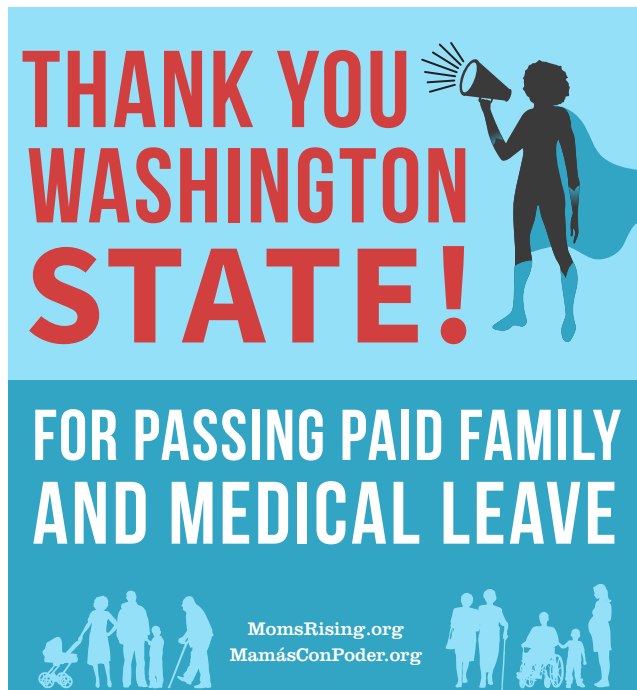


moms **MEETUP** **toolkit**

Sharing the Good News About Paid Family and Medical Leave in Washington State



We've won a MOM-umental victory in Washington State with the passage of Paid Family and Medical Leave. Beginning January 2020, Washington's new Paid Family and Medical Leave program will provide families with the time they need to welcome a new child to their family, care for a critically ill loved one, or recover from their own serious medical condition.

But we need your help to be sure that moms, dads, and families across Washington State can take full advantage of this new program.

That's right, this is an all hands on deck moment! We all need to speak up to be sure every person knows about the opportunities available to them through Paid Family and Medical Leave.

So thank you for joining MomsRising to help spread the good news far and wide, especially in your local community with friends, family, and neighbors. Now it's time for the fun part – getting ready.

Don't worry! It's not complicated – below are a few resources to help you have a fun and engaging gathering. If you have additional questions, please email the MomsRising team at wainfo@momsrising.org.

PLANNING YOUR MOMS MEETUP

1. Pick a Time & Location

Most importantly, pick a time and location that will keep your stress level low. Some people love to host at their home, others don't care to.

Some location options outside your home that you might consider include:

Library meeting room

Community center

Religious facility

Coffee shop/Café

Bar/Lounge

Business office

Restaurant

Your House

Park/Playground

School cafeteria

Make sure you list accessibility information about the location you choose, so guests with disabilities can plan their visit to your event. For example: include information about the location such as the availability of ramps or stairs, elevator and wheelchair accessibility, parking information (i.e. how far is the parking lot from the entrance to the building), and public transportation options. You can learn more about creating an accessible event listing here: <https://momsrising.org/2FoCRzQ>. This way your event will be safe, welcoming, and accessible to everyone you invite.

2. Sign Up

If you haven't already, let us know you are organizing a gathering by signing up as a host here: https://action.momsrising.org/survey/Paid_Leave_Meetup/ (If you want help with this or don't want to fill out an online form, just email us at: wainfo@momsrising.org)

FIRST STEPS! IT'S EASY!

1. Invite Others

Consider inviting friends, family, parents of kids in your children's classes or sports teams, neighbors, friends from your faith community, book groups, and more. You can invite anyone who you think may be interested!

We want to keep track of all the incredible work led by MomsRising members, so please email us at wainfo@momsrising.org to let us know you're hosting a meetup. Do you have a Facebook event? Please send us the link. If you'd like MomsRising to help promote your event to the public, just let us know in your email, and we'll make sure to share your event to our networks! Or, you can keep the event private with just the people you know, the choice is yours! We will only share info about meetups if asked. If you aren't on Facebook you can email, text, or call people to share invitations as well.

You can copy and paste the content for the Facebook invite below and feel free to add your own flair:

SAMPLE EVENT TITLE: MomsRising meetup

SAMPLE EVENT DESCRIPTION:

"We won a MOM-umental victory in Washington State with the passage of Paid Family and Medical Leave. Starting in January 2020, workers will be able to take paid time off to welcome a new child to their family, to care for a critically ill loved one, or to recover from their own serious medical condition. Join us for a fun, kid-friendly MomsRising meetup to learn more about Washington's best-in-nation Paid Family and Medical Leave program and how you can help families in your community to access it. Kids are welcome to join in the fun!"

[List accessibility information for the event location in the Facebook event description such as wheelchair access to the building, any steps to the building, elevator access, and distance from parking area to the entrance. More information about creating accessible event listings is [here](#).]

FACEBOOK EVENT COVER IMAGE: [\[DOWNLOAD HERE\]](#)



2. Decide What You're Going To Do Together

The most satisfying meetup is one where the host (you!) and participants feel welcomed and inspired by the topic and conversation. To help you plan the conversation and activities for a successful meetup, we have a sample agenda, and also some great tips and activities with suggested scripts. *(You know your group best! If you don't feel like you need a script, feel free to say things in your own words.)*

You can mix and match from the agenda ideas below to make the most effective gathering for your group size and the time you have.

SAMPLE AGENDA COMPONENTS

Mix and match the below agenda components to make an agenda that works for you.

