

ALABAMA FAMILIES NEED PAID FAMILY LEAVE

Right now only 17% of working people in the United States have access to paid family leave through their employer. [1] And although the current Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) allows some employees to take up to 12 weeks of job-protected unpaid leave, it only covers about 60 percent of employees. Further, many people who are eligible to take FMLA can't afford to take it, because FMLA's unpaid. This lack of paid, job-protected leave is why 1 in 4 new mothers is back at work within 10 days of having a baby [2] and also why 1 in 5 retirees leaves the workforce earlier than planned because they need time away from work to care for a spouse or loved one. [3]

Working families need and deserve a robust detail-driven paid family and medical leave policy. We need a plan that is accessible to all working people, inclusive when it comes defining family, affordable and cost-effective and sustainable for workers, employers, and taxpayers and provides a meaningful length of leave. ***Please read the following stories from Virginia and take them to heart. Our families are counting on you.**

Karis, Maylene

I've been in a position where I could not get time off for my sick son. I'm also a single parent and it's important we have paid family and medical leave.

Courtney, Montgomery

FMLA only guaranteed that my job would still be here when I returned from leave. Had it not been for my family, I would not have had the opportunity to stay home with my son for 3 months. I used all of my vacation and sick leave and went a month with no paycheck. Now for doctor's appointments etc for my son, I have loose more time because I used all of my leave on maternity. Something needs to be done.

Daniel, Birmingham

I am a father and I feel very strongly about this. This a hard enough for a woman to do under the best of conditions, and it is important. I think we should all do what we can to set up our future generations health.

Kristen, Ozark

I will be receiving no paid leave and will be returning to work 2 weeks after the baby is born. I hope to be able to pump [breastmilk] but am not sure how well that will work out.

Sonja, Auburn

I am 29 and am having my first child. My husband and I are going to be struggling to make ends meet when I am out on maternity leave. We feel like this country does not do enough for people who are struggling to start their own family.

Jennifer, Fort Mitchell

My friend and I had babies at the same time. Mine arrived early and was in the NICU so I was allowed to build a leave bank, but my friend was not able to do so. She lost a month's paycheck to stay home for five weeks.

Doris, Huntsville

Please pass the workplace flexibility laws to include paid sick days, paid family and medical leave. It is very difficult to care for family members without these laws in place, being that half of the workforce today are women.



**Working families in the United States
LOSE AT LEAST \$20.6 BILLION
IN WAGES EVERY YEAR
due to a lack of access to
paid family and medical leave**

Source: Sarah Jane Glynn and Danielle Corley, "The Cost of Work-Family Policy Inaction: Quantifying the Costs Families Currently Face as a Result of Lacking U.S. Work-Family Policies" (Washington: Center for American Progress, 2016), available at <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/women/reports/2016/09/22/143877/the-cost-of-inaction/>.)

Join the conversation on Twitter: @MomsRising would love to hear your hopes and plan for #Paid-FamilyLeave. For more stories from your state visit www.MomsRising.org

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[1] <http://www.nationalpartnership.org/our-work/workplace/paid-leave.html> [2] *In These Times: The Real War on Families*
[3] *Keeping Up with the Times: Supporting Family Caregivers with Workplace Leave Policies*, AARP Public Policy Institute