INFORMATION FOR FACULTY AND STAFF WHO MUST VOTE FOR THE PAID FAMILY LEAVE BENEFIT

While most University employees are automatically going to be PFL-eligible, per New York state guidelines some employees in certain job categories need to approve by MAJORITY that PFL is a wanted benefit at the University.

Background on PFL

In February of 2017, New York State passed the Paid Family Leave Act. Paid Family Leave (PFL) will be available to eligible employees on or after January 1, 2018. A quick summary of the plan highlights is below; click here for a more detailed overview.

- **Time off with your family when they need you:** Provides partially paid leave with job protection so you can bond with a newborn, care for a seriously ill family member, or assist a family member who is called to active duty. PFL is protected time off for qualified employees and cannot be denied.

- **Affordable:** Because the cost of this benefit is shared by workers throughout the state, the payroll deduction set by NYS to fund it is quite small – up to, but not to exceed .126% of the statewide average weekly wage. For 2018, that means the most anyone will pay to fund this benefit is $85.56 each year – less than a cup of coffee each week. A $15/hr employee would pay about $.76 cents per week to receive eight weeks of leave per year at half pay, or approximately $300.

- **Broad Eligibility:** The NYS law is broader than the federal Family Medical Leave Act (which provides only unpaid leave) and more flexible. For example, PLF includes paid, protected leave to provide care for a grandparent, grandchildren, and parents-in-law. This type of leave is not covered under the FMLA. Faculty and staff also can request time off in consecutive days, or spread out over months (i.e., take off Fridays over eight months).

- **Important Benefit for all Employees:** Although you may not have an immediate need for PFL, there is a lot of value to having its benefits available to you and your colleagues in order to handle a future, unimagined family situation.

- **Frequently Asked Questions:** Click here for answers to some frequently asked questions about PFL.

Voting on PFL

- **Who Needs to Vote:** Those who are in job categories that are employees of charitable or educational institutions employed in a teaching or professional capacity. This sub-group of University employees is roughly 9,000 of our faculty and staff who have specific advanced academic degrees and/or licenses. To see the list of job titles affected, click here.

- **Why You Should Vote:** For this group to receive PFL benefits, we need a majority of faculty and staff in the group – about 4,501 individuals – to vote “yes.” Likewise, if a majority vote against
receiving the benefit, or more than 50% of 9,000 do not cast a vote at all, then no one in this group will be eligible for PFL. We also feel compelled to advise you of a small risk associated with this vote. State representatives have suggested that if the majority of this group votes not to receive PFL, then all faculty and staff in this group also become ineligible to receive statutory disability benefits. The University believes that this interpretation is incorrect, and we will work to protect this benefit for all of our employees. However, we feel obligated to inform you of this small risk before you vote. We will provide updates as soon as we are able.

- **How to Vote:** If you are an employee in a category that needs to vote, you received an email on Wednesday, December 13 from University of Rochester HR with the subject line: “Important: Please Respond to Become Eligible for Paid Family Leave Benefit”. Be sure to check your junk email box to be sure you received this. This email contains information directing employees on how to record their vote. If you believe you are in a job category that needs to vote, but believe you have not received this email, please contact Leave Administration at 585.275.8747 or HRLeaveAdministration@UR.rochester.edu.

- **Frequently Asked Questions:** Please [click here](#) for some frequently asked questions about the voting process for PFL. If you have further questions, or would like more explanation, please contact Leave Administration at 585.275.8747 or HRLeaveAdministration@UR.rochester.edu.