

FAQ for Employees Intermittent Leaves and Short Term Disability



Important Contacts and Telephone Numbers

The Hartford (M-F, 5AM-6PM)	1-866-266-4560	Policy #697409	www.thehartford.com/mybenefits
Lane County HR Benefits	541-682-3124	Fax: 541-682-4290	HRleaves@co.lane.or.us
Lane County Payroll	541-682-4200	541-682-4503	lcscepy@co.lane.or.us
Leave Forms	InsideLane Employee Info: Benefits – Protected Leave Page lanecounty.org Human Resources: Benefits – Protected Leave Page		

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Q: How do I file a Leave or Short Term Disability claim with The Hartford?

A: Call The Hartford between the hours of 5AM and 6PM PST, Monday – Friday.

Q: Can I report intermittent leave absences online with The Hartford?

A: Yes. Although calling in the absences is the best method, you can report absences online. The first time you visit the site, you will need to REGISTER for an account. You will be prompted to create a username and password for future use throughout your claim.

Q: How far in advance should I file my claim?

A: You should file your claim up to 30 days in advance of your anticipated last date of work.

Q: How do I know if I qualify for FMLA/OFLA protections?

A: Please call The Hartford and they will determine your eligibility. FMLA/OFLA protections are determined by date of hire and the hours worked in a certain timeframe. FMLA = Employed at least 12 months and worked at 1250 hours in that year. OFLA = Employed for the 180 day calendar period immediately preceding the leave and have worked at least an average of 25 hours per week during the 180-day period.

Q: When does an absence qualify for FMLA or OFLA?

A: If you miss work for 3 or more days, or intermittently for the same ongoing condition, for yourself or for a family member, please call The Hartford to file a claim. You may have protected leaves available to you.

Q: How do I know what type of claim to file with The Hartford?

A: The Hartford will let you know what leave options are available for you. If you know you will need to miss work for yourself or a family member, either continuous absences (3 or more days) or intermittent absences (as needed), they will help you determine the correct type of claim to file.

Q: How often will I need to provide updated medical information?

A: Based on the type of disability or medical leave for yourself or family member, the Medical Provider may be asked for updated medical information. For routine disabilities like pregnancy or surgeries with standard recovery durations, your claim could be approved for the expected duration of your leave. For other claims, The Hartford may need updated medical as often as weekly.

Q: I am a temporary employee – do I qualify for FMLA/OFLA protected leave?

A: It's unlikely that you would be eligible for protected leave, unless you have worked at least 25 hours/week for the preceding 180 days. Please reach out to HRleaves@co.lane.or.us to discuss the initial leave options before calling The Hartford.

SHORT TERM DISABILITY QUESTIONS

Q: What information will The Hartford request to approve my Short Term Disability claim?

A: The Hartford will send you a packet and contact your Medical Provider for additional information. Your Medical Provider may require an authorization in order to release information to The Hartford. Verify with the Provider's office and let them know that The Hartford will contact them for medical information to support your disability.

Q: How do I update The Hartford if I file a claim before my Date of Disability?

A: If you file a claim prior to your date of disability (i.e. for a surgery or a pregnancy), call The Hartford to confirm your surgery or delivery date once the event occurs.

Q: How do I check on the status of my leave or Short Term Disability (STD) claim with The Hartford?

A: Call or check on your status online at www.thehartford.com/mybenefits.

Q: How does FMLA/OFLA coordinate with Short Term Disability (STD)?

A: FMLA/OFLA protects your job and benefits during your leave, but does not replace your income. STD is a paid benefit through Lane County for approved medical leaves filed with The Hartford. It is possible for FMLA/OFLA to be approved and STD to be denied, and vice versa.

Q: Can I use TM and during my STD leave?

A: Yes. TM and other accrued leave banks may be used during the 80 hour elimination period, and throughout the claim to supplement the STD pay, as needed. You may also have the option to not use accrued leave banks during or after the elimination period – Please refer to your CBA for how you may use leave banks during a STD leave.

Q: How long will I get an STD benefit for my pregnancy claim?

A: You are considered disabled for 6 weeks from the date of your delivery for a natural birth, or up to 8 weeks for a cesarean birth.

Q: Can STD benefits extend beyond eight weeks for a pregnancy claim?

A: Potentially. If you are unable to return to work due to your own health complications after delivery, your Medical Provider must submit additional medical information to support any additional leave needed.

Q: Can I get STD benefits before my date of delivery for a pregnancy claim?

A: Potentially. If you have complications with your pregnancy that impact your functional abilities at work, your Medical Provider must submit additional medical information to support an early date of disability.

Q: Following the pregnancy STD claim, do I have to provide a Fit for Duty Medical Release?

A: No. For a pregnancy STD claim, you are considered disabled for 6 weeks from the date of your delivery for a natural birth, or up to 8 weeks for a cesarean birth. At that time you are cleared to Return To Work, unless the Medical Provider certifies otherwise.

Q: When can I take the optional Parental Leave?

A: As a delivering parent, you may take the leave immediately following the pregnancy STD claim, or anytime within one year of delivery. As a non-delivering parent, employees may use Parental Leave for bonding with the child within one year of the time of the birth, or the placement for adoption/foster care. Parental leave is up to 12 weeks and must be taken continuously, all at once. Once you return to work, the leave is no longer available. Parental Leave cannot be taken intermittently.

INTERMITTENT CLAIM QUESTIONS

Q: How do I record my intermittent absences for FMLA/OFLA leaves on my timecard?

A: Please follow your department's call-in requirements. Please indicate if the absence is related to your FMLA/OFLA leave and if you wish to take it unpaid or use any leave banks. Then record the absence on your timecard accordingly. Please refer to the **Timecard Codes for Leaves** for assistance. If you are unable to update the timecard yourself, please make sure you submit a **TM Designation form** so your Supervisor knows how you would like your absence recorded.

Q: How do I report my intermittent absences for FMLA/OFLA leaves to The Hartford?

A: Once you have reported the absence to your Supervisor and coded the timecard correctly, you may call The Hartford (or report absences online) once per week after your timecard has been completed. Fridays are the recommended day for reporting your intermittent time loss, after you sign off/finalize your timecard for that week, so that you are only reporting the absence one time. This is especially helpful if you flexed hours during the week or took more/less FMLA/OFLA than originally reported. The Hartford will want to know the date and hours of the absence or doctor appointment. *(Please note: The Hartford does not need to know if you used any leave banks or took the FMLA/OFLA absence as unpaid.)*

Q: What if I have changes to my intermittent absence that was already reported to The Hartford?

A: If you have changes to previously reported time or your claim dates have changed, you must call The Hartford to correct the time reported. You cannot correct previously reported time through the online system.