

IOWA 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 Iowa and take them to heart. Our families are counting on you.**

Kathryn, Dubuque

My Mother had alzheimer's and my boss gave me paid time off in occasion to get her to Doctor's appointments and Adult Daycare. Not everyone has a job where the boss understands. I feel it is absolutely necessary that there is paid family leave.

Theresa, Iowa City

After having a c-section, I struggled with breastfeeding my son, but because I had paid leave, I was able to figure it out. Women I know with much easier deliveries but less support from their offices, weren't as lucky. Breastfeeding is a healthy, inexpen-

sive option, but the women and children who could benefit most from it (those with lower incomes) aren't getting the support they need and have to return to work. It's criminal.

Christina, Cedar Rapids

I took paid family leave so I could care for my dying grandmother. My boss did not like it when I took time but I did it so that she wouldn't be alone. I loved her like she loved me when I was younger and she cared for me and my siblings. I do think it's a vital part of keeping loyal employees.

Kate, Windsor Heights

I just went through seven weeks of caring for my husband at home. He had liver cancer, and died recently. Although I am retired, I often thought of how difficult (or impossible!) it would be to do that if I were still working, let alone if I had little ones to care for! Generous paid family leave is a must!

Gabriella, Burlington

As a married mother of one who almost lost her house because unpaid leave put us so far behind on bills, I can't say how much this would help the American family. The impact would be huge and positive.

Trina, Sioux City

Every person should have the right to care for family when illness affects their family!! Just make sure the employer can't Fire them, as soon as they return to work. It happened to me, even though I had documents to prove I was sick.



**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