



Family Leave Talking Points

Main Points

- The Comprehensive Paid Leave for Federal Employees Act would provide federal employees with 12 weeks of paid family leave for all absences covered by the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA).
- This proposal expands on the paid parental leave benefit that Congress approved in late 2019 and that took effect in October 2020. That benefit provided federal workers with 12 weeks of paid leave for the birth, adoption, or foster placement of a new child.
- The new legislation would expand the parental leave benefit into a true family leave benefit – providing federal workers with 12 weeks of paid leave to care for close family members, for their own serious health conditions, and for circumstances that arise when the employee or a family member is detailed for covered duty in the armed forces.
- Employees would not need to exhaust their existing sick or annual leave before using this benefit.

Supporting Points

- The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the urgency of providing all U.S. workers – including those employed by the federal government – with paid leave to protect the health and safety of themselves and their families.
- The United States is the [only advanced-economy nation](#) not to provide some form of paid parental leave to its citizens – and only one of two not to provide paid family leave. Because of this, workers must depend on the generosity of their employers for any paid time off to care for themselves and their loved ones.
- Currently, the [Family and Medical Leave Act](#) guarantees employees only unpaid leave to care for a new child or a sick parent, to tend to their own serious health conditions, or to address issues stemming from military deployments – and many workers simply can't afford to miss multiple paychecks.



- Providing paid family and medical leave benefits not only employees, but employers too.
- Employers offering paid family leave report higher retention, better worker morale, and increased productivity – benefits that offset the costs associated with providing the leave.
- According to a [2019 study](#) by the American Sustainable Business Council and Panorama, technology companies implementing paid leave policies experienced a \$2.64 return for every \$1 invested in their workforces, while manufacturing companies saw a \$2.57 return for every \$1 invested – translating to productivity increases of 6.5% and 3.6%, respectively.
- Expanding the paid parental leave program currently provided to federal workers into a full paid family leave program would cost just \$53 million over 10 years, according to a preliminary estimate by the Congressional Budget Office. This is a small price to pay for the economic and productivity benefits that would be achieved.
- This legislation would close a loophole in the government’s leave benefits and improve the government’s ability to recruit and retain qualified workers.
- The federal government should lead by example and be the model employer for other employers to emulate. Extending full family leave benefits to federal workers will get us one step closer to that goal.
- The bill was introduced in the House in January by Oversight and Reform Chairwoman Carolyn Maloney ([HR 564](#)). The House bill was voted out of the House Oversight Committee on July 20, 2021. Companion legislation was introduced in the Senate in April by Sen. Brian Schatz ([S 1158](#)).
- AFGE looks forward to working with lawmakers to ensure passage of this critical legislation as soon as possible.