

Paid Leave Means A Stronger D.C.

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Washington, D.C., enacted a paid family and medical leave insurance program in 2017, and was one of the first without the infrastructure of an existing temporary disability insurance program. The program has been fully in effect since July 2020, and after expansions in 2021 and 2022, workers in D.C. can take 12 weeks of leave to bond with a child or care for their own or a family member's serious health condition, and two weeks for prenatal care. Built on lessons learned from older state programs, the program includes a progressive wage replacement rate and a more inclusive definition of "family" for family caregiving.¹

D.C. residents have work and family responsibilities. Paid leave means no longer having to choose between job and family.

People in
the District both
work and provide
care

- ▶ More than 8,600 children are born in the District each year, and in 75 percent of all California households with children – nearly 88,000 homes – all parents have paying jobs.²
- ▶ Women's wages support their households. In D.C., 87 percent of Black mothers and 57 percent of white mothers are key family breadwinners. State-level data is limited, but nationally 64 percent of Native American mothers, 49 percent of Latina mothers and 43 percent of AAPI mothers are breadwinners.³
- ▶ Women make up more than half of D.C.'s labor force (51 percent) and more than one-third of its business owners (35 percent).⁴
- ▶ Across the country, many men want to play a larger role in caring for their children, but unsupportive policies and stigma hold them back.⁵

D.C. families' care needs are increasing. Paid leave means older adults and people with disabilities can provide and receive care, and our care workforce is more resilient.

- ▶ Older workers and older adults are more likely to experience serious medical conditions that require care.⁶
- ▶ In D.C. nearly one-sixth of workers are 55 and older.⁷
- ▶ Paid leave reduces nursing home utilization and can help recruitment and retention of care workers.⁸
- ▶ Nearly 11,000 D.C. residents report having long-term COVID-19 symptoms that affect their daily activities.⁹ Paid leave helps family

The state's
caregiving
needs are
growing

caregivers and people with disabilities (who are often caregivers themselves) manage their health and care needs while maintaining their income and employment.¹⁰

State paid leave plans like D.C.'s show workers, families and businesses benefit from paid leave. 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.



D.C.'s paid leave program is helping thousands

- ▶ Paid leave helps improve health outcomes and helps working people remain economically secure and stay connected to their jobs.¹¹
- ▶ Businesses' employee retention can also improve significantly with paid leave, helping to strengthen bottom lines.¹²
- ▶ State programs are used as intended by workers without overburdening employers.¹³

D.C.'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 United States needs a common sense, national paid leave program that:

- ▶ includes all workers, no matter where they live or work or what kind of job they have;
- ▶ replaces enough income that workers at any income level can afford leave;
- ▶ provides enough time for workers to meet their care and health needs;
- ▶ covers the range of major needs workers face, including addressing their own health conditions, caring for seriously ill, injured or disabled family members and welcoming newborn, newly adopted or foster children;
- ▶ provides education and outreach to ease implementation for workers and small businesses;
- ▶ has a sustainable funding source that is affordable for workers, employers and the government without harming other essential programs, such as Social Security or the Child Tax Credit.



A national paid leave plan is the solution

National paid family and medical leave means a stronger economy, healthier families and businesses, and greater equality for all women and families.

