

# Paid Leave Means A Stronger California

JANUARY 2021

## California is home to the first paid family and medical leave insurance program

**in the United States.** The state's paid leave program builds on its decades-old disability insurance plan, which has guaranteed paid medical leave to people who need to be out of work for serious health issues.<sup>1</sup> Studies of California's paid family leave law show that paid leave works for working people, families and businesses.<sup>2</sup>

## The coronavirus pandemic will have long-term consequences on Californians' health, caregiving needs and economic stability.

- ▶ Women, especially Black, Latinx, AAPI and Native American mothers, were hit hardest by pandemic closures, working in many of the most-affected industries and bearing the brunt of increased caregiving without schools or child care.<sup>3</sup> At the end of 2020, California's labor force had lost 606,000 workers<sup>4</sup> and five times as many women were unemployed compared to one year earlier.<sup>5</sup> If nothing is done, women nationwide will lose \$64.5 billion in wages each year from reduced labor force participation and lower work hours.<sup>6</sup>
- ▶ More than 3,457,000 Californians – 8 percent Black, 40 percent Latinx and 20 percent AAPI – work in frontline industries,<sup>7</sup> facing heightened risks of exposure and challenges managing family caregiving needs.
- ▶ More than 2,817,000 Californians contracted COVID-19 in the first year of the pandemic.<sup>8</sup> An estimated 10 to 15 percent – 281,700 to 422,600 – will experience long-term symptoms including difficulty breathing, chest pain or fatigue that may require care from a loved one or interfere with work.<sup>9</sup>

## Paid leave means a more robust, equitable recovery from the pandemic.

## Californians are caught between their work and family responsibilities.

People in  
California both  
work and provide  
care

- ▶ More than 446,000 children are born in California each year, and in 67 percent of all California households with children – more than 5.6 million homes – all parents have paying jobs.<sup>10</sup>
- ▶ Women's wages support their households. In California, 75 percent of Black mothers, 45 percent of white mothers, 46 percent of Latina mothers and 46 of AAPI mothers are key family breadwinners. State-level data is limited, but nationally 64 percent of Native American mothers are breadwinners.<sup>11</sup>

- ▶ Women make up nearly half of California’s labor force (46 percent) and nearly one-third of its business owners (30 percent).<sup>12</sup>
- ▶ Across the country, many men want to play a larger role in caring for their children,<sup>13</sup> but unsupportive policies and stigma hold them back.<sup>14</sup>

**Paid leave means not having to choose between job and family.**

**California families will face increased family and medical care needs.**

- ▶ More than one in five workers are age 55 and older.<sup>15</sup>
- ▶ In the next 20 years, the share of the state’s population age 65 and older will grow by more than one-eighth.<sup>16</sup>
- ▶ Older workers are more likely to experience serious medical conditions that require care.<sup>17</sup>

**Paid leave means older adults and working people of all ages can get the support they need to receive and provide critical care.**



**State paid leave plans like California’s show workers, families and businesses benefit from paid leave.**

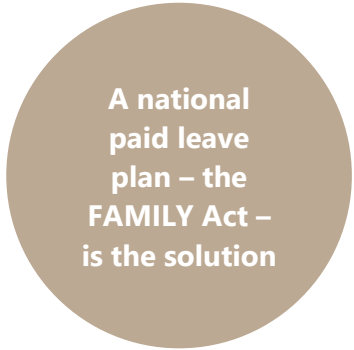


- ▶ Paid leave helps improve health outcomes and helps working people remain economically secure and stay connected to their jobs.<sup>18</sup>
- ▶ Businesses’ employee retention can also improve significantly with paid leave, helping to strengthen bottom lines.<sup>19</sup>
- ▶ State programs are used as intended by workers without overburdening employers.<sup>20</sup>

**Paid leave means people – especially women – aren’t forced to leave the labor force to care for their families or health, reducing turnover for employers of all sizes and boosting the economy.**

**California’s paid leave plan shows that paid leave programs work – a common sense, tested approach that works for families, businesses and economies.**

But people’s access to paid leave shouldn’t depend on where they live or work or what job they hold. The Family And Medical Insurance Leave (FAMILY) Act is a common sense solution that builds on state models to address the country’s paid leave crisis. Seventy-nine percent of 2020 voters – 67 percent of Republicans, 77 percent of Independents and 93 percent of Democrats – support a permanent paid family and medical leave program for people with health needs or child or family care.<sup>21</sup>



**The FAMILY Act means a stronger economy, healthier families and businesses, and greater equality for all women and families.**

**For more on the FAMILY Act, visit [NationalPartnership.org/theFAMILYAct](https://NationalPartnership.org/theFAMILYAct).**

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- 4 U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2020, December). *State Employment and Unemployment (Table 2. Civilian labor force and unemployment by state and selected area, not seasonally adjusted)*. Retrieved 14 January 2021, from U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics website: <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/laus.t02.htm>
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- 8 *Washington Post*. (n.d.) Coronavirus: Case and death counts by place. Retrieved 14 January 2021, from [https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2020/national/coronavirus-us-cases-deaths/?itid=sn\\_coronavirus\\_2/](https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2020/national/coronavirus-us-cases-deaths/?itid=sn_coronavirus_2/). Data reflects cumulative reported cases by state through January 14, 2021.
- 9 Scientific understanding of this new disease is still developing and estimates vary of the incidence of lasting health effects of COVID-19; 10 to 15 percent is a conservative estimate for symptoms lasting longer than 90 days, particularly among patients with severe illness. See Cirulli, E. T., Schiabor Barrett, K. M., Riffle, S., Bolze, A., et al. (2020, December 1). Long-term COVID-19 symptoms in a large unselected population. medRxiv. Preprint. doi: 10.1101/2020.10.07.20208702; del Rio, C., Collins, L. F., & Malani, P. (2020, October 5). Long-term Health Consequences of COVID-19. *Journal of the American Medical Association*. 324(17): 1723-1724. doi: 10.1001/jama.2020.19719; Yelin, D., Wirtheim, E., Vetter, P., Kalil, A. C., et al. (2020, September 1). Long-term consequences of COVID-19: research needs. *The Lancet: Infectious Diseases*. 20(10): P1115-1117. doi: 10.1016/S1473-3099(20)30701-5
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20 Ibid.

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