Building Healthy, Equitable Communities Through Supports for Working Families

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May 17, 2018
Welcome to the Building Healthy, Equitable Communities Series

A virtual space for exploring the topic of health equity
2018 SCHEDULE

Episode 1: Health Equity  (April)
Building healthy, equitable communities through equitable laws and policies

Episode 2: Healthy Children & Families  (May)
Building healthy, equitable communities through supports for working families

Episode 3: Food Systems  (June)
Building healthy, equitable communities through a just food system

Episode 4: Built Environment  (August)
Building healthy, equitable communities through comprehensive city planning

Episode 5: Schools  (September)
Building healthy, equitable communities through transforming the school climate

Bonus Training: Preemption  (October)
Preemption, public health, and equity – the search for local solutions

Episode 6: Community Power  (October)
Building healthy, equitable communities through community-driven solutions
What you can expect from our episodes:

Blog Post
6 Federal Policies That Fall Short of Supporting Working Families

Webinar
Building Healthy, Equitable Communities Through Supports for Working Families

Expert Panel
Continued Conversation About Healthy Children & Families (May 22)
Welcome!

Hannah Sheehy
Senior Policy Analyst
ChangeLab Solutions

Vicki Shabo
Vice President, Workplace Policies & Strategies
National Partnership for Women & Families
• What does PFL have to do with health?
• Why is PFL a health equity issue?
• What makes a PFL policy equitable?
• How can we drive and sustain policy change?
Advancing Inclusive
Paid Leave & Paid Sick Days for All

Vicki Shabo
Vice President for Workplace Policies and Strategies

national partnership for women & families
For 47 Years: Fighting and Winning for Women and Families

The National Partnership for Women & Families is a nonprofit, nonpartisan 501c(3) advocacy group dedicated to promoting fairness in the workplace, access to quality health care – including reproductive health services – and policies that help all people meet the dual demands of work and family.
FMLA: Job-Protected, Unpaid Leave for Parental Leave, Family Care Leave, Personal Medical Leave

Approximately 20 million workers take FMLA-type leaves each year. Only about 60 percent of the workforce is covered by the FMLA itself.


This survey includes pregnancy-related disability leave within the parental leave category, rather than in medical leave.
Reality: Unpaid Leave Is Not Universal - And Is Unaffordable for Too Many Families

Estimated share of working adults who are eligible for FMLA unpaid leave compared to those who are eligible for and can potentially afford it, by race/ethnicity

Source: DiversityDataKids.org.
Reality: A Nation Without Paid Time to Care

- Just **15 percent** of working people have paid family leave.

- **Less than 40 percent** have personal medical leave through an employer-provided disability program.

- More than **37 million working people** can’t earn a single paid sick day.

Access to paid family and medical leave and paid sick days should not be based on where you live or if you’ve “won the boss lottery.”

Half of all U.S. households with children have a “breadwinner mom” who is the sole or a key source of income for the family.

Consequences: Moms and Babies Are Harmed by the Status Quo

- **Only half** of first-time mothers take any paid leave in connection with the birth of their child.

- Nearly **one-quarter** of mothers are back at work within two weeks of giving birth.

- A full **95 percent** of fathers are back at work within two weeks.

- **Nearly half** of new parents with incomes of $30,000 or less say they turned to public assistance to make ends meet when adequate paid leave was unavailable.
### Solutions:
**Paid Sick Days and Paid Leave**

Policy designs for each solution differ.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paid Sick Days</th>
<th>Paid Family and Medical Leave</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Short-term leave: Days or hours</strong></td>
<td><strong>Longer-term leave: Weeks</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• To recover from the flu</td>
<td>• To recover from surgery</td>
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<td>• To care for a sick child</td>
<td>• To bond with a new child</td>
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<tr>
<td>• To seek assistance in cases of domestic violence</td>
<td>• To care for a family member undergoing cancer treatment</td>
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<td>• To seek preventive care – for example, well baby visits or annual physicals</td>
<td>• To care for an aging parent who has been placed on hospice</td>
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<td>• To deal with military deployment or service member care</td>
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**Impact**

**Benefits for Women & Families, Employers, Economy**

**Economic Security**
- Women are more likely to stay in the workforce and earn higher wages
- Older workers have higher income and retirement savings
- Families are far less likely to fall into poverty when needing leave

**Business**
- Higher retention saves cost of recruitment, hiring and training
- Evidence of improved worker morale and productivity
- Allows small businesses to provide this critical benefit and compete

**Taxpayers**
- Decreased use in public assistance
- Stronger tax base due to higher labor force participation and wages

**Health**
- Improved maternal, infant and child health
- Improved and faster recovery from illness, surgery and injury
Healthier communities for all through better laws & policies
Disclaimer

The information provided in this discussion is for informational purposes only, and does not constitute legal advice. ChangeLab Solutions does not enter into attorney-client relationships.

