

Parental Leave for Primary and Secondary Caregivers

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Col. Douglas Mayer
Headquarters U.S. Marine Corps
Manpower and Reserve Affairs





DACOWITS RFI

The Committee requests a briefing from each of the Military Services on current policies relative to parental leave for primary and secondary caregivers, and whether consideration was given to the 2017 recommendations made by DACOWITS.

- 1. The Secretary of Defense should consider allowing the Military Services to permit flexible (non-continuous) use of maternity and parental leave if requested by the military parent(s).*
- 2. The Secretary of Defense should consider removing the marriage stipulation from parental leave in order to be consistent with policies that recognize non-married parental benefits.*



Maternity Convalescent Leave (MCL)

- Provides Marines that give birth recovery time for their return to duty
- Starts the day after discharge from the medical facility
- A single, continuous 6-week period of non-chargeable leave
 - Can be extended if the medical provider deems that the Marine is not ready to return to duty
 - Marine may also voluntarily return to duty early, but only if cleared by medical provider
- Marine is subject to physical fitness / body composition standards no earlier than 6 months after return to duty



Primary Caregiver (PC)

- The parent with primary responsibility of care for a new child from a qualifying birth or adoption (In most cases, the non-military parent)
- A Marine may be the PC under various circumstances
 - When the Marine is the birthparent
 - When both parents are military members and the other parent is designated as the secondary caregiver
 - If the original PC is unavailable or becomes incapacitated
- Primary Caregiver Leave (PCL) is a single, continuous period of non-chargeable leave, up to a maximum of 6 weeks
 - May begin anytime within one year of the birth / adoption
 - PCL is in addition to MCL (if applicable)



Secondary Caregiver

- Typically, non-birthparent Marines are considered as having secondary responsibility for care of a new child
- Secondary Caregiver Leave (SCL) is a single, continuous period of non-chargeable leave, up to a maximum of 14 days
 - May begin anytime within one year of the birth / adoption
 - Unmarried, non-birthparent Marines must show proof of parentage
 - SCL is in addition to MCL (if applicable)



Other Policy Highlights

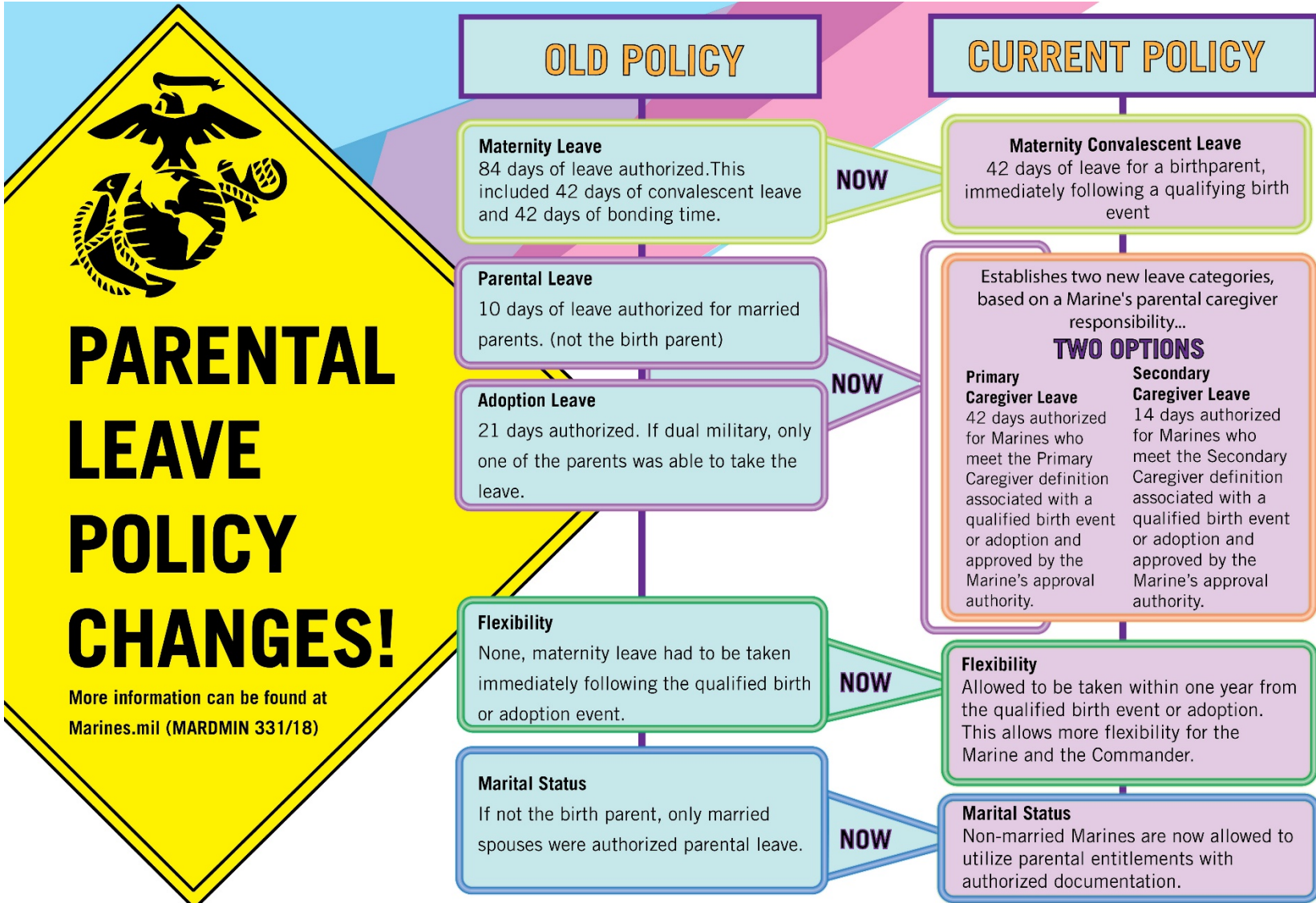
- Marines receive official designation as PC or SC for a pending birth event or adoption to establish their leave entitlement
 - Request for designation should occur approximately 60 days prior to the due date or anticipated adoption date
 - Approval resides with the Marine's Commanding Officer
 - The Designation is registered in the Marine Corps Total Force System
- Marines may defer PCL or SCL execution beyond 1 year due to operational requirements (deployment or work ups)
- PCL or SCL is not authorized if the child is given up for adoption and/or parental rights are terminated/surrendered