A. Welcome

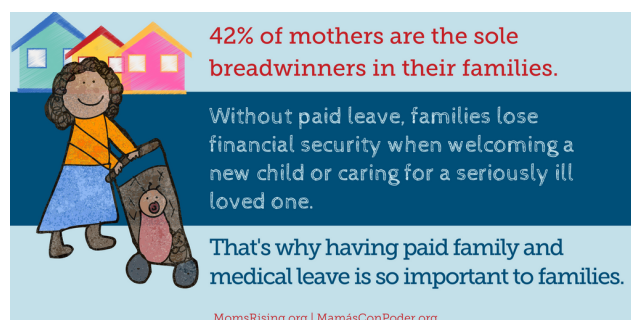
10 minutes

- Welcome guests and share a few personal thoughts about why you are hosting
- Invite each person to introduce themselves
- Pass around a sign-in sheet (See our template in the appendix that you can print at home)
- Briefly overview the activities for the meetup



1 in 4 mothers
return to work within
10 days of giving birth

Nearly 12% return less than a week after giving birth



B. Our Experiences

20 minutes

Many people care deeply about paid family and medical leave because they, or someone they know, have had a personal experience of using it – or of needing it but not having it. Reflecting on our own personal experiences with this issue can be a powerful way to begin the discussion.

SAMPLE AGENDA COMPONENTS CONTINUED

To have this conversation, we'd recommend you:

Ask the group to think on these prompts and reflect on their own experiences (You may want to go around a circle in your group so everyone has a chance to share):

YOU CAN SAY:

- "Have you, or has anyone you know, had an experience where you needed time away from work to care for your own serious illness, that of a family member, or to care for the arrival of a new child? Was that time paid, or unpaid? This could be a positive experience or a negative experience. What happened in your life?"
- Invite the participants to share their reflections with the group. Thank people for sharing their stories.

C. How Moms, Dads, Kiddos, and Leaders won Paid Family and Medical Leave in Washington State

5 minutes

Take this opportunity to briefly bring your guests up to speed on how we got here! Wondering what to say? Try this:

YOU CAN SAY:

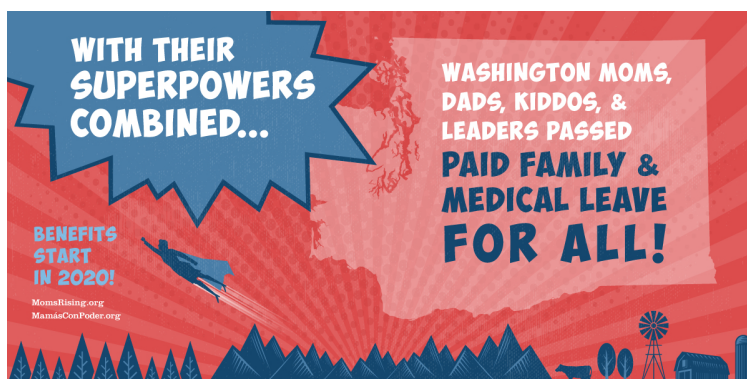
"The lived experiences of moms, dads, grandparents, small business owners, and community members, including all of us, helped grow a movement in support of paid family and medical leave in Washington State. After decades of advocacy and incremental victories, legislators from both sides of the aisle came together in 2017 to pass a best-in-nation policy for all Washington workers. MomsRising played a major role making that happen, proving: when moms rise, we all rise!"

In 2016, nearly 300 MomsRising members across Washington State joined a statewide, bipartisan Listening Tour that included three members of Congress, 11 members of the Washington State legislature, 17 local council members, numerous business leaders, and representatives of more than 60 community agencies and organizations. MomsRising members like us made hundreds of calls to their state legislators, attended town halls, placed letters-to-the-editor in local newspapers, and sent tens of thousands of emails (over 35,000!) to encourage representatives in Olympia to support paid leave. Want to learn more about the advocacy that made paid family and medical leave in Washington State possible?"

What is Paid Family and Medical Leave?

Paid Family and Medical Leave – which is different from paid sick leave – provides workers the time they need to be there with family during times of joy and times of sorrow without risking a paycheck. And it empowers small businesses to support their employees when they need it the most without carrying the financial burden alone. Paid Family and Medical Leave can be used to take extended leaves from work to:

- Bond with a new child after birth, adoption, or foster placement
- Care for a seriously sick spouse, child (including adult children), parent sibling, grandchild, or grandparent
- Recover from your own serious medical condition



SAMPLE AGENDA COMPONENTS CONTINUED

Here are some resources you can share with your guests:

When Moms Rise: The Story of Paid Family and Medical Leave Advocacy in Washington State
<https://moms.ly/2RSpjmV>

Washington's new family-leave law is among the most generous in the nation
<http://moms.ly/2FBOAiN>

WA Paid Family & Medical Leave is LAW! 'A Great Day for All Washingtonians' blog post
<http://moms.ly/2tmmtz4>

D. What does Washington's new Paid Family and Medical Leave program mean for me, my family, and my community?

20 minutes

The goal of this activity is to provide guests with information about Washington's new Paid Family and Medical Leave program so they can access benefits themselves AND so they can help their friends, family, and neighbors access benefits too!

YOU CAN SAY:

"Now, we will walk through the basics of Paid Family and Medical Leave, so we know what to expect from this new program and so we can share this information with others. We want to help as many people as possible take advantage of this new program. So we'll start by watching a quick video, and then we'll learn more about the nuts and bolts of how the program works."

Show MomsRising's video overviewing the new program.
<https://moms.ly/2wt3lbQ>

Pass around copies of the Paid Family and Medical Leave in WA State postcard.
<https://moms.ly/2RNeHpO>

YOU CAN SAY:

"Here are the most important bits of information to know about Washington's new Paid Family and Medical Leave program. You can also follow along by reading the postcard I just handed out."

How long is Paid Family and Medical Leave and how can it be used?

Each year, workers will be able to take:

- 12 weeks of paid family leave to bond with a new child after birth, adoption, or foster placement or to care for a seriously sick spouse, child (including adult children), sibling, parent, grandchild, or grandparent OR
- 12 weeks of paid medical leave to recover from their own serious medical condition (for example, child birth or surgery – leave cannot be taken for a cold or minor illness)

Workers can combine family and medical leave to receive 16 weeks of paid leave per year. That means birth parents can take 16 weeks of paid leave, and birth parents who experience pregnancy complications, as defined by a doctor, can take 18 weeks of paid leave per year.



