

PAID FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

CORE MESSAGES

Solution. Establishing a permanent paid family and medical leave program ensures parents can care for children without jeopardizing their financial and job security.

Problem. Only 15% of U.S. workers have paid leave, forcing many parents to choose between caring for their children and job security.

Call to action. Policymakers should invest in affordable paid leave policies that benefit both employers and employees, covering diverse needs and families and preventing negative consequences for taking leave.

MAKING THE CASE

- **Early childhood development.** Infants and toddlers only get one chance at a strong start in life. The brain develops faster from birth to age three than at any later point in life and high-quality child care is what nurtures a growing brain during this period. A baby's early relationships with parents and caregivers nurture brain connections that form the foundation for all learning and relationships that follow.
- **Benefit to parents.** Parents and caregivers need dedicated paid time off so they are able to bond with and care for their young children during these critical stages of development. Paid leave is also associated with health benefits for new mothers, including declines in depressive symptoms and improvement in overall health. Moreover, paid leave is essential for allowing families to take time off if their children have a serious health need or a family member gets sick, which can improve recovery.



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- **Disparities.** No parent should have to choose between their job security and their child’s health, but that’s the impossible too many workers face today without comprehensive paid leave policies. Black and Latinx workers are even less likely to have access to paid leave through their jobs, exacerbating inequitable health and economic outcomes for their families.
- **Economic impact.** Paid leave improves outcomes for families, employers, taxpayers, and the economy. When parents can attend to a child’s early medical needs, infant mortality rates, and childhood illnesses are reduced. This lowers private and public health costs and minimizes the need for working parents to take time away from work. Paid leave can also give parents and other caregivers time to search for quality child care that meets their families’ needs, which promotes increased productivity when they return to their jobs after leave.



TIP: Eight in 10 voters support a comprehensive paid family and medical leave policy that covers all people who work.

NCIT is here to support your advocacy campaign in a variety of ways to help you plan and execute your campaign. We support advocacy campaigns by mobilizing communities, advancing science and research through communications and messaging expertise, and other forms of capacity building for organizations. We offer tools and resources, connections to partner organizations, one-on-one coaching, and training to organizations advocating for policies that impact expectant parents, infants, toddlers, and their families. Each request starts a conversation – you don’t have to have all the details ready. We’ll get you connected to the right person! [Connect with us here!](#)