

# Paid Leave Means A Stronger Colorado

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The vast majority of working people in the United States do not have paid family leave through their jobs.<sup>1</sup> **In Colorado, even *unpaid* leave under the federal Family and Medical Leave Act is inaccessible for 64 percent of working people.**<sup>2</sup>

This means Coloradans face impossible choices when new children are born or adopted and when serious personal or family health needs inevitably arise.

**Coloradans are caught between their work and family responsibilities.**

People in  
Colorado both  
work and provide  
care

- ▶ More than 62,000 children are born in Colorado each year, and in 70 percent of all Colorado households with children – more than 850,000 homes – all parents have paying jobs.<sup>3</sup>
- ▶ Women's wages support their households. In Colorado, 73 percent of Black mothers, 48 percent of white mothers and 53 percent of Latina mothers are key family breadwinners.<sup>4</sup>
- ▶ Women make up nearly half of Colorado's labor force (46 percent) and more than one-quarter of its business owners (29 percent).<sup>5</sup>
- ▶ Across the country, many men want to play a larger role in caring for their children,<sup>6</sup> but unsupportive policies and stigma hold them back.<sup>7</sup>

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

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

- ▶ More than 1 in 5 workers is age 55 and older.<sup>8</sup>
- ▶ In less than 15 years, the share of the state's population age 65 and older will grow by nearly one-third.<sup>9</sup>
- ▶ Older workers are more likely to experience serious medical conditions that require care.<sup>10</sup>
- ▶ Three people die every day from drug overdoses in Colorado.<sup>11</sup>

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

The state's  
caregiving needs  
are significant,  
and growing

## Impossible choices between job and family are hurting the economy, and women suffer most.

**Colorado's  
economy and  
families are  
suffering**

- ▶ In Colorado, there is a 12 percentage point gap in labor force participation between men and women, in part because the United States lacks family friendly policies.<sup>12</sup>
- ▶ Nationally, if women participated in the U.S. labor force at the same rates as women in countries with paid leave, our economy would benefit from more than \$500 billion in additional economic activity each year.<sup>13</sup>
- ▶ Paid leave improves employee retention, morale and productivity, strengthening bottom lines – but small employers often cannot provide it on their own.<sup>14</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.**

## Coloradans need a common sense solution to address the country's paid leave crisis.

An effective paid leave policy would:

- ▶ Cover all working people, apply equally to men and women and reflect a modern definition of family;
- ▶ Include the well-established reasons people need family and medical leave;
- ▶ Provide at least 12 weeks of leave and replace a substantial share of workers' usual wages; and
- ▶ Be cost-effective for workers, small employers and the government;
- ▶ Protect workers against adverse consequences for taking leave.

**A national paid  
leave plan – the  
FAMILY Act – is  
the solution**

The Family And Medical Insurance Leave (FAMILY) Act is the only federal proposal that aligns with these criteria. And the sustainable national fund it would create would reduce the number of working families in Colorado facing significant economic insecurity when they need to take family and medical leave by 83 percent.<sup>15</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).**

