



Colorado needs a strong, solvent, state-run paid family and medical leave program



What is Paid Family and Medical Leave?

Paid family and medical leave (PFML) is compensated time off for major life events like the birth of a child, a worker's own serious illness, or the serious illness of a loved one. It is different from Paid Time Off (PTO) such as flex, vacation, or sick time, because it offers job protections during an extended, time off so workers don't have to worry about a paycheck while caring for their own health or the health of a loved one. To date, eight states and the District of Columbia have passed paid family and medical leave legislation.

Why Colorado Needs Paid Family and Medical Leave:

Paid family and medical leave program benefits are numerous, varied, and well-documented. They include:

Businesses Benefits

- Increased workplace productivity
- Greater workforce attachment for new mothers
- Greater competitiveness with larger businesses
- Lower employee turnover

Family Security Benefits

- Decreased poverty rates
- Higher vaccination rates for children
- Reduced infant mortality and hospitalization
- Improved school performance and higher future wages for children

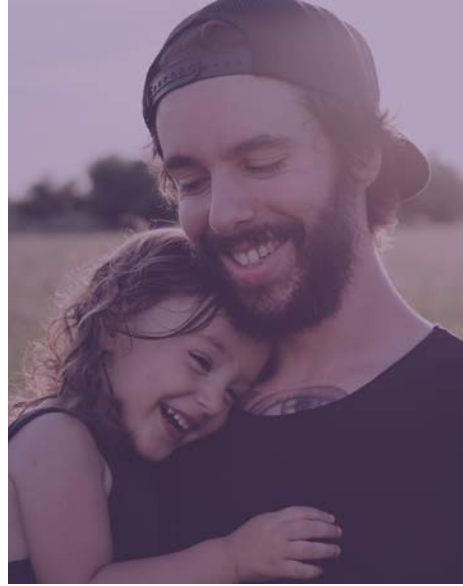
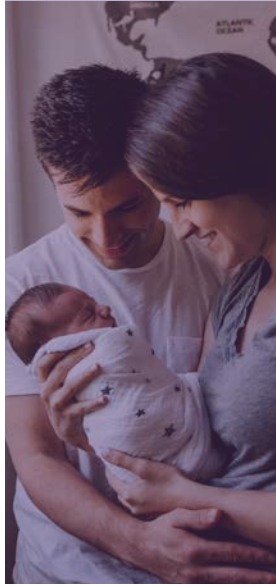
State Budget Benefits

- Decreased Medicaid spending as a result of lower nursing home admissions
- Lower utilization of public assistance programs like Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

Focused on workers

Paid family and medical leave is a needed, proven policy, that's essential for today's workers. Coloradans overwhelmingly support a family and medical leave policy administered as a social insurance model that puts worker needs over corporate profits. Legislators and their constituents agree that no Coloradan should ever have to choose between their own health or the health of a loved one and a paycheck. By creating an accessible, adequate, and affordable state-run paid family and medical leave program, we can make sure no Coloradan ever has to.

Despite its value to employees and businesses alike, only 17 percent of workers have access to a formal paid family and medical leave benefit. Coloradans need, deserve, and support a strong PFML policy that covers as many workers as possible and provides benefits to those who need them most.



Coloradans Need A Quality Paid Family and Medical Leave Program

While workers need access to these benefits, it's important to remember that not all paid family and medical leave programs are created equal. To match the needs of workers, an effective PFML program must be accessible, affordable, and offer an adequate benefit. In practice, this means:

Accessible

No matter where or how we work, life happens to all of us. As a result, every worker should have access to paid family and medical leave benefits. Any program should be equitable, transparent, and responsive to employee needs so Coloradans can actually use the benefits.

Affordable

Premiums for funding a paid family and medical leave program should not be financially burdensome for individuals across Colorado. In other states, premiums tend to hover around one percent of a worker's paycheck, with the cost burden often split between the employer and employee. This value for affordability should extend to all workers regardless of gender to ensure that women—who disproportionately provide unpaid care—aren't overly burdened by the program's cost.

Adequate

Research repeatedly shows workers don't use paid family and medical leave if the benefit doesn't adequately meet their needs. An adequate benefit provides wage replacement and guarantees job protection, so workers feel financially secure in taking time off from work. It must also be flexible enough so workers can use it for a range of personal and family needs.

This is the year Colorado will pass a paid family and medical leave program!



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