

NARFE Legislative Report February 2021

COVID Relief Bill This is the primary focus right now. Among features expected with that is the \$1400 check to most, but not all, persons.

COVID Relief Bill includes Federal leave The latest COVID relief bill moving through the House would dramatically expand federal employees' access to paid leave needed in connection with the pandemic, offering up to 600 hours (15 weeks) of time off for those who are unable to work due to COVID-19 symptoms or self-isolation orders and those who need to care for a child whose school or daycare center is closed or relying on virtual learning and would also apply to federal employees and postal workers who are caring for an individual with COVID-19 symptoms or caring for a family member 65 or older if their normal care provider is unavailable due to the pandemic. The leave could be used through Sept. 30 and would apply after other sick leave has been used up.

Paid parental leave The recent National Defense Authorization provides 12 weeks of paid parental leave for federal employees for the birth, adoption, or foster placement of the employee's child. The new benefit kicked in for births or placements occurring on or after October 1, 2020. The FY21 National Defense Authorization Act, extended the benefit to all federal employees.

Required Minimum Distribution Changes? House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Richard Neal, D-Mass., plans to reintroduce in the new Congress the Securing a Strong Retirement Act of 2020, which would boost the required minimum distribution age from 72 to 75. The bill has bipartisan support. There is also talk of possibly continuing the suspension of the RMD through this year.

"Strengthening retirement policy continues to be a priority of mine, and improving Americans' long-term financial security has taken on even greater importance now that so many people have had to draw from their savings during the COVID crisis," Neal told Think Advisor in a Tuesday email message. "I plan to reintroduce the Securing a Strong Retirement Act this Congress and expect it will pass with broad bipartisan support, just as the SECURE Act did in 2019."

The Securing a Strong Retirement Act of 2020, commonly called Secure Act 2.0, builds on the Setting Every Community Up for Retirement Enhancement (Secure) Act of 2019.

Submitted by Randy Herald, Legislative Chair