SAMPLE AGENDA COMPONENTS CONTINUED

How is Paid Family and Medical Leave funded?

Paid Family and Medical Leave will be paid for through a statewide insurance pool that employees and some employers will contribute to beginning January 1, 2019. The average worker will contribute about \$2 per week from their paycheck. Business owners with fewer than 50 employees (that's 96% of Washington businesses!) will have the option of contributing to the insurance pool or not – their employees will receive benefits from the Washington Employment Security Department either way. And business owners with fewer than 150 employees that choose to contribute can receive small business assistance to help cover costs while an employee is on leave.

How much is the Paid Family and Medical Leave benefit?

Workers will receive a percentage of their wages, with low-income workers receiving 90% of their wages and higher income workers receiving a progressively smaller portion of their wages. The maximum weekly benefit is \$1,000, meaning that workers earning more than \$81,000 per year will receive no more than \$1,000 per week.

HOURLY WAGE	ANNUAL EARNINGS (AT FULL-TIME)	WEEKLY PREMIUMS		BENEFIT LEVEL: % OF WEEKLY WAGE
		WORKER	EMPLOYERS	
\$13.50	\$28,000	\$1.36	\$0.80	90%
\$26	\$54,000	\$2.62	\$1.54	71%
\$40	\$83,000	\$4.03	\$2.37	63%

How does Paid Family and Medical Leave work?

Beginning January 1, 2020, workers will apply for Paid Family and Medical Leave online, by phone, or by paper application through the Employment Security Department (ESD), with only minimal information required from employers. Benefits will be paid directly to the worker from ESD every two weeks.

Who qualifies for Paid Family and Medical Leave?

Anyone who has worked at least 820 hours with one or multiple employers in the past year, including public and part-time employees, can take Paid Family and Medical Leave. Self-employed individuals can opt into the program.

Are businesses required to contribute?

Businesses with fewer than 50 employees (that's 96% of Washington businesses!) have the option of contributing to the insurance pool or not – and their employees will receive benefits from the Washington Economic Security Department (ESD) either way.

Is small business assistance available?

Small businesses that choose to contribute their share of the premium to the insurance pool, and have fewer than 150 employees, can receive up to \$3,000 to cover costs while an employee is on leave. Businesses can apply for up to 10 grants each year.

Questions? If questions come up, just send them to wainfo@momsrising.org.

SAMPLE AGENDA COMPONENTS CONTINUED

E. Learn More and Take Action

10 minutes

Lead your guests on a virtual tour of the new MomsRising multilingual website, <http://MomsRising.org/paidleavewa>

Feel free to use the script below or you can deliver the information in your own words.

YOU CAN SAY:

“MomsRising has launched a new multilingual website, <http://MomsRising.org/paidleavewa>, to share information about Washington’s Paid Family and Medical Leave program, provide downloadable tools and resources, and invite moms, dads, and families to take action to improve access to the program. The website even includes an easy-to-use calculator so you can estimate your Paid Family and Medical Leave benefit!”

Invite guests to peruse the website on their smartphones, or look over the shoulder of someone nearby, and sign up to join our Washington State MomsForce for Paid Family and Medical Leave.



Resources for Business Owners

If you have any business owners in your group, please take a moment to share about the benefits Paid Family and Medical Leave offers businesses. Share a postcard with basic information about how the program will work for businesses: <https://moms.ly/2LahvLo>

YOU CAN SAY:

“Family is at the heart of every small business! Paid Family and Medical Leave levels the playing field by providing small businesses with the assistance they need so that all employees can be there for family during times of joy and times of hardship.”

YOU CAN SAY:

“As part of the Washington State MomsForce for Paid Family and Medical Leave, you’ll hear the latest and greatest news about the program, and you’ll learn how you can help improve access to it. We need your help to share the good news far and wide about Paid Family and Medical Leave, beginning in your local community. You can also access information and tools for taking action through MomsRising’s new multilingual website on Paid Family and Medical Leave. Now, keep your phones handy – they’ll be useful for the next activity!”

SAMPLE AGENDA COMPONENTS CONTINUED

F. How can we make a difference?

5 minutes

Remind guests that they've already taken the first and most important action by signing up for the Washington State MomsForce for Paid Family and Medical Leave! Suggest that they commit to do even more.

YOU CAN SAY:

"We've had a MOMumental victory in our state, but our work doesn't stop here! Paid Family and Medical Leave is only helpful if Washingtonians know about the program and know how to access it. That's where you come in! We need your help to share the good news far and wide, beginning in your local community."

Join the WA State Facebook group

In this group, we'll share information about online and on-the-ground advocacy opportunities in Washington State. We'll also share relevant articles, blog posts, resources, information about local events, and blogs from Washington voices. This is a space where members can talk about the issues they care about and connect with others who share their concerns in their local community. Membership is open to those who live or work in Washington and are interested in issues that impact Washington families. Join us here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/MomsRisingWA/>



Take to social media

Take a photo as a group and share it on social media along with information about Paid Family and Medical Leave. Whether it's Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, or Instagram – your voice is powerful and influential with your loved ones. You can help your followers access the new program by sharing information and resources.

Sample Facebook post: Washington's new best-in-nation Paid Family and Medical Leave program is coming to boost families and businesses in 2020! Get all your questions answered at MomsRising's new multilingual website. It even includes a calculator so you can estimate your paid family and medical leave benefit! Do you own a small business? There's information for you, too! <http://MomsRising.org/paidleavewa>

Sample tweet: Get all your questions about WA's #PaidLeave program answered & even estimate your benefits online! There's plenty of info & resources for #smallbusinesses too! <http://MomsRising.org/paidleavewa> #paidleaveWA

Talk with your friends & spread the word around town

YOU CAN SAY:

"Between work, child care, and favorite neighborhood spots, you can help shout the good news by printing materials and distributing them around town."