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- 1 National Partnership for Women & Families. (2022, October). *State Paid Family and Medical Leave Insurance Laws*. Retrieved 15 December 2022, from <https://www.nationalpartnership.org/our-work/resources/economic-justice/paid-leave/state-paid-family-leave-laws.pdf>
- 2 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2022, May). *National Vital Statistics Rapid Release, Births: Provisional Data for 2021* (Table 4. Total number of births, by state of residence, provisional 2021, and percentage of cesarean delivery and preterm births, by state of residence: United States, each state and territory, final 2020 and provisional 2021). Retrieved 15 December 2022, from <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/vsrr/vsrr020.pdf>; U.S. Census Bureau. (2022). *American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates 2021, Geographies: All States within United States and Puerto Rico, Table DP03: Selected Economic Characteristics*. Retrieved 15 December 2022, from <https://data.census.gov>
- 3 Shaw, E., Mason, C. N., Lacarte, V., & Jauregui, E. (2020, May). *Holding Up Half the Sky: Mothers as Workers, Primary Caregivers, & Breadwinners During COVID-19*. Retrieved 15 December 2022, from Institute for Women's Policy Research website: <http://iwpr.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Holding-Up-Half-the-Sky-Mothers-as-Breadwinners.pdf>; "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, 79 percent of Black mothers are key breadwinners; 64 percent of Native American mothers are key breadwinners; 60 percent of mothers identifying as multiracial or "other" race are key breadwinners; 49 percent of Latina mothers are key breadwinners; 48 percent of white mothers are key breadwinners; and 43 percent of Asian/Pacific Islander mothers are key breadwinners.
- 4 U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2022). *Local Area Unemployment Statistics, Expanded State Employment Status Demographic Data (2021 Annual Averages)*. Retrieved 15 December 2022, from <https://www.bls.gov/lau/ex14tables.htm>; Institute for Women's Policy Research. (2021). *Status of Women in the States (Table 4.1)*. Retrieved 26 January 2021 from <https://statusofwomensdata.org/explore-the-data/poverty-opportunity/additional-state-data/composite/>
- 5 Lenhart, A., Swenson, H., & Schulte, B. (2019, December). *Lifting the Barriers to Paid Family and Medical Leave for Men in the United States*. Retrieved 13 December 2022 from New America website: <https://www.newamerica.org/better-life-lab/reports/lifting-barriers-paid-family-and-medical-leave-men-united-states/>; 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 15 December 2022, 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/>
- 6 Atkinson, I. (2021, September). *Our Aging, Caring Nation: Why a U.S. Paid Leave Plan Must Provide More Than Time to Care for New Children*. Retrieved 15 December 2022, from <https://www.nationalpartnership.org/our-work/resources/economic-justice/paid-leave/our-aging-caring-nation-why-a-us-paid-leave-plan-must-provide-more-than-time-to-care-for-new-children.pdf>
- 7 See note 4, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.
- 8 Arora, K., & Wolf, D. A. (2017, November.) Does Paid Family Leave Reduce Nursing Home Use? The California Experience. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 37(1), 38-62; Espinoza, R. (2020). *Would You Stay? Rethinking Direct Care Job Quality*. Retrieved 15 December 2022, from PHI National website: <https://www.phinational.org/caringforthefuture/wouldyoustay/>
- 9 U.S. Census Bureau. (2022, November 29). *Week 51 Household Pulse Survey: November 2 – November 14* (Health Table 11. Duration of COVID-19 Symptoms and Ability to Carry Out Everyday Activities, by Select Characteristics). Retrieved 15 December 2022, from <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/2022/demo/hhp/hhp51.html>
- 10 Setty, S., Koball, H., Hartig, S., & Sutcliffe, T. J. (2019, February). *Disability Perspectives on Paid Leave: A Qualitative Analysis of Leave-taking Among Workers Affected by Disabilities or Serious Health Conditions*. Retrieved 15 December 2022, from The Arc of the U.S. website: <https://thearc.org/policy-advocacy/paid-family-medical-leave/>
- 11 National Partnership for Women & Families. (2022, February). *Paid Leave Works: Evidence from State Programs*. Retrieved 15 December 2022, from <https://www.nationalpartnership.org/our-work/resources/economic-justice/paid-leave/paid-leave-works-evidence-from-state-programs.pdf>
- 12 Ibid.
- 13 Ibid.

The National Partnership for Women & Families is a nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy group dedicated to promoting fairness in the workplace, reproductive health and rights, access to quality, affordable health care and policies that help all people meet the dual demands of work and family. More information is available at NationalPartnership.org.

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