



# Family and Medical Leave Insurance

## A statewide paid family medical leave insurance program would:

- provide wage replacement for Vermont workers so they may recover from serious personal illness or injury, care for a loved one, or welcome a new child;
- be funded through an employee contribution with the option for individual employers to contribute to the premium; and
- help Vermont small businesses be more competitive employers.

A bill before the legislature, H.196, would create a **statewide family & medical leave insurance program.**

Under this proposal, an employee would be eligible to access wage replacement if they are:

- welcoming a new child;
- recovering from a serious personal illness or injury; or
- caring for a seriously ill family member; and
- if they have paid into the insurance program for a minimum of six out of the past 12 months.

The benefit includes:

- up to 12 weeks of paid leave for qualifying conditions;
- 100% wage replacement – up to a cap of two times Vermont’s livable wage – paid out of the insurance fund; and
- job protection (except in certain instances).



*Chrissy, an employee at The Alchemist, cares for her child, Forest, in The Alchemist’s infant care and lactation area.*

We’ve been really fortunate to be able to provide a flexible leave policy to our employees. I know that this is something that is impossible for many of Vermont’s small employers. Vermont needs a paid family medical leave insurance program, so that more employers can see their employees thrive.

— Jen Kimmich, The Alchemist

**Only half of all workers in the U.S. are eligible for leave under the federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA),** and it remains inaccessible to those who cannot afford it because it means an employee would have to choose between taking care of themselves or a loved one or losing their paycheck.

**Only 11 percent of workers in the U.S. have access to paid family leave through an employer,** and less than 40 percent have access to personal medical leave.

Among working mothers, only about half are able to take any kind of paid leave – including sick or vacation time – when their children are born. And, most strikingly, **more than 40 percent of bankruptcies in the U.S. are a result of lost income when the employee or a family member falls ill.**

## Studies have shown...

When mothers take longer leaves, their babies are **MORE LIKELY** to be seen for regular check ups and immunizations.

Breastfeeding mothers, who take part in paid leave programs, continue breastfeeding for **TWICE** as long as those without access to paid leave.

Children’s hospital stays are shortened by **31%** when parents have access to paid leave.

**9** months after the leave is taken, fathers who take at least two weeks off for the birth of a child are more involved in direct care than those who do not.

In California, the vast majority of employers reported that paid family leave had a **POSITIVE** or no noticeable effect on productivity, profitability, turnover or morale.



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*The U.S. is one of the only countries in the world to not offer any kind of paid family or medical leave.*

***Vermont can do better.***

	Wage Replacement (%)	Funded By	Maximum Leave (weeks/year)
Rhode Island	40%	Employee	11
California	55%	Employee	12
New Jersey	73%	Employee & Employer	12
Canada	55%	Employee & Employer	17
U.K.	90%	Employee & Employer	12
Sweden	90%	Employee & Employer	12 + 12
Zambia	100%	Employer	12
Indonesia	100%	Employer	12