



Commence Leave SMART Form

PURPOSE: This form should be used when an employee is going on a Paid FMLA or Unpaid Leave of Absence. This form may also be used to change the Leave Type once the employee is already on a leave (e.g., changing from Paid FMLA to Unpaid FMLA).

When Leave Begins

Submitting the Commence Leave Smart Form for the leave types outlined below, except as noted for Paid FMLA, will update coverage and stop deductions and initiate the direct billing process. There are four leave types:

- Authorized Leave Without Pay
- Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) (Unpaid)
- Military Service Leave (Unpaid)
- Paid FMLA – Note: Submitting paid FMLA status does not change the employee's benefits or result in any notices being sent to an employee. However, the employee is eligible for qualified status changes, within 30 calendar days, due to the FMLA leave.

If a participant wants to change coverage when going on an FMLA leave or Military Leave, (s)he should call the Benefits Center. For other leaves (s)he would have to experience a qualified status change outside of beginning an unpaid leave. The Benefits Center will process a Qualified Status Change to update elections in accordance with allowable mid-year changes.

Active coverage will terminate according to the effective date of leave of absence. If the leave status date is effective prior to the 16th of the month, the coverage will terminate the end of the month before the leave effective date. If the leave status is effective on or after the 16th of the month, coverage will terminate the end of the month following the month in which the unpaid leave status is effective.

When an employee is on Military Leave, it is advisable to share that some options have clauses as it relates to Armed Conflict and to refer them to the Summary Plan Description(s) for more detailed information. Some options include Armed Conflict clauses; however, the employee may choose to continue coverage. The AD&D option is specifically excluded from continuation while an employee is on Military Leave.

Leave Begin Date Rules

The following rules apply when setting the Leave Start Date:

- The Leave Start Date should be the first day the employee is on leave.
- The date may not be in the future (wait until on or after the date to submit the smart form).
- Agencies should avoid entering an unpaid leave into the GaBreeze system if it's going to be less than 15 consecutive calendar days. Since GaBreeze only bills employees on leave for full month periods, the process to stop payroll deductions and start direct billing and payments would not be worthwhile for short term leaves.
- Agencies can not change the Leave Start Date once they've submitted the smart form. If the date needs to be corrected agencies will need to contact the SPA team.
- A leave can not be submitted prior to an existing leave already on the system.

Agencies are requested to use the Unpaid Leave status if the employee has an absence in excess of 15 days.

If a participant is in an Unpaid Leave status, returns to Active Status, and starts an Unpaid Leave status again, the 12 month time period to continue benefits begins over again. Note: For Military Leave, the period of time is 24 months.

Move to Unpaid Leave Event

The Move to Unpaid Leave event is used to update coverages, stop deductions and initiate the direct billing process.

Coverage Effective Date Rules

- If the status change is prior to the 16th of the month, all active coverages (except DC FSA) end on the end of the month in which the status is effective. The direct billing process for inactive coverages start the 1st of the following month in which the status change is effective.
Example:
 - Unpaid Leave status effective 9/14
 - Active coverage ends effective 9/30
 - Direct billing starts for October coverage
- If the status change is on or after the 16th of the month, all active coverages (except DC FSA) end the end of the month following the month in which the status change is effective. The direct billing process for inactive coverages start the 1st of the month following the status change effective date.
Example:
 - Unpaid Leave status effective 9/22
 - Active coverage ends effective 10/31
 - Direct billing starts for November coverage
- The DC FSA will end on the unpaid leave status effective date regardless of the time of month. Claims will continue to be reimbursed by the Spending Account administrator until the end of the year.
Example:
 - Unpaid Leave status effective 9/14
 - Active coverage ends effective 9/14
 - No direct billing for DC FSA

Deduction Effective Date Rules

- If the status change is prior to the 16th of the month, all deductions (except DC FSA) end the 1st of the month in which the status is effective. The direct billing process for inactive coverages start the 1st of the month in which the status change is effective.
Example:
 - Unpaid Leave status effective 9/14
 - Deductions stop effective 9/1
 - Direct billing starts for October coverage
- If the status change is on or after the 16th of the month, all deductions (except DC FSA) end the 1st of the month following the month in which the status change is effective. The direct billing process for inactive coverages start the 1st of the month following the status change effective date.
Example:
 - Unpaid Leave status effective 9/22
 - Deductions stop effective 10/1
 - Direct billing starts for November coverage
- The DC FSA deduction will end the first of the month prior to the leave status effective date. Claims will continue to be reimbursed by the Spending Account administrator until the end of the year.
Example:
 - Unpaid Leave status effective 9/14
 - Deductions stop effective 9/1
 - No direct billing for DC FSA

Step 1: On GaBreeze Employer Web site, click on Smart Form Tab and enter Employee SSN.

Step 2: Choose Smart Form – Leave Commencement

Step 3: Enter Leave Commencement Data.

Move to FMLA/Military Service Leave Event

The Move to Military Service Leave event is used to update coverages, stop deductions and initiate the direct billing process.

Coverage Effective Date Rules

- If the status change is prior to the 16th of the month, all active coverages (except STD, LTD, AD&D) end the end of the month in which the status is effective. The direct billing process for inactive coverages start the 1st of the following month in which the status change is effective.
Example:
 - o Status effective 9/14
 - o Active coverage ends effective 9/30
 - o Direct billing starts for October coverage
- If the status change is on or after the 16th of the month, all active coverages (except STD, LTD and AD&D) end the end of the month following the month in which the status change is effective. The direct billing process for inactive coverages start the 1st of the month following the status change effective date.
Example:

- o Status effective 9/22
- o Active coverage ends effective 10/31
- o Direct billing starts for November coverage

- The STD, LTD and AD&D plans will end on the status effective date regardless of the time of month.

- Example:
- o Status effective 9/14
 - o Active coverage ends effective 9/14
 - o No direct billing for STD, LTD and AD&D

Deduction Effective Date Rules

- If the status change is prior to the 16th of the month, all deductions (except STD, LTD, AD&D) end the 1st of the month in which the status is effective. The direct billing process for inactive coverages start the 1st of the month in which the status change is effective.

- Example:
- o Status effective 9/14
 - o Deductions stop effective 9/1
 - o Direct billing starts for October coverage

- If the status change is on or after the 16th of the month, all deductions (except STD, LTD, AD&D) end the 1st of the month following the month in which the status change is effective. The direct billing process for inactive coverages start the 1st of the month following the status change effective date.

- Example:
- o Status effective 9/22
 - o Deductions stop effective 10/1
 - o Direct billing starts for November coverage

- The STD, LTD and AD&D deductions will end the first of the month prior to the leave status effective date.

- Example:
- o Status effective 9/14
 - o Deductions stop effective 9/1
 - o No direct billing for STD, LTD and AD&D

Direct Billing and Payments

Employees on LOA without pay will receive a monthly billing from GaBreeze. Also, they may choose to enroll in an automatic withdrawal from their account by contacting the GaBreeze Benefits Center after receiving their first billing notice. Note: If the employee applies and is approved for premium waiver for STD, LTD, or Life, GaBreeze is notified by the vendor and the amount is not calculated as part of their monthly premium due. This is also true for some Boards of Educations that provide subsidies for their employee's benefits.

Employees on LOA without pay status can continue coverage via direct billing through the end of the 12th calendar month following the beginning of the unpaid leave. After 12 months the participant will be offered COBRA dental and vision. If, during the 12-month period, the employee does not pay for their benefits, their coverage will terminate in accordance with the failure to pay provisions.

Note: All plans except the Dependent Care Spending Account automatically continue through direct billing. The Health Care Spending Account (HCSA) can be continued through the end of the plan year in which the leave began. Dependent Care Spending Account (DCSA) claims can be submitted to the FSA carrier for claims incurred through the end of the plan year up to the amount the participant contributed prior to coverage ending.

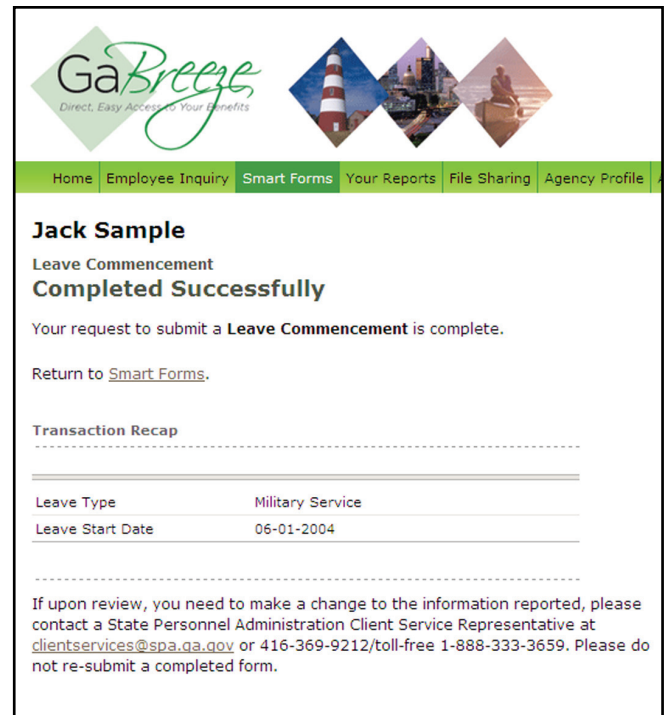
Leaves of Absence During Annual Enrollment:

With the exception of Unpaid FMLA or Military leave, participants may not elect new plans and may not elect to increase coverage during Annual Enrollment. They may only elect to decrease or drop coverage during Annual Enrollment. When a participant is on an unpaid leave of absence for FMLA or Military Leave, they may elect new plans, drop plans, and increase or decrease coverage during Annual Enrollment. Any changes made would be effective 1/1 of the new plan year. Note: FSAs cannot be elected during AE for participants on an Unpaid Leave of Absence.

The following items are impacts to an employee on LOA during Annual Enrollment:

- If the participant is on LOA without pay before the Benefit Calculation Date (10/1), benefits impacted by pay are not increased for AE notices.
- If the participant is on a LOA and returns to work prior to or during the plan year, the coverage/premiums are re-calculated to reflect Benefit Salary as of the prior 10/1 date for the new plan year.
- If a participant starts LOA without pay after 10/1, but before the beginning of the plan year, benefits impacted by pay are calculated to reflect the current Benefit Calculation for Annual Enrollment notices.

Step 4: Completed Successfully



The screenshot shows the GaBreeze web portal interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links: Home, Employee Inquiry, Smart Forms, Your Reports, File Sharing, and Agency Profile. The main content area displays the name "Jack Sample" and the status "Leave Commencement Completed Successfully". Below this, it states "Your request to submit a Leave Commencement is complete." and provides a link to "Return to Smart Forms." A "Transaction Recap" section contains a table with the following data:

Leave Type	Military Service
Leave Start Date	06-01-2004

At the bottom of the recap section, there is a note: "If upon review, you need to make a change to the information reported, please contact a State Personnel Administration Client Service Representative at clientservices@spa.ga.gov or 416-369-9212/toll-free 1-888-333-3659. Please do not re-submit a completed form."

Need Help?

If you need help navigating the GaBreeze Employer Web site or have questions about any of the features described in this job aide, you can contact the SPA Team at 1-888-968-0490, or 404-656-2730 if calling within the metro-Atlanta area, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Eastern Time.



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