Print some of these materials for your guests to take:

- Informational postcard (<https://moms.ly/2RNeHpO>)
- Informational postcard for businesses (<https://moms.ly/2LahvLo>)
- Paid Family and Medical Leave Poster (included in the appendix)



SAMPLE AGENDA COMPONENTS CONTINUED

Host your own meetup

Tell your guests that now that they've been to a meetup, they could organize one on their own to get their friends, family, and neighbors involved! By sharing information face-to-face with the people we know, we're helping to make a difference locally. MomsRising makes it easy! Encourage guests to talk to you about how you used this toolkit to plan and to reach out to wainfo@momsrising.org for extra support.

Send a Letter to the Editor

Submit a letter to the editor to your local paper. A letter to the editor is a quick and powerful way to share information about Paid Family and Medical Leave with a lot of people at once. Write a letter on your own or together with friends. MomsRising's simple online platform makes it easy for you to submit a letter to the editor to your local paper. MomsRising has even included a draft letter you can customize as you'd like. The MomsRising platform will send your letter to your local publications directly! Submit a letter: [<https://moms.ly/2FoJpnz>]

G. Closing

5 minutes

Remind guests that they've already taken the first and most important action by signing up for the MomsForce!

- Thank everyone for coming.
- Take a photo as a group and share it on social media along with information about Washington State's new Paid Family and Medical Leave program. Tag all our accounts: MomsRising, MamásConPoder.org, and the MomsRising WA FB page. Use hashtags: #keepmarching #risers #PFML #WAleg #paidleave #Poderosas (for Spanish) #paidleaveWA.
- Invite folks with questions that don't get answered during the meetup to contact wainfo@momsrising.org.

Paid Family and Medical Leave Resources

MomsRising Paid Family and Medical Leave website:

<http://MomsRising.org/paidleavewa>

MomsRising's Paid Family and Medical Leave in Washington State video:

<https://moms.ly/2wt3lbQ>

Paid Family and Medical Leave postcard:

<https://moms.ly/2RNeHpO>

Getting Down to Business postcard for small business owners:

<https://moms.ly/2LahvLo>

Employment Security Department WA Paid Family and Medical Leave program website:

<https://paidleave.wa.gov/>

MomsRising video about the importance of Paid Family and Medical Leave:

<http://moms.ly/2EzuLVf>

When Moms Rise: The Story of Paid Family and Medical Leave Advocacy in Washington State:

<https://moms.ly/2RSpmV>

Washington's new family-leave law is among the most generous in the nation:

<http://moms.ly/2FBOAiN>

WA Paid Family & Medical Leave is LAW! 'A Great Day for All Washingtonians' blog post:

<http://moms.ly/2tmmtz4>

Letter to the editor to share information about Paid Family and Medical Leave submission form:

<https://moms.ly/2FoJpnz>

ACTIVITIES FOR KIDS

This meetup is designed to be kid-friendly. Guide your guests through one or more fun activities designed for kids. Some ideas are listed below, but feel free to get creative and come up with your own!

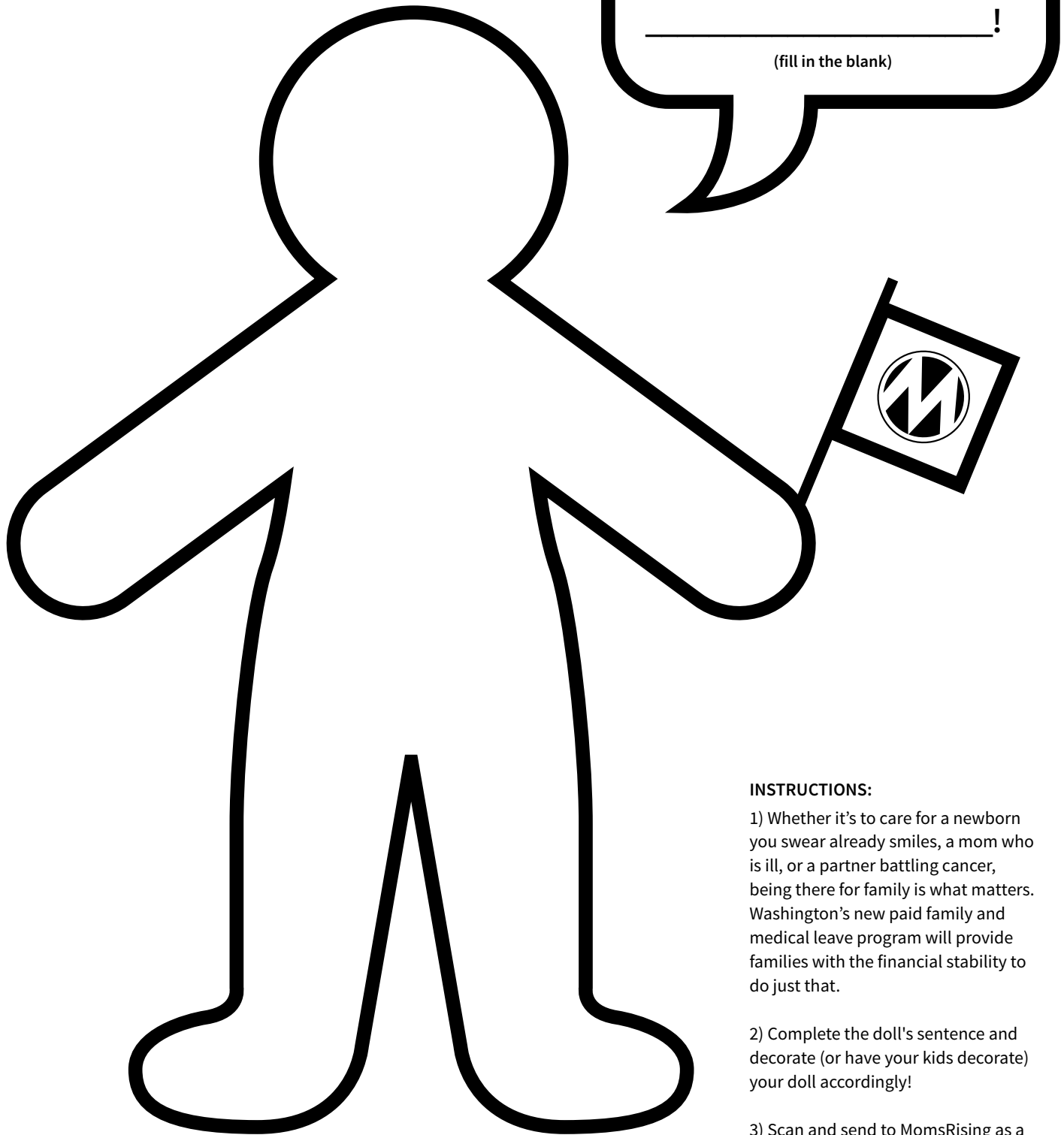
YOU CAN SAY:

“Next, let’s invite the kiddos to participate in a fun project that promotes the values important to paid family and medical leave, such as community and being there for family.”

- **Decorate Paper Dolls:** Use the simple template included in the appendix and basic art supplies to decorate paper dolls with your guests and kids. Provide crayons, colored pencils, markers, glue, yarn for hair, glitter or whatever your imagination comes up with!
- **Paid Family and Medical Leave Coloring Sheets:** While adults discuss important issues, encourage the kids to color these pre-made coloring sheets on how paid family and medical leave helps families and businesses. Make sure you hang these works of art around your community. Coloring sheets are included in the appendix.
- **Balloon Feelings (18 months to 6 years old):** This activity will help children identify different emotions and help feel accepted in expressing all the various emotions they might have in life. Talk about different emotions like happy, excited, angry, worried, surprised, and sad. Blow up balloons with your children and use a marker to draw a circle for a face showing a different emotion. You can talk about different emotions you might have for different situations like getting sick, the first day of school, or having a birthday party, etc. They can use different balloons to express their feelings “I feel [name feeling] when [situation].”
- **Write thank you cards (4 to 12 years old) :** This activity helps children express gratitude and foster a sense of community. Help your children think of people in their lives who have been kind or helped them especially when things were difficult. Ask them how they felt when people are kind to them. Get paper and markers and make the cards together. Have them write or draw their feelings on the cards. You can help younger children trace a handprint on the card to color in.



Make a Paper Doll



Paid family and medical
leave helps my family to

_____!

(fill in the blank)

INSTRUCTIONS:

1) Whether it's to care for a newborn you swear already smiles, a mom who is ill, or a partner battling cancer, being there for family is what matters. Washington's new paid family and medical leave program will provide families with the financial stability to do just that.

2) Complete the doll's sentence and decorate (or have your kids decorate) your doll accordingly!

3) Scan and send to MomsRising as a scan to wainfo@momsrising.org or post your dolls on social media and tag @MomsRising