ChangeLab Solutions is a non-partisan, nonprofit organization that educates and informs the public through objective, non-partisan analysis, study, and/or research. The primary purpose of this discussion is to address legal and/or policy options to improve public health. There is no intent to reflect a view on specific legislation.

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What does paid family leave have to do with health?
Maternal health

- Physical recovery
- Benefits to mental health
Infant health

- Reduced infant mortality
- Improved breastfeeding
Family health

- Reduced stress
- Stronger partnerships
Paid family leave also has health equity implications.
What is equity?

Health equity = “the state in which everyone has the opportunity to attain full health potential and no one is disadvantaged from achieving this potential because of social position or any other socially defined circumstance.”

Source: National Academy of Science
Health equity efforts aim to improve everyone’s health by focusing on people who are currently excluded or underserved.
Why is paid family leave a health equity issue?
PFL reduces low-income mothers’ stress and anxiety associated with childbirth and childrearing.

Greater increases in breastfeeding initiation and duration among low-income women who took PFL.
PFL interrupts the “negative cycle of accumulated debt, dependence, poor health, depression, and despair set in motion by the loss of compensation, secure employment, or both when low-income working women have no choice but to take time off to have a baby.”

We need more research that takes health equity into consideration
What makes a paid family leave policy equitable?
Equity-promoting PFL provisions...

- An expansive definition of covered employers and eligible employees
- Increased length of leave to guarantee, at minimum, 12 weeks of paid family leave
Equity-promoting PFL provisions...

- Increased wage replacement and no waiting period
- Job protection
- An expansive definition of eligible family members
How can we drive and sustain policy change?
In the Absence of a National Standard... States Lead the Way on Paid Leave

Five states and D.C. have enacted paid family leave policies:

- California (since 2004)
- New Jersey (since 2009 – seeking expansions)
- Rhode Island (since 2014 – seeking expansions)
- New York (2018)
- Washington, D.C. (2020 implementation)
- Washington state (2020 implementation)

Bills introduced in 30+ states (including Colorado, Connecticut, Illinois, Indiana, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, New Mexico, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Utah and Virginia):

- Massachusetts is likely to pass paid leave this year!
In the Absence of a National Standard... States and Cities Lead the Way on Paid Sick Time

Paid sick time laws exist in 43 jurisdictions across the country!

- Ten states (CT, CA, MA, OR, VT, AZ, WA, RI, MD, and NJ)
- Thirty-one cities
- Two counties

Earlier this year, **Austin, TX** became the first city in the South to pass a paid sick time law.

Last month, **New Jersey** became the tenth state to pass a paid sick time law.

- This will replace its 13 municipal laws with a stronger and more inclusive standard that will cover the whole state and tens of thousands more workers.
Growing Risk: Harmful Proposals

Fake Flexibility Legislation
- “Comp time” – Working Families Flexibility Act
- “Safe harbor” – Workflex in the 21st Century Act

Exclusionary Legislation
- Employer tax credits – Strong Families Act
- Go-fund-me savings accounts – Working Parents Flexibility Act
- Targeted, means-tested benefits
- Parental-only legislation – Social Security proposal, Trump budget proposal
- Moms-only policies

Irresponsible Legislation
- Trump budget proposal
- Social Security proposal
Strong Paid Family and Medical Leave Plan: Key Principles

#PaidLeaveChecklist

- Affordable
- Inclusive
- Substantial
- Comprehensive
- Secure

Cost-effective for workers, employers and the government
Accessible to all working people and reflects a modern definition of “family”
Includes 12 weeks of leave or more
Covers equally the full range of personal medical and family caregiving needs
No fear of retaliation or adverse consequences for taking leave

A robust national paid leave program must check all the boxes!
Learn more: SupportPaidLeave.org
Momentum: Ingredients for Progress

- Demographics
- National dialogue and politics
- State success
- Private sector leadership
- Public demand and support
- Research
- Media
- YOU!!
Thank you! Questions?

Join our expert panel for Continued Conversation About Healthy Children & Families on May 22, 11am - noon PT

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Want more health equity?

**Next up, Episode 3!** Building Healthy, Equitable Communities Through A Just Food System

- Blog: June 4
- Webinar: June 21
- Expert Panel: June 26

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Resources for changemaking:

- Paid Family Leave Ensures Health Equity for All
- Stay tuned for the Blueprint for Collective Action

For these and other resources, visit us at changelabsolutions.org