



# PAID FAMILY AND PARENTAL LEAVE

## LEARNING GOALS

- To consider the benefits and costs of a paid family or parental leave program to businesses and employee health and well-being.
- To practice drawing connections between local challenges and global contexts and best practices.

## ASSIGNMENT

Estimated Time: ~20 min

- Listen: "[Countries Around the World Beat the U.S. on Paid Parental Leave](#)" (~ 8 min.)
- Read: "[Keep employers in mind as we advocate paid family and medical leave](#)" (opinion) (~ 7 min.)
- Read: "[Paid Family Leave: Strengthening Hawai'i's Children and Families](#)" (~ 5 min.)

## TERMINOLOGY

- **Paid Family Leave** - paid time off for parents and other caregivers to bond with a new child or care for an ill family member.
- **Paternal Leave** - paid time off to new fathers to care and bond with their newborn.
- **Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFRCA)** - a Congressional act providing 10 weeks of emergency family leave to workers. However, FFRCA is estimated to leave out as many as 75% of American workers.
- **Federal and Medical Leave Act** - a federal law providing 12 weeks of unpaid leave to workers for certain medical and family reasons.

## KAHOOT QUIZ

- Go to [Kahoot.it](https://kahoot.it) or use the Kahoot mobile app and enter the pin 03270662
- Or, use [this link](#)

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What are the benefits of paid family leave to both workers and employers?
- What are some concerns employers may have about paid parental leave, and how might these concerns be alleviated?
- Why would paid family leave be particularly important to female workers?
- How might Covid-19 impact both employers, and employees with parental responsibilities? Do you think parental leave would be beneficial during this time? Why or why not?
  - ◊ See the additional resources for an opinion piece on the role of parental leave in the era of COVID.



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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (continued)

- According to the NPR podcast, why is it important to offer paid leave to both mothers and fathers?
- What population demographics make paid family leave especially important to Hawaii?
- As of now, what caregiving provisions does Hawaii offer its workers, and how might Hawaii expand its policies? What policies, if any, do you think Hawaii or the United States as a whole should adopt from countries abroad?

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Hawaii Children's Action Network](#)  
A nonprofit organization which conducts research on the health and well-being of children in Hawaii and advocates for policies best serving children's economic and educational interests. Areas of advocacy include paid family leave, an increased minimum wage, and increased funding for public school programs.
- [Hawaii Paid Family Leave Moves Forward at State Legislature](#)  
An article by the Hawaii Public Radio explaining [Senate Bill 2491](#), which was introduced in the 2020 Hawaii State Legislature and proposed the creation of a paid family leave program providing employees with 16 weeks of paid leave. Note: the bill stalled in the House due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the subsequent suspension of the legislative session in Hawaii.
- [Top 10 Reasons Why Hawaii Needs Paid Family Leave](#)  
A short fact sheet by the UH Center on the Family outlining the benefits of paid family leave that are specific to Hawaii's families and economy.
- [Among 41 countries, only U.S. lacks paid parental leave](#)  
An article by the Pew Research Center comparing parental leave programs and benefits among OECD countries.
- [Dads With Newborns Struggle To Help With Childcare When They Lack Paternity Leave](#)  
A short podcast by NPR which outlines the struggles of a new father without paternity leave and explains the benefits of a paternal presence in the early weeks of a baby's life.
- [As coronavirus stresses families, paid parental leave can ease fears](#)  
An opinion piece in USA Today explaining the unprecedented challenges new parents face during the Covid-19 pandemic and the potential benefits of paid parental leave during this time.

## IDEAS FOR ACTION

### Easier

- Educate yourself: ask your parents and/or teachers about their personal challenges of raising a family while working. Consider if your parents and teachers may have benefited from paid family or parental leave at one point during their careers.



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## IDEAS FOR ACTION (continued)

### Easier

- Create a poll for your parents on their experiences returning back to work after having children. Possible questions might include: how much time did your parents take off? After returning to work, how did you parents ensure adequate care for you/your siblings? Share and analyze the results of the poll as a class.

### Medium

- Spread awareness: give a class presentation on the importance of paid family and parental leave in Hawaii.
- Volunteer: the Hawaii Children's Action Network strongly advocates for paid family leave. Visit their website (linked in the additional resources section) to find out more about volunteer opportunities and events related to paid family leave advocacy.
- Research more about local parents' struggles in working and caring for their children. Write to your representatives on what you think should be done to better support these workers.

### Hard

- Policy advocacy: research bills in the city council and state legislature related to paid family leave and parental leave. Write and submit testimony.

## HAWAII DOE SUBJECT STANDARDS LINKS (High School)

### Hawaii Core Standards for Social Studies (HCSSS)

- Content Standard [SS.WH.8.12.1](#)
- Content Standard [SS.US.12.8.1](#)
- Content Standard [SS.PID.4.10.2](#)
- Action Projects link to [SS.PID.5.7.1](#)

### Career and Technical Education — Hawaii Content and Performance Standards III

- Benchmark [CTE.9-12.2](#)

### [National Health Education Standards](#)

- NHES.2.12.2
- NHES.2.12.10
- Action Projects could link to NHES.8.12.3

This lesson was created by Megan Tagami.