



Connecticut Campaign for **PAID FAMILY LEAVE**

Paid Family and Medical Leave: The Need for an Inclusive Definition of Family

The Campaign for Paid Family Leave supports paid family and medical leave legislation that allows workers to take paid time off for any reason defined in Connecticut's Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), with the addition of caring for a sibling, grandparent, grandchild, a child of any age and **any other individual related by blood or whose close association with the employee is the equivalent of a family relationship.**

All Connecticut Workers Deserve Time to Care.

Due to cultural, economic, and social forces the **overwhelming majority** of households today depart from the "nuclear family" model of a married husband, wife, and their kids. *Connecticut workers need an inclusive paid family and medical leave system that will allow time to care for extended family and loved ones who don't share biological or legal ties.* An inclusive definition of family is critical to:

- **LGBTQ Workers:** LGBTQ-identified older adults in the U.S. are nearly *twice* as likely as non-LGBTQ-identified older adults to live alone. They are also less likely to have biological family or partner support when they need care and often rely on chosen family: **42% of LGBTQ adults** between the ages of 45 and 64 said that they would depend on close friends in an emergency, compared to 25% of the general population.
- **Working Caregivers:** fifty-three percent (**53%**) of Americans who care for an older adult provide that unpaid care to a friend or loved one other than a spouse or parent. More than **23%** of workers who provide care to an adult age 65 or older do so for a friend, neighbor or other unrelated person and over **22%** care for a relative other than a spouse, unmarried partner, parent, or grandparent.
- **Individuals who live alone:** more than 378,000 households in CT, or **28%** of all households in the state, consist of an individual who lives alone. In an emergency or during an illness, many of these individuals rely on care from chosen family—like close friends—or extended family.
- **Unmarried couples:** More than **80,000 residents** of CT live with an **unmarried partner** and should have the right to care for each other.
- **Workers with Disabilities:** In a 2016 national survey conducted by the Center for American Progress, 32% of people in the United States reported that they took time off work to provide care for a **chosen family** member. Higher rates were participants with disabilities (**42%**, compared with 30% of participants without disabilities).

Inclusive Family Definitions Work Across the Country and Do Not Lead to Increases in Usage.

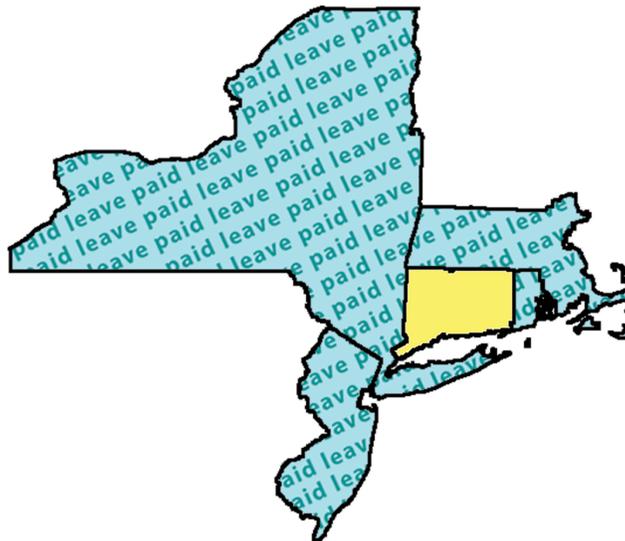
Several existing federal and state paid family leave and paid sick days laws show that an inclusive family definition provides important protection without leading to a significant increase in usage or uptake.

- The federal government has used—and repeatedly expanded—a chosen family standard for more than **45 years**. This language has been used in the context for sick leave since 1994.
- Since 2016, 5 localities, AZ, and RI have passed paid sick time laws that cover chosen and extended family. Under these 7 laws, more than **10 million** workers will gain the right to use paid sick time to care for chosen and extended family.

- Only a minority of paid family leave claims in CA, NJ, and RI are to care for a seriously ill family member. From July 2016 to June 2017, only **12.7%** of filed claims in CA were to care for a seriously ill relative. In 2016, **16.4%** of eligible claims in NJ and **20.4%** of approved claims in RI were to care for a family member with a serious health condition.

The Bottom Line: Paid family and medical leave (PFML) programs work well, are not abused, and require workers to obtain certification for a family member's health condition.

- Research shows that paid family leave programs work well and boost an employers' bottom lines. In California, approximately **93%** of employers reported that PFML had a positive or neutral effect on employee turnover, which saves employers replacement costs.
- The states with PFML programs require workers to submit documentation from the family member's health care provider in order to take the leave, and there may be additional safeguards to verify the details of the family member's health condition.
- CA, NJ, and RI all require certification that includes, among other requirements, medical facts, probable duration of the condition, a statement that the serious health condition warrants the worker to help provide care, and an estimate of how long the worker's participation may be necessary.



Make CT Next.

Learn more: www.paidfamilyleavect.org

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