- 1 U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2019, September). *National Compensation Survey: Employee Benefits in the United States, March 2019* (Tables 16 and 31). Retrieved 6 January 2020, from <https://www.bls.gov/ncs/ebs/benefits/2019/employee-benefits-in-the-united-states-march-2019.pdf>; Percent of workers who have access to paid family leave by U.S. region: Northeast (25 percent), South (17 percent), Midwest (17 percent) and West (20 percent).
- 2 diversitydatakids.org. (2015). *Working Adults Who Are Eligible For and Can Afford FMLA Unpaid Leave (Share)*. Retrieved 6 January 2020 from Brandeis University, The Heller School, Institute for Child, Youth and Family Policy website: <http://www.diversitydatakids.org/data/ranking/529/working-adults-who-are-eligible-for-and-can-afford-fmla-unpaid-leave-share/#loct=2&cat=44,25&tf=17>; Workers are considered unable to take unpaid FMLA leave because they are either ineligible based on employer size or job tenure requirements or because 32.3 days of lost wages from unpaid leave, the average length of an FMLA leave, would result in their family income dropping to or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level.
- 3 Martin, J. A., Hamilton, B., E., Osterman, M. J. K. & Driscoll, A. K. (2019, November 27). Births: Final Data for 2018 (Table 6). *National Vital Statistics Reports*, 68(13). Retrieved 6 January 2020, from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website: [https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr68/nvsr68\\_13-508.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr68/nvsr68_13-508.pdf); U.S. Census Bureau. (2019). *American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates 2018, Geographies: All States within United States and Puerto Rico, Table DP03: Selected Economic Characteristics*. Retrieved 6 January 2020, from <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=dp03&g=&hidePreview=false&table=DP03&tid=ACSDP1Y2018.DP03&vintage=2018&lastDisplayedRow=31>
- 4 Anderson, J. (2016, September 8). *Breadwinner Mothers by Race/Ethnicity and State*. Retrieved 6 January 2020, from Institute for Women's Policy Research website: <https://iwpr.org/publications/breadwinner-mothers-by-raceethnicity-and-state/>; "Key breadwinner" means a single mother who heads a household or a married mother who contributes 40 percent or more of the couple's joint earnings. Nationally, 81 percent of Black mothers are key breadwinners; 67 percent of Native American mothers are key breadwinners; 60 percent of mothers identifying as multiracial or "other" race are key breadwinners; 53 percent of Latina mothers are key breadwinners; 50 percent of white mothers are key breadwinners; and 44 percent of Asian/Pacific Islander mothers are key breadwinners.
- 5 See note 3, U.S. Census Bureau; Institute for Women's Policy Research. (2018). *Status of Women in the States*. Retrieved 6 January 2020, from <https://statusofwomendata.org/state-data/>
- 6 Heilman, B., Cole, G., Matos, K., Hassink, A., Mincy, R., & Barker, G. (2016). *State of America's Fathers*. Retrieved 6 January 2020, from MenCare Advocacy website: [https://men-care.org/soaf/download/PRO16001\\_Americas\\_Father\\_web.pdf](https://men-care.org/soaf/download/PRO16001_Americas_Father_web.pdf); Livingston, G. (2018, January 8). *Most dads say they spend too little time with their children; about a quarter live apart from them*. Pew Research Center Publication. Retrieved 6 January 2020, from <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/01/08/most-dads-say-they-spend-too-little-time-with-their-children-about-a-quarter-live-apart-from-them/>
- 7 U.S. Department of Labor. (2015, September 4). *The Cost of Doing Nothing: The Price We All Pay Without Paid Leave Policies to Support America's 21st Century Working Families*. Retrieved 6 January 2020, from <https://www.dol.gov/wb/resources/cost-of-doing-nothing.pdf>
- 8 U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2019, October). *Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population in states by sex and intermediate age, 2018 annual averages*. Retrieved 6 January 2020, from <https://www.bls.gov/lau/ex14tables.htm> (Unpublished calculation by the National Partnership for Women & Families)
- 9 U.S. Census Bureau. (2017). *American Community Survey, 1-Year Estimates 2016, Geographies: All States within United States and Puerto Rico, Table S0101: Age and Sex*. Retrieved 24 January 2018, from [https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS\\_16\\_1YR\\_S0101&prodType=table](https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_16_1YR_S0101&prodType=table); University of Virginia Demographics Research Group. (2016, May). *National Population Projections: Projections for the 50 States and D.C.* Retrieved 24 January 2018, from <http://demographics.coopercenter.org/national-population-projections/?q=demographics/national-population-projections> (Unpublished calculation based on projected rate of growth of older adult population from 2016 to 2030)
- 10 National Partnership for Women & Families. (2017, June). *Our Aging, Caring Nation: Why a U.S. Paid Leave Plan Must Provide More Than Time to Care for New Children*. Retrieved 6 January 2020, from <http://www.nationalpartnership.org/caregivingreport>
- 11 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. (2018, December 19). *Drug Overdose Deaths, Number and age-adjusted rates of drug overdose deaths by state, US 2017*. Retrieved 6 January 2020, from <https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/data/statedeaths.html>
- 12 See note 8. (Unpublished calculation by the National Partnership for Women & Families of the difference in labor force participation rates for adult women and men by age category)
- 13 See note 7.
- 14 National Partnership for Women & Families. (2019, September). *Paid Leave Works: Evidence from State Programs*. Retrieved 6 January 2020, from <https://www.nationalpartnership.org/our-work/resources/economic-justice/paid-leave/paid-leave-works-evidence-from-state-programs.pdf>
- 15 diversitydatakids.org. (2018). *Full-Year Working Adults Ages 21-64 Living in Families Estimated to be Below 200% of the Federal Poverty Line After Wage Loss Due to 12 Weeks of Paid/Unpaid Family or Medical Leave (Share)*. Retrieved 6 January 2020 from Brandeis University, The Heller School, Institute for Child, Youth and Family Policy website <http://www.diversitydatakids.org/data/ranking/670/full-year-working-adults-ages-21-64-living-in-families-estimated-to-be-below-200/#loct=2&cat=54,25&tf=21&ch=132,133,134> (Unpublished calculation by the National Partnership for Women & Families)

The National Partnership for Women & Families is a nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy group dedicated to promoting fairness in the workplace, access to quality health care and policies that help women and men meet the dual demands of work and family. More information is available at [NationalPartnership.org](http://NationalPartnership.org).

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