

# getting started

Are you interested in expanding your family-friendly benefits but unsure of how to get started? Here are practical steps you can take.



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## know the law



The first step is to understand federal and state laws that apply to pregnant workers or workers with caregiving responsibilities. Consult with your legal advisors to ensure compliance with federal and state obligations.

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## assess your current benefits and consider best practices

Check your current policies to make sure they are relevant and competitive.

- Consider the research outlined throughout the Employer Toolkit on practices that offer the best business and health outcomes and determine whether your current benefits meet those guidelines.
- Research “best in class” lists such as [Seramount’s 100 Best Companies](#) or the [Star Tribune’s Top Workplaces](#) and [MSPBJ Best Places to Work - Minneapolis / St. Paul Business Journal](#) to see what benefits those workplaces offer.



## determine who your employees are and what they want

Family-friendly workplace policies are not “one size fits all.” Take stock of your employees’ needs and tailor your policies to fit what works best for you and them.

- Consider employee demographics—both for current employees and employees you want to hire.
- Conduct a [survey](#) of employees to determine which benefits they would most value. Make the survey anonymous to respect employees who may be pregnant or considering expanding their family and don’t yet want to tell their manager.
- Create a committee or review panel of employees and ask them for feedback on potential policy changes.



## consult online and organizational resources for help



The following online and organizational resources offer help in determining what benefits to offer and how to implement them:

- Membership associations such as the [Society for Human Resource Management](#) and [CATAPULT](#) offer a variety of resources, including articles and sample policies that can help craft a family-friendly workplace strategy. Both have membership fees. The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) has a [Minnesota chapter](#), which in turn includes local chapters that offer more local resources, workshops and gatherings.
- The [Minnesota Breastfeeding Coalition](#) has information for employers and workplaces, as does the [Minnesota Department of Health](#) and the [Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry](#).
- There is also a [Business Case for Breastfeeding](#) from the Office on Women's Health ([womenshealth.gov](http://womenshealth.gov)).
- [Pregnant at Work](#) was created by the Center for WorkLife Law at the University of California Hastings College of Law. The website includes free webinars for employers, model policies, and accommodation ideas for common pregnancy complications.
- [The Job Accommodation Network](#) provides information on pregnancy accommodations.
- [The Dave Thomas Foundation](#) provides information on creating policies for adoptive families.





## consider all costs, including the cost of doing nothing

For many family-friendly policies, particularly paid leave, cost is cited as the top concern for employers. When factoring costs, consider:

- Some policies, such as accommodations for pregnant workers or babies at work, have no or very little associated costs.
- For policies such as paid parental leave, the benefits have been shown to outweigh the costs for businesