

Applying for Exemption from WA Cares Fund

You will need an active **SecureAccess Washington (SAW)** account to login to Paid Family and Medical Leave through Washington State's Employment Security Department (ESD) and [establish a WA Cares Exemption account](#).

Already have a SAW account?

If you already have a SAW account for Paid Leave, login and click the "Add/Switch Account" link in the menu bar on your account homepage – this will take you to the "Choose an Account" page. Select the "Create a new account" button and then select "Apply for a WA Cares Exemption".

If you don't already have a SAW account for Paid Family and Medical Leave, create one using the instructions below.

How do I create a SAW account?

Create a SAW account by going to secureaccess.wa.gov and clicking the "SIGN UP!" button. After entering your first and last names, your email address, Username, Password and confirming that you're not a robot, you should receive an email with a link to activate your account. Once your account is active, you'll need to add "Paid Family and Medical Leave" to your SAW services.

How do I add Paid Family and Medical Leave to my SAW services?

Login to your SAW account at secureaccess.wa.gov, select "Add A New Service," then:

1. Select "I would like to browse a list of services."
2. Scroll through the list to "Employment Security Department" and select "Paid Family and Medical Leave" from the drop-down menu.
3. When you see the confirmation screen that lets you know the service has been added to your list, click "OK", then click "Access Now" to select "Paid Family and Medical Leave" from your list of services to access your account.
4. Once you've logged in and selected Paid Family and Medical Leave from your list of services in SAW, you'll click "Continue" to proceed to creating your WA Cares Exemption account.

On the "Create an Account" page, select the "Apply for a WA Cares Exemption" button.

Please Note: They will need to verify certain documents when you submit your exemption application. [Make sure you're fully prepared](#) and give yourself plenty of time before the deadline!

Next steps

ESD will review your application and notify you if you're eligible for an exemption from WA Cares coverage.

If your application is approved

You'll get an exemption approval letter from ESD, at which point you'll be:

- Required to present your exemption approval letter to all current and future employers. **If you fail to present your ESD approval letter, employers will withhold non-refundable WA Cares premiums.**

Exemptions will take effect the quarter after your application is approved.

If you have questions about your SAW account, go to [SecureAccess.wa.gov](https://secureaccess.wa.gov) and click the "GET HELP" button in the menu bar.

*If you already have an exemption letter but you are unable to locate it, you will find a copy of your exemption letter by logging in to secureaccess.wa.gov and then accessing the Paid Family and Medical Leave service to get to your WA Cares Exemption account. You will be able to find a digital copy of your letter there. If you still need more assistance in finding your exemption letter, please contact Employment Security Department (ESD) at (833) 717-2273 or email them at esdgpwacaresexemptions@esd.wa.gov.