

# Dept. of Military Services: Reserve component maternity leave available to Wisconsin soldiers

Posted on Monday, Mar 20, 2023

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

MADISON, Wis. — In a big win for Soldiers, Reserve Component Maternity Leave (RCML) is now available to Wisconsin National Guard Soldiers.

RCML authorizes traditional Soldiers to be paid for 12 unit training assemblies (UTAs) post childbirth, and they may use it flexibly in the year that follows. This leave is available for future drills and can be applied retroactively back to June 9, 2022, for any Soldiers who gave birth, did not attend drill and did not get paid by their unit.

Sgt. 1st Class Savannah Wanek — a state training manager and Parenthood, Pregnancy and Postpartum (P3) non-commissioned officer in charge — stated that she is excited to see this policy implemented into the day-to-day operations of units. On the surface, this change may appear to be minor in the grand scheme of policy changes, but the Wisconsin National Guard has never been able to pay its traditional Soldiers for maternity leave until now. By providing paid time off from drill requirements, the Wisconsin National Guard better supports Guard families, alleviates some financial strain and reduces stress on its female Soldiers.

“Wisconsin immediately hit the ground running to implement RCML after the National Guard Bureau published the policy in December 2022,” Wanek said. “February drill marked the first opportunity for M-Day Soldiers to be excused but marked present under RCML.”

Wanek said that Soldiers who qualify for retroactive RCML should talk to their unit’s readiness non-commissioned officers who will submit a WING Form 8 on their

behalf. Unit P3 advisors are available to assist with creating a leave plan, coordinating approval from the command team and ensuring that everyone is on the same page. Soldiers will work with their units to identify how to allocate their 12 unit training assemblies (each drill day is two UTAs) within the year following a birth event.

Wanek said that she personally supervised a Soldier who chose not to drill in January anticipating the RCML policy.

“Once that guidance was published, we were able to retroactively pay her which meant that she used eight UTAs, leaving her with four to use for the February drill weekend,” she said. “At any given time, the number of Soldiers who fall under RCML is small, but it is important to the Wisconsin Guard that no birth parents fall through the cracks.”

[Reserve component maternity leave available to Wisconsin Soldiers | Flickr](#)

This initiative is just one example of how the National Guard is working support all of its Soldiers as they balance the many demands of work and family life.