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Paid Family Leave: EDD Launches Media Campaign to Boost Awareness of Benefits

Sacramento, California, February 6, 2017: Today the Employment Development Department (EDD) will launch the first statewide Paid Family Leave (PFL) media campaign since the law first passed in 2002. Advocates applaud this move as a victory in their push to make PFL accessible to more working families. “Raising the visibility of Paid Family Leave is the first step in making sure all California workers and their families benefit,” said Jenya Cassidy, Director of the California Work & Family Coalition. “This doesn’t happen automatically – we are really proud of our partnership with the EDD in making Paid Family Leave work for everyone.”

Advocates have been working on equity in Paid Family Leave since an early [study](#) by Eileen Appelbaum, Senior Economist, and Dr. Ruth Milkman, Professor of Sociology, revealed low awareness among low income, new immigrant, Latino, and young workers. Members of the California Work & Family Coalition collaborated with Assemblymember Daly’s (D-Anaheim) office to pass a budget bill allowing the EDD to use funds for outreach and education after a [2015 Field Poll](#) showed only 36% of registered voters were aware of the law.

Moments Matter

The EDD public education campaign entitled “Moments Matter” will combine radio, digital, print and some television ads focused on caregivers, new dads, moms, adoptive, and foster parents from across the state. Coalition members saw a preview and were able to give some early input on content.

What’s Next

Sharon Terman, Senior Staff Attorney at Legal Aid at Work, a member of the Coalition, says attorneys at her organization anticipate an increase in the volume of calls to their Work & Family helpline -- which offers free legal advice on leave rights, including the complex interaction of job protection and Paid Family Leave -- as more workers learn about the program and seek information about their rights. “One of the first questions people have when they need to take leave is if their boss can say no,” she said. “Public education will make a huge difference, but we also need resources for the legal and community organizations on the ground.”

According to Ana Grande, Community Organizing Director at Clinica Romero in Los Angeles, having legal information and on-the-ground community support around Paid Family Leave is crucial for new immigrants. Clinica Romero has been working with legal and community partners from the Coalition to educate patients and their families about Paid Family Leave. “It’s one thing to see an ad about Paid Family Leave,” she said. “Our patients need their



information from a trusted source and they often have questions and want additional support when applying for benefits.”

“The opportunity to connect public education with community and legal support is why the partnership between the EDD and the statewide Coalition can be such a great model,” said Jenya Cassidy. “As campaigns for Paid Family Leave gain momentum nationally, states and localities are looking to California to see how our law is implemented. It’s important for us to make sure we are reaching all California workers effectively.” As momentum around paid leave policies grows, federal legislation, the FAMILY Act, expected to be re-introduced this week, will allow employees and employers to create a national Family and Medical Leave Insurance program.

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Paid Family Leave

Paid Family Leave provides up to 6 weeks of partial pay to workers who take time off to bond with a new child - birth, adopted, or foster - or to care for a seriously ill family member.

The California Work & Family Coalition

The California Work & Family Coalition is a statewide alliance of parents, caregivers, unions, and advocates from diverse organizations. We formed around the passage of California’s Paid Family Leave law – the first in the nation - and we continue to work together on expanding access to Paid Family Leave, paid sick days, and other family friendly workplace policies. Our mission is to organize communities to realize equitable, family-friendly workplaces and to expand the social safety net in California through policy, advocacy, and education.