Questions



Policy Changes





Example 1

A pregnant active duty Marine is married to a civilian spouse and has an expected delivery date of 10 Nov 2018. On 10 Sep the Marine requests designation as primary caregiver and her Command approves. The Marine gives birth on 6 Nov and is discharged from the hospital on 8 Nov with 6 weeks Maternity Convalescent Leave (MCL) starting 9 Nov. On 20 Dec, her medical provider determines she is not fit for full duty and authorizes 7 days additional MCL. The Marine returns to her unit on 28 Dec, deciding to delay Primary Caregiver Leave (PCL) because this best meets her family's needs. After 28 Jun 2019, she is subject to USMC fitness and body composition standards. Prior to 6 Nov 2019 the Marine commences 35 days PCL (42 days minus the 7 extra days of MCL).



Example 2

An active duty Marine's civilian spouse is pregnant with an expected delivery date of 10 Nov 2018. On 10 Sep 2018, the Marine requests designation as primary caregiver (PC), stating that the civilian spouse returns to full-time work on 3 Dec. On 14 Sep, the Commander denies the request for insufficient justification and instead designates the Marine as secondary caregiver. The spouse gives birth 6 Nov and the Marine starts 14 days of Secondary Caregiver Leave (SCL) on 7 Nov. On 12 Nov, the spouse suffers a severe medical emergency, requiring hospitalization. On 19 Nov the Marine requests re-designation as primary caregiver due to the spouse's long-term incapacitation. The Commander changes the Marine's designation to PC on 20 Nov and authorizes the Marine 28 days of Primary Caregiver Leave (42 days minus the 14 days of SCL).



Example 3

A pregnant active duty Marine is married to a Sailor and has an expected delivery date of 10 Nov 2018. The couple determines which of them will be designated as primary and secondary caregiver, and the Marine subsequently requests designation as secondary caregiver. Her Commander approves the designation after confirming de-confliction of caregiver designation with the Sailor's command. The Marine gives birth on 6 Nov, is discharged from the hospital on 8 Nov, and begins 6 weeks of Maternity Convalescent Leave on 9 Nov. On 21 Dec, she begins 14 days of Secondary Caregiver Leave. After 21 Jun 2019, the Marine is subject to USMC fitness and body composition standards.