WASHINGTON'S PAID FAMILY & MEDICAL LEAVE IS COMING IN JANUARY 2020

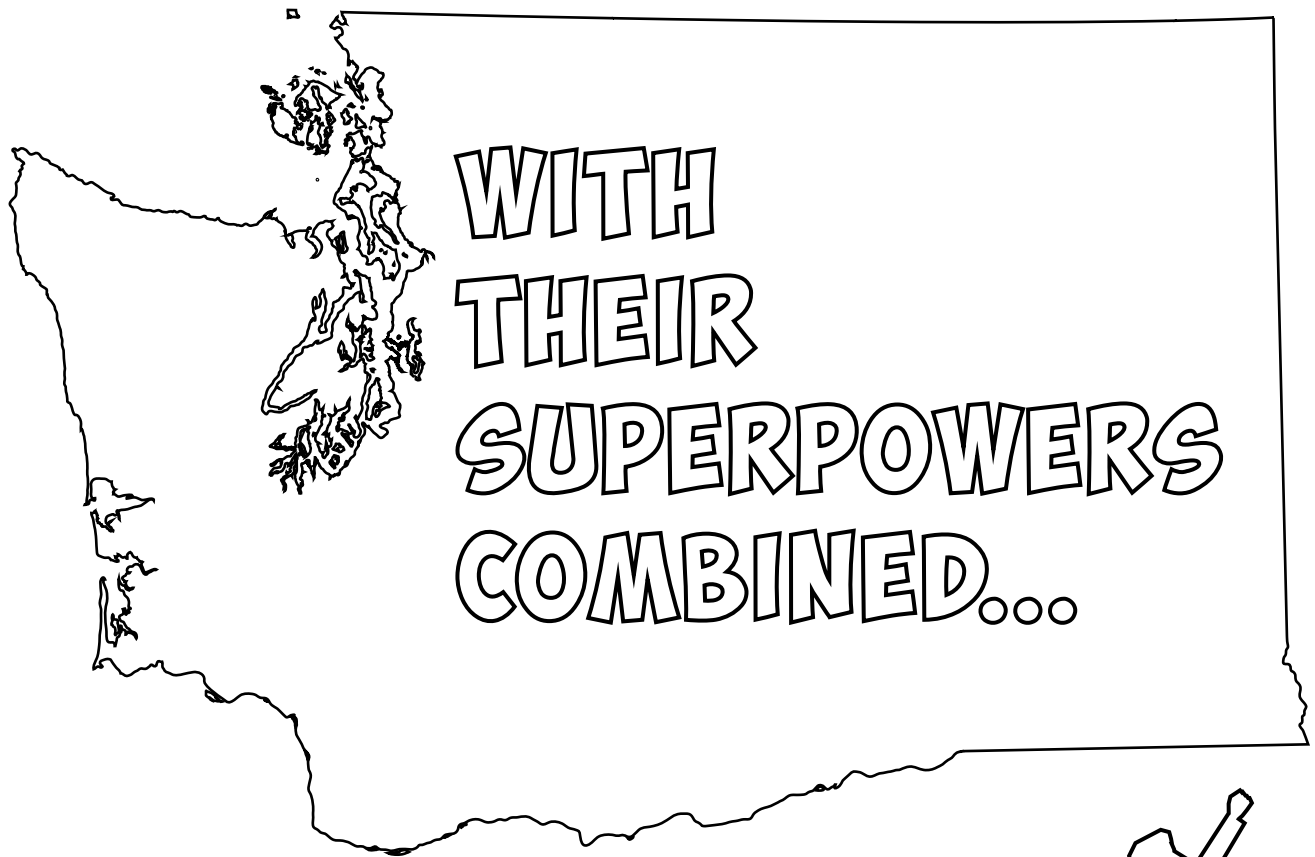


Paid Family and Medical Leave is
important to me because...

