the same time.

**The need for PFMLI affects all of us, even our own team here at OED. We're going to start sharing stories from our coworkers who needed PFMLI and what impact that would have had on their lives:**

*"My youngest of three children was diagnosed with a rare brain tumor when she was nine years old. During that difficult time, it was imperative for me to be with her during her chemotherapy and radiation treatment, but as a single mom, I was also our family's sole source of income. I needed to keep my job and to continue working.*

*For five months, I worked during the day while she was in the hospital and spent my nights after work in a chair next to her bed. Shortly after chemotherapy ended, we had a 30-day window to get her proton radiation treatment from MD Anderson, which meant moving to Houston, TX for two and a half months. I took unpaid time off under FMLA, which was supposed to protect me, however my position was terminated within a week of taking leave.*

*If there would have been PFMLI back then I would have been able to take care of my daughter during the most critical time without worrying about my income or losing my job. Thankfully, my daughter has been in remission for 10 years, so you can imagine how important PFMLI is to me.*

*It makes me happy to know that PFMLI will soon be available to families, so when a loved one has an illness and needs care, the focus can be on taking care of their loved one." - Sheri*

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#### **Meet the PFMLI Leadership Team:**

##### **Gerhard Taeubel, Acting Director, PFMLI:**



Gerhard Taeubel is the Acting Director of the Paid Family and Medical Leave Insurance Division. Prior to joining the Oregon Employment Department, he worked for 18 years at the Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries, most recently as the agency's Wage and Hour Division Administrator. During this time, he helped to implement the state's paid sick time law. He graduated from California State University, Fullerton with a bachelor's degree in English and received a master's degree in Comparative Literature from the University of Oregon.

##### **Ashley Carson Cottingham, Acting Deputy Director, PFMLI :**



Ashley Carson Cottingham is the acting Deputy Director for Paid Family Medical Leave Insurance Division. Prior to joining the Oregon Employment Department, she was the Agency Deputy Director for the Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman. She also led the Department of Human Services' Office of Aging and People with Disabilities where she expanded the home care worker program for older adults and people with disabilities as well as improved safety and quality of long-term care for Oregonians. Prior to returning to Oregon in 2012, Ashley worked in Washington, DC for two non-profits and for the U.S. Senate, Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Subcommittee on Primary Health and Aging with a special focus on economic security, health care and family caregiving. She became a

member of the National Academy of Social Insurance, a nonpartisan organization made up of the nation's leading experts on social insurance in 2009 (upon invite) for her advocacy and education on Social Security at the national level. Ashley holds a BA from the University of Oregon and a JD from Vermont Law School.

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### **Get in touch**

**We want to create a program that's informed by the needs and experiences of Oregonians.** Do you know someone who might be interested in learning more about paid family and medical leave insurance? Send them a link to our [website](#), and encourage them to sign up for [PFMLI email updates](#)!

We welcome your questions and ideas and we want to hear from everyone who has ideas to share. **If you have questions or concerns, please send an email to [PaidFamilyAndMedicalLeave@oregon.gov](mailto:PaidFamilyAndMedicalLeave@oregon.gov).**