

Issue: Paid Parental Leave

Fast Facts:

- Paid parental leave is both an economic and moral issue.
- What federal law says: the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) guarantees that employees may take up to 12 weeks of **unpaid** leave within a year of the birth or adoption of a child.
- Federal family and medical leave laws passed in 1993 under Bill Clinton's administration guaranteed 12 weeks of unpaid leave and job protection, but excluded companies with fewer than 50 employees.
- Today, only 12% of U.S. employees get paid leave through their employers. That means 88% of working mothers will not get a minute of paid leave after they give have a child.
- Lack of paid parental leave for new mothers also helps perpetuate the gender pay gap, since one of the reasons why women earn less than men is because they take time out – sometimes much more than six months – to care for a young child.
- Paid parental leave positively impacts infant outcomes like birth weight and infant mortality, it also contributes to more women staying at their jobs, improves retention, and lowers rehiring and retraining costs for companies.
- According to the Center for American Progress, costs to replace workers are estimated to be as much as ten times higher than the national average for high-wage, high-skilled workers — in fields like technology, accounting and law, nearly 213% of workers' salaries.
- Private sector companies that offer paid parental leave include: EBay, Spotify, Netflix (up to one year), Google, Johnson & Johnson, Facebook, Goldman Sachs, Bank of America, Arnold & Porter, LLP, Bloomberg, American Express, Ernst & Young, and Hilton Worldwide.
- New York is the fifth state in the US to adopt a paid family leave law. California implemented such a law in 2004, but it only offers six weeks of paid leave, as do provisions passed in New Jersey in 2009 and Rhode Island in 2014. Washington state adopted a similar measure in 2007 but has yet to put it into practice.
 - New York's new law will guarantee pay and applies to small businesses as well as large companies. It covers the private sector; public sector unions can opt in.
 - In a survey of 253 employers affected by California's paid family leave initiative, the vast majority—over 90%—reported either positive or no noticeable effect on profitability, turnover, and morale.



How the U.S. Ranks vs. the Rest of the World on Paid Parental Leave:

- At the very bottom.
- The United States is the only industrialized country—and one of only four in the world—to offer no paid parental leave (to anyone – men or women). The other three are Papua New Guinea, Swaziland, and Lesotho.
 - When Australia [passed a parental leave law](#) in 2010, it left the U.S. as the only industrialized nation not to mandate paid leave for new moms.
 - Andorra, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Uzbekistan, Panama, Mexico, Guyana, Bolivia, and Latvia, are just some of the countries that have some form of paid parental leave.
 - On the other side of the spectrum: Estonia offers almost two years of paid leave for mothers.

What Other Cities Are Doing:

- Some of the cities across the U.S. that offer paid parental leave to their employees include: Chicago, Boston, San Francisco, and New York City.
 - **Chicago** offers between four and six weeks.
 - **Boston** offers six weeks, with the first two weeks at 100% pay, the next two at 75% and the final two at 50%.
 - This spring, **San Francisco** became the first US municipality to mandate that employers offer fully paid parental leave. California already has a state insurance program that pays workers 55% of their normal wages to take time off after the birth or adoption of a child, or to care for a sick family member. The San Francisco law requires that employers make up the balance of the employee's pay so that that they earn 100% of their normal wages.

In Miami-Dade...

- Miami-Dade County approved a measure earlier this year providing six weeks of paid parental leave to county and Public Health Trust employees. The policy provides new parents with 100% pay during the first two weeks of leave, 75% during the second two weeks, and 50% pay during the last two weeks.
- The City of Doral unanimously approved a proposal to direct the City Attorney to draft a paid parental leave policy for the city in April of this year.