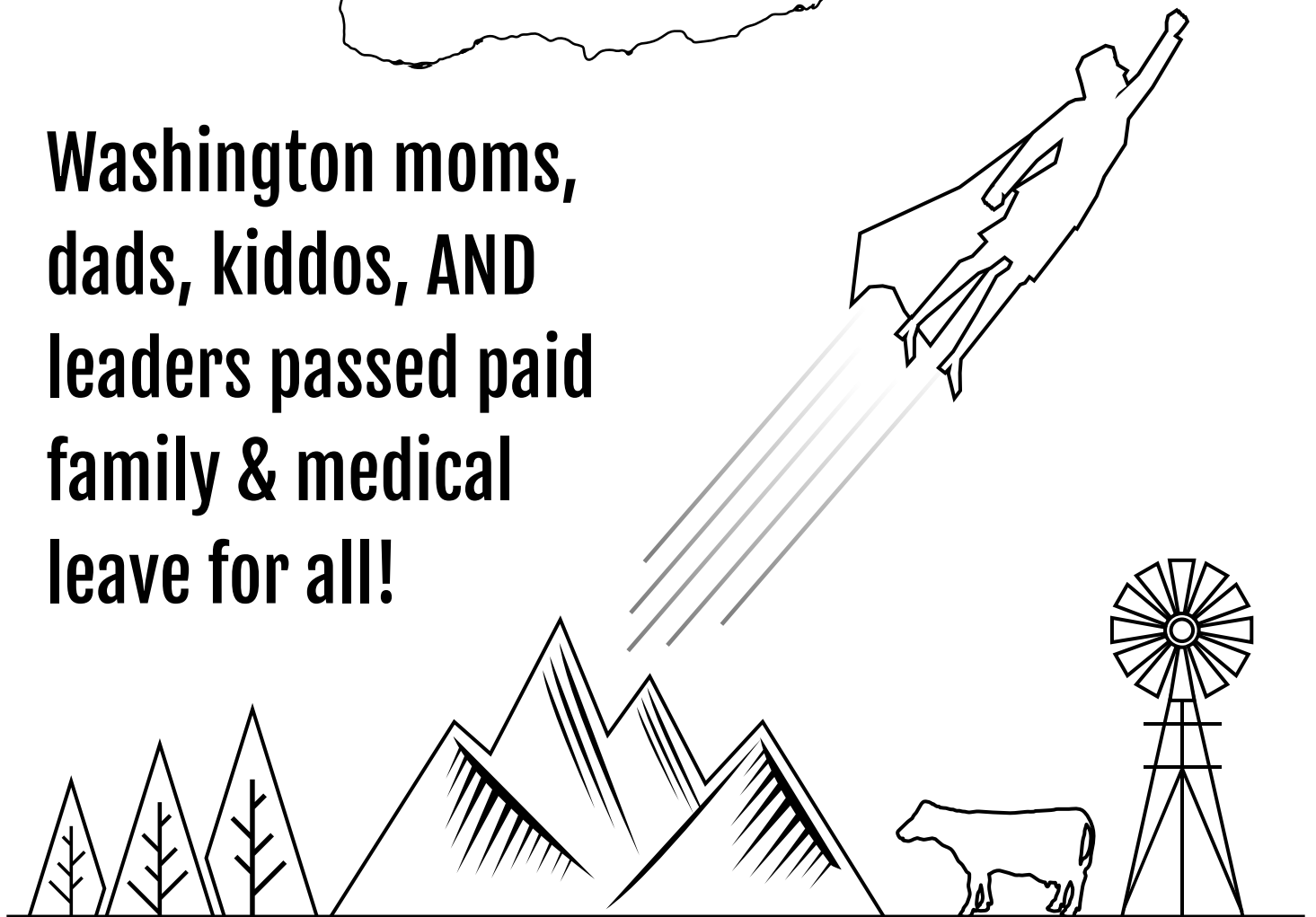


<http://MomsRising.org/paidleavewa>

MomsRising.org | MamásConPoder.org



**Washington moms,
dads, kiddos, AND
leaders passed paid
family & medical
leave for all!**

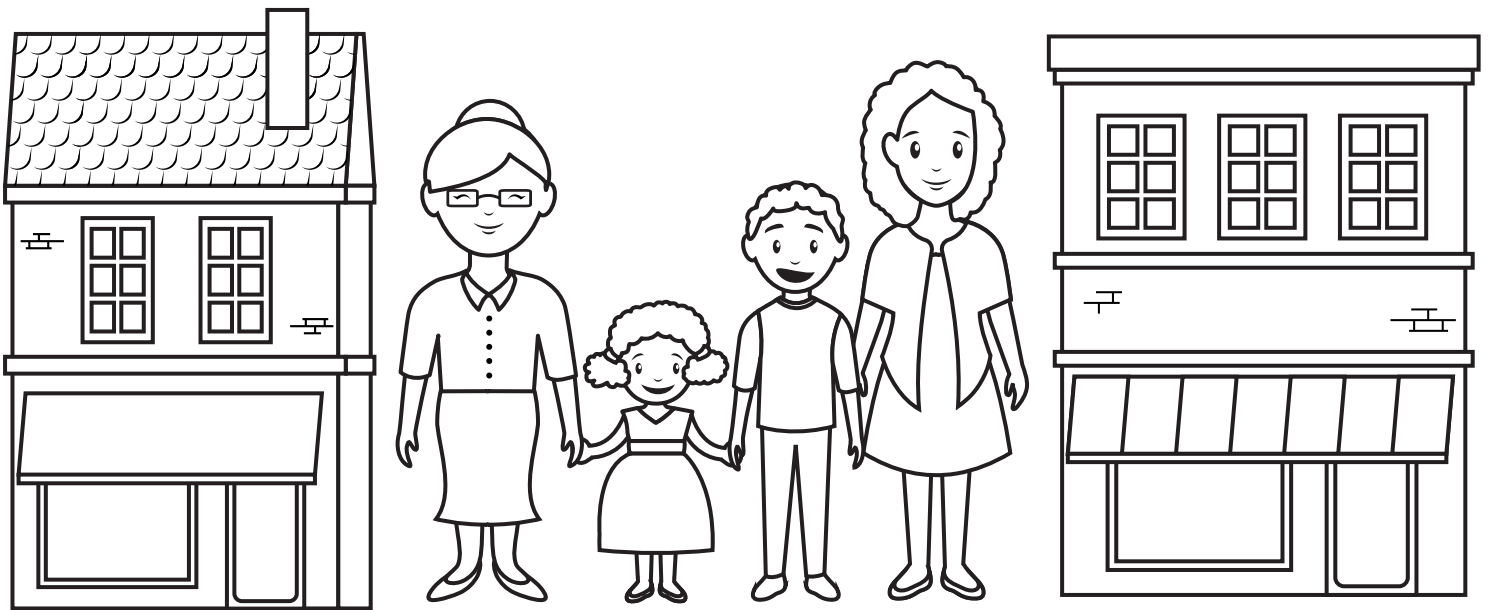


<http://MomsRising.org/paidleavewa>

MomsRising.org | MamásConPoder.org

FAMILY IS AT THE HEART OF EVERY SMALL BUSINESS

Washington's Paid Family and Medical Leave program is a win-win-win for Washington's families, small businesses, and economy

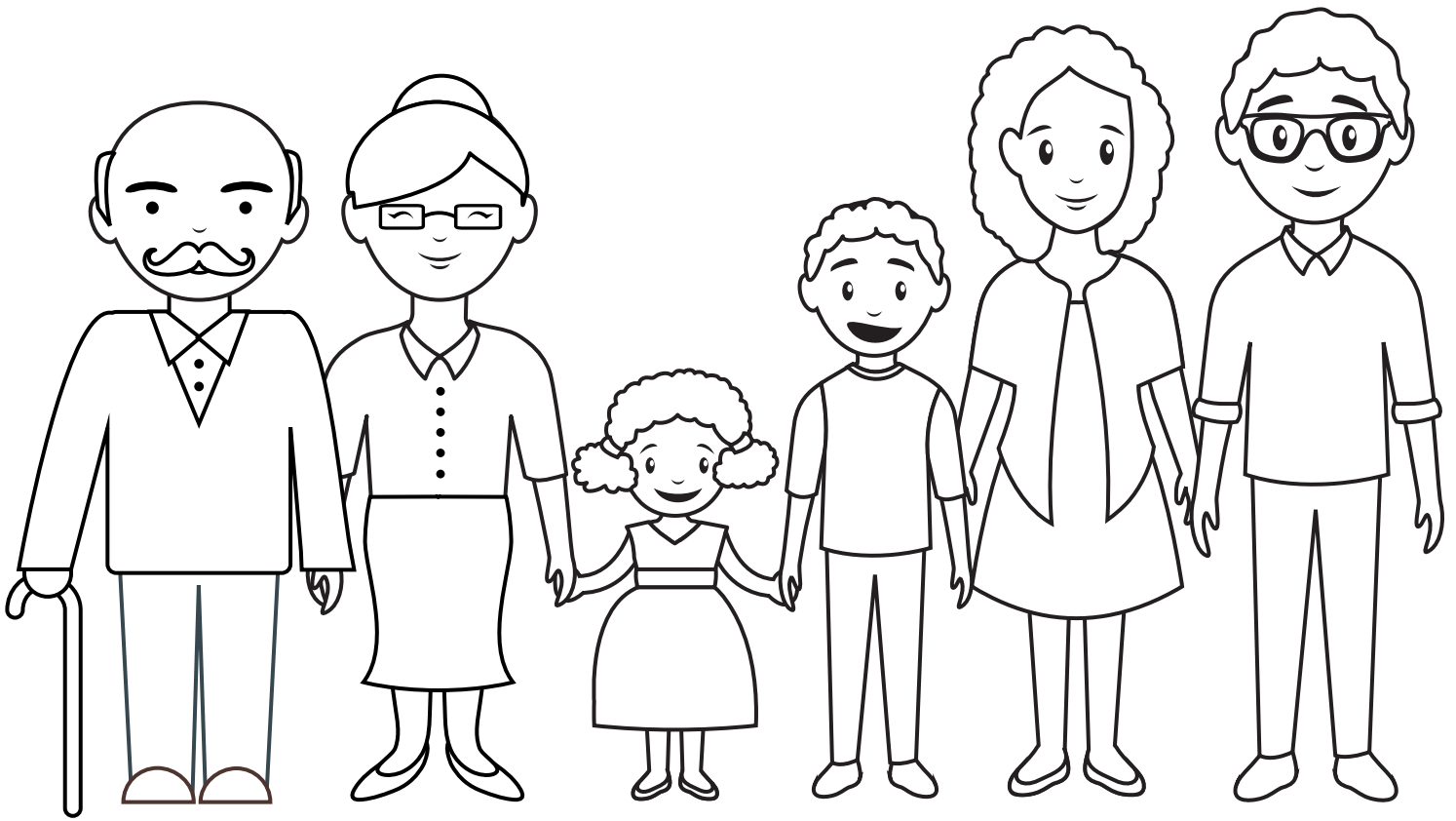


Beginning January 2020, small businesses will be able to support their employees when they need it most without carrying the financial burden alone. This new program levels the playing field by providing small businesses with the assistance they need so that all employees can be there for family during times of joy and times of hardship.

<http://MomsRising.org/paidleavewa>

MomsRising.org | MamásConPoder.org

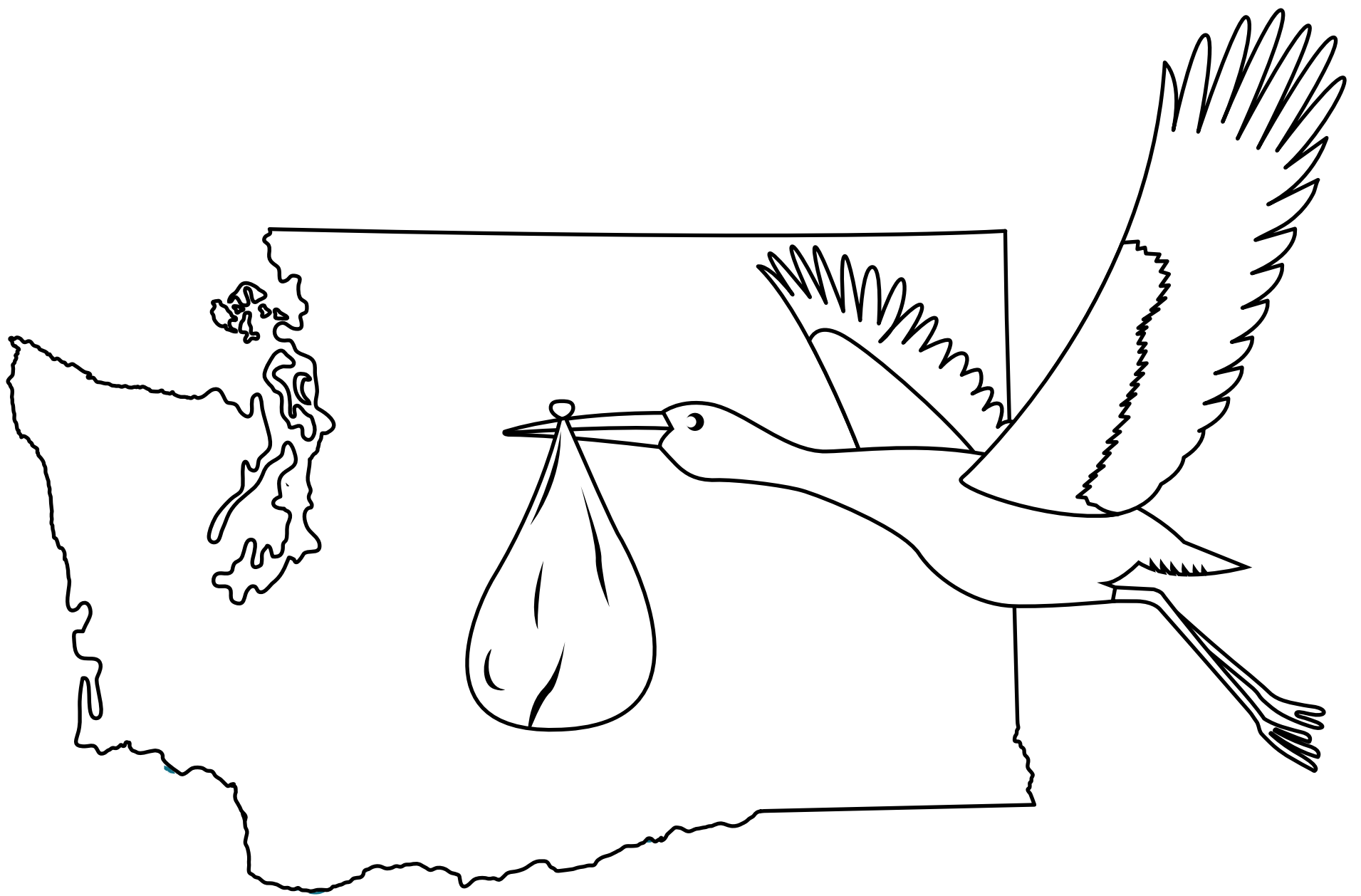
PAID FAMILY & MEDICAL LEAVE FOR ALL OUR WASHINGTON FRIENDS AND FAMILY



Whether it's to care for a newborn you swear already smiles, a mom who is critically ill, or a partner battling cancer, being there for family is what matters. Washington's Paid Family and Medical Leave program will provide families with the financial stability to do just that – and businesses won't have to carry the financial burden while an employee is on leave.

<http://MomsRising.org/paidleavewa>

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**WASHINGTON STATE
IS EXPECTING..
PAID FAMILY &
MEDICAL LEAVE**

**WASHINGTON'S NEW PAID FAMILY
AND MEDICAL LEAVE PROGRAM, WILL BE
AVAILABLE TO ALL WASHINGTON WORKERS
BEGINNING JANUARY 2020.**

<http://MomsRising.org/paidleavewa>

MomsRising.org | MamásConPoder.org

Thank you so much for coming, please sign in!

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