

**HEALTHY
MOMS.
STRONG
BABIES.**



PAID FAMILY LEAVE FOR MOMS, BABIES AND SICK LOVED ONES



The U.S is the only industrialized nation that does not offer some form of paid family leave at the national level.

Only 17 percent of civilian workers in America have access to paid family leave.

Permanent paid leave could have a life-or-death impact on [the health of moms and their babies](#), the livelihood of family members caring for sick loved ones and ultimately an overwhelmingly positive effect on the economy. Unfortunately, only 17 percent of civilian workers in America have access to paid leave, including maternity and paternity leave, or caring for a loved one. Large employers, those who have more than 500 employees, offer the [greatest amount](#) of paid leave, while small employers, those with less than 50, offer the [least amount](#). Recent polling, however, indicates that most Americans [support](#) expanding paid family leave for Americans—drawing a stark contrast between public opinion and public policy.



Most Americans will face the demands of having a baby, developing a serious illness or needing to care for a sick loved one at some point in their lives. In those cases, retaining some level of income can mean the difference between being able to maintain stability and financial independence, versus facing the challenges of having no income to support themselves and their loved ones.

— Stacey D. Stewart
President & CEO, March of Dimes



The overwhelming majority of businesses reported a positive or no impact on productivity

Why does the United States need PERMANENT paid family leave?

For the health of new moms and babies:

- Better birth outcomes and improved infant mortality rates
- Allows for the increased duration of breastfeeding, which improves the health of both moms and babies and lowers the risks of infection for babies
- An [international evaluation](#) of paid leave policies showed that for every increase of 10 weeks of paid maternity leave, there was a 10 percent lower neonatal and infant mortality rate and a 9 percent lower rate of mortality in children under age 5, even after controlling for other known risk factors for infant and child death

For families caring for sick loved ones:

- Provides financial stability to those who need to care for an elderly or ill parent or child, or themselves
- Allows for leave to be taken for military caregiving purposes

For the economy:

- Increases the labor force participation of moms by 6 percent in the year of a birth
- Reduces birth-year maternal labor market detachment by 20 percent
- At five years, up to 50 percent fewer women leave their jobs
- Older caregivers who leave their job to take care of an elderly parent can experience income and benefit loss to the tune of \$303,880 (on average) over their lifetime

More needs to be done to ensure benefits are made permanent for all Americans.

What does the current Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) allow?

- FMLA (signed into law in 1993) requires private employers with at least 50 employees and all government agencies regardless of number of employees to offer 12 weeks of leave for childbirth, adoption or the serious illness of one's self or a close relative.
- **However**, that leave is not required to be paid, which represents a significant financial burden for most Americans.

March of Dimes calls on Congress to enact permanent paid family leave for all workers.

The Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) provides some protections for American workers during the pandemic by requiring certain small and mid-sized businesses to offer over 12 weeks of paid sick leave for employees affected by COVID-19, so they can care for a sick family member, new baby or a child whose school or day care has closed.

March of Dimes supports the **Family And Medical Insurance Leave (FAMILY) Act (H.R. 1185/S. 463)** because it:

- Creates an affordable and self-sustaining national system to provide workers with up to 12 weeks of partial income through a family and medical leave insurance fund
- Takes a balanced approach by providing leave to a range of family situations, not just new parents
- Allows leave to be taken by individuals to care for their own serious health conditions, including:
 - Pregnancy and childbirth recovery
 - Other serious health conditions of a child, parent, spouse or domestic partner
 - The birth or adoption of a child
 - For military caregiving and leave purposes
- Provides a fair system by which both employers and workers to pay into the fund, which would be available to most employees
- Does not adversely impact participants' future earnings by cutting their retirement benefits