



HB 16 - Paid Family and Medical Leave - New Mexico

New Mexicans should not have to choose between losing their job and caring for a new baby, a loved one, or themselves.

The Paid Family and Medical Leave Act is a program would allow employees to take family and medical leave from their jobs to bond with a child or to care for themselves or a family member when experiencing a serious health condition.

Why is Paid Family and Medical Leave important?

- Paid leave literally saves lives! Infants and children are less likely to die when their parents have access to paid leave.ⁱ
- Paid leave allows workers to take the time to tend to their families and address serious health concerns without the risk of financial hardship.ⁱⁱ
- Employees and employers enjoy the benefits of healthier workforce with less absenteeism, higher productivity and morale, and lower health care costs.ⁱⁱⁱ
- Employers save on replacement costs even with low-wage earners – it costs on average **33%** of an employee's salary to replace that employee.^{iv}
- Family caregivers can help aging and ill individuals to recover more quickly and to spend less time in hospitals, leading to financial savings and a decreased burden on health care facilities.

Cornelia, Aztec, NM

When I had my first child, I went through a perfect LaMaze birth until she had left my body. At that point the placenta wouldn't separate from my uterus, the docs had to fully anesthetize me and scrape it out. Bottom line was that I contracted a uterine infection, had to have a blood transfusion and was very much not healthy. No maternity leave was available to me at the job I had, which was as an on-air news anchor. KSL, my employer, assumed all news people would be male and thus did not offer such coverage to its female news personnel. Pretty ironic, since the station was owned by the 'family friendly' Mormon Church. But then, the church assumed women didn't work. I was allowed to use my annual vacation of two weeks, plus my one week of sick leave. I came back to work after that time but did not fully regain my health for about eight months. It was absolute and complete hell. Don't make other women have to go through an experience such as mine.

Veronica, Las Cruces, NM

While I do have FMLA coverage, I do not have paid leave. I had managed to cover, with an accumulation of sick and annual leave around 9 weeks of my 12 week leave. When the leave hours ran out, so did my paycheck. We were forced to cash out our IRA and use it to cover bills, food, medical insurance, diapers and the like. When I returned to work, I had no sick leave or annual leave left to cover me and my child in case of emergency or illness. I have yet to be able to accumulate any significant amount of time since then either. Children get sick and schools have days off...so, moms and dads can't afford to miss work when they are ill or just need a bit of downtime. It seems to me that America can do better.



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Good for business. Good for workers. Good for New Mexico.

The U.S. is the only OECD nation without any type of paid family & medical leave policy.

- There is no federal or state policy to provide private sector workers with paid family leave to care for a family member with a serious health condition or to bond with a newborn child, newly adopted child, or newly placed foster child.
- California, Connecticut, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island, Washington, and the District of Columbia have passed laws providing paid leave for employees who need time off to care for sick or disabled family members or a new child.^v This differs from regular sick leave which can be used for short term illnesses and doctors' appointments.
- Implementing state family leave helps small employers who cannot afford to provide paid family leave to compete with larger employers.^{vi} New Mexico is a small business state and most employees will not even qualify for *unpaid* leave under FMLA. Approximately, 96% of businesses in NM are not required to offer *unpaid leave*.^{vii}
- New Mexicans who do fall under FMLA coverage are not compensated and may not be able to afford to take *unpaid* leave.

How will we pay for this and what are the benefits?

How much would an employee and employer pay into the fund?			
Employee contribution			Employer contribution (per employee)
	Annual Salary	Yearly Contribution	Yearly
Minimum Wage	\$15,600	\$78.00	\$ 62.40
State Avg. Wage *	\$45,400	\$227.00	\$ 202.65

*Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Employment Survey May 2018

How much would an employee received in income replacement?				
	Annual Salary	Weekly Wage	Replacement	Weekly Replacement
Minimum Wage	\$15,600	\$300	100%	\$300
State Avg. Wage*	\$45,400	\$873	67%	\$684
Max wage	\$60,000	\$1,154	67%	\$872.08

*Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Employment Survey May 2018

ⁱ Ruhm, Christopher J., *Parental Leave and Child Health*, *Journal of Health Economics*, Vol. 19, No. 6, November 2000, 931-960.

ⁱⁱ The included stories and more can be found at momsrising.org. Stories from the Front Lines of Motherhood: Women and mothers from across the country share how important access to paid leave is for their families. Available at: <https://www.momsrising.org/campaigns/paid-family-medical-leave/stories>.

ⁱⁱⁱ Paid Family and Medical Leave: Good for Business. National Partnership for Women & Families. Sept 2018. Retrieved from: <https://www.nationalpartnership.org/our-work/resources/economic-justice/paid-leave/paid-leave-good-for-business.pdf>

^{iv} Sears, Lindsay. 2017 Retention Report: Trends, Reasons & Recommendations. Retrieved from: <http://info.workinstitute.com/retentionreport2017>

^v State Paid Family and Medical Leave Insurance Laws. National Partnership for Women & Families. August 2019. Retrieved from: <https://www.nationalpartnership.org/our-work/resources/economic-justice/paid-leave/state-paid-family-leave-laws.pdf>

^{vi} In California, Healthy Employees Create Healthy Businesses. Small Business Majority. July 28, 2016. Retrieved from: <https://smallbusinessmajority.org/blog/california-healthy-employees-create-healthy-businesses>

^{vii} Paid Leave Report of the Southwest Women's Law Center, 2017, available at: <http://www.swwomenslaw.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Paid-Family-Learn-Report2-3.pdf>