



AMERICAN BENEFITS COUNCIL

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES ON PAID LEAVE

- American Benefits Council member companies recognize the importance of paid family and medical leave and paid sick leave benefits and they provide generous paid leave to their workforces.
- Paid family and medical leave programs are important for workers so they can meet the needs of parenting, care for a member of their family who is ill or address their own illness.
- Paid sick leave is an important public health and safety measure because it helps ensure that individuals who are ill do not feel compelled to come to the workplace, where they might infect co-workers and members of the public.
- The American Benefits Council supports federal legislation to expand access to paid family and medical leave and paid sick leave consistent with the following principles:
 - Employers must have the ability to treat workers equitably. Similarly situated workers for the same employer should expect their eligibility to receive paid leave, and the benefits and administration of the leave program, to be consistent wherever in the United States they live or work.
 - Federal standards for paid leave programs must ensure that employers operating in more than one jurisdiction are not subject to the cost and administrative burden of complying with various state or local paid leave requirements that may be inconsistent or even contradictory.
 - The federal standards for national employers must be reasonable, affordable and administrable.
 - To simplify the administration of paid family and medical leave benefits, the federal Family and Medical Leave Act definitions and standards should apply.

- Employers that adopt and comply with federal paid leave standards must be deemed to be in compliance with all state or local paid leave requirements.
- Employers should have flexibility to design and administer innovative paid leave benefits since what is best suited for one company's workforce or industry may not be best suited for another.
- Federal paid family and medical leave legislation should protect and build on private sector solutions that would allow employers to provide coverage either through self-funding and/or private insurance.
- Paid family and medical leave programs should be designed, operated and funded by the private sector for maximum efficiency and to ensure that payroll taxes needed to fund existing government programs are not diluted in order to finance new governmental programs.
- Federal, state and local governments should address gaps in access to paid leave benefits for workers not covered by private sector employer plans to ensure that workers are protected from the hazards to health, family and income that may result from a lack of paid leave.
- To minimize disruptions in union workplaces, federal, state or local paid leave legislative changes should defer to the collective bargaining process and not require any party to a collective bargaining agreement to reopen negotiations of the agreement or to apply until the existing agreement is renegotiated by the parties or expires.