



## Paid Leave and Labor Unions

**Starting in 2026, Paid Leave will provide payments and job protections to Minnesota workers, including union members and other represented workers.**

### How does Paid Leave work with collective bargaining?

Paid Leave is a statewide benefit that applies to all eligible workers, regardless of union status.

- The law sets a baseline of benefits. Union workers and their employers can choose to negotiate additional benefits beyond this baseline.
- Paid Leave is separate from other employer policies or contract language that may relate to leave, paid time off, or other topics.
- Questions about how Paid Leave will fit with existing union contracts should be taken up between union workers and their employers through appropriate channels.

### Who pays for Paid Leave?

Paid Leave is funded by a payroll premium shared by employers and employees.

- Employers must pay at least half of the total premium and will collect the rest from employee pay. Employers are responsible for submitting the full premium to the state.
- Employers can pay more than half of the premium, as a voluntary employee incentive or because of a collective bargaining agreement.
- Premiums collected by the employer cannot cause an employee to earn less than minimum wage.

### Does Paid Leave protect your job?

Yes. Generally, workers must be returned to their job or a similar job when they come back from leave.

- Job protections begin 90 days after date of hire.
- For union workers in the construction industry, these rights are subject to contract negotiations.

No matter how long someone has been at their job, employers cannot retaliate against an employee for applying for or using Paid Leave.

### Does Paid Leave affect seniority or promotions?

Paid Leave does not erase any seniority or hiring rights protected under union contracts or policies.

- Time on leave should be treated like other protected leave.
- Whether leave time counts towards additional Paid Time Off (PTO) or seniority depends on a worker's contract or employer policy.

### What if an employer has an equivalent plan?

Employers, including those with unionized employees, can choose to meet their responsibilities under Minnesota Paid Leave by providing employees with an equivalent plan that meets or exceeds the coverage offered by the state. Employers seeking an Equivalent Plan Substitution must apply through the state.

- Under an equivalent plan, workers apply to take leave through their employer or insurance carrier, rather than the state.
- Similarly, payments to workers on leave will come from the employer or insurance carrier, not the state.
- Employees covered by an equivalent plan have the same protections as workers covered by the state plan and can appeal or raise issues to the state.
- Questions about how an equivalent plan will fit with a union contract should be taken up between union workers and their employers through appropriate channels.



**Learn More**  
[paidleave.mn.gov](https://paidleave.mn.gov)

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