



Extending Paid Family Leave to Federal Employees Will Benefit Workers, Taxpayers, Nation

The Issue

Federal employees currently receive no paid time off for the birth, adoption, or foster placement of a child, or to address other family medical emergencies. This forces workers to use up their own sick or annual leave, take off time without pay, or return to work earlier than advised. Providing paid family leave to federal employees will help build support for extending this benefit to all American workers and their families.

How We Got Here

The U.S. is the only industrialized nation that does not offer its citizens paid family leave. Under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), employees in both the public and private sectors can take up to 12 weeks of leave to care for a new arrival or an ill family member without fear of losing their jobs, but that leave is unpaid. Six states and Washington, D.C., currently require companies to offer some level of paid family leave to their workers, reaching about 13 percent of all private-sector workers in the U.S.

Why It's Dangerous

Lack of paid family leave forces families to make difficult decisions when coping with newly arrived children, medical emergencies, or separations due to military service. Studies show that providing this leave costs relatively little but results in happier and more productive employees – reducing employee turnover and increasing employee morale.

What We've Done So Far

AFGE has been lobbying to provide paid family leave benefits to federal workers for many years and recently endorsed a bipartisan bill introduced in the House that would provide all federal employees with 12 weeks of paid leave for reasons covered by the Family Medical Leave Act. These include the birth, adoption, or fostering of a new child; caring for sick or injured family members; an employee's own serious health condition; and family issues that arise when a loved one is serving overseas in the military.

What Needs to Happen Now

AFGE urges every member of Congress to cosponsor the Federal Employee Paid Leave Act of 2019 (HR 1534 and S 1174) and support this important legislation when it comes to a vote.

This information should not be downloaded using government equipment, read during duty time or sent to others using government equipment, because it suggests action to be taken in support or against legislation. Do not use your government email address or government phone in contacting your lawmakers.