

# HRW CLIENT ALERT

October 7  
2021

## Recent Massachusetts Paid Family & Medical Leave Updates

On October 1, 2021, the Department of Family and Medical Leave (DFML) announced important changes to the state average weekly wage, maximum weekly benefit amount, and contribution rates.

### **Key Changes**

As of [October 1, 2021](#), the average weekly wage for Massachusetts increased to \$1,694.24 from \$1,487.78.

By October 1 of each year, the DFML must adjust the maximum weekly paid family or medical leave (PFML) benefit to be 64% of the state average weekly wage, to take effect January 1 of the following year. With this year's increase in the average weekly wage, a corresponding increase in the maximum weekly PFML leave benefit will also go into effect.

Beginning in January 2022, the maximum total amount that employees can receive in PFML benefits will be \$1,084.31 per week, an increase from the current \$850 per week maximum total amount.

Effective January 1, 2022, the contribution rate on eligible employee wages will decrease from 0.75% to 0.68%. For additional details about updates to the contribution rates for 2022, please visit the [MA DFML website](#).

### **Impact on Employers**

Employers remain responsible for remitting family and medical leave contributions to the DFML on behalf of their covered individuals. With the new rates for 2022, employers should prepare to make the appropriate payroll adjustments.

Employers have a continuing obligation to provide written notice to their current workforce of PFML benefits, contribution rates, and other provisions as outlined in the PFML statute. With the new rate contributions going into effect on January 1, 2022, employers will be required to give notice to their employees within 30 days, or by January 31, 2022. We anticipate that the DFML will be creating a new model notice for employers to use.

### **For Questions/Compliance Assistance**

If you have any questions about Massachusetts' Paid Family and Medical Leave and its potential impact on your business or organization, please contact:

- Kathleen Berney ([kberney@hrwlawyers.com](mailto:kberney@hrwlawyers.com) / 617-348-4335);
- Cathy Reuben ([creuben@hrwlawyers.com](mailto:creuben@hrwlawyers.com) / 617-348-4316);
- Alicia Ward ([award@hrwlawyers.com](mailto:award@hrwlawyers.com) / 617-348-4357); or
- Any member of the [HRW Team](#) to discuss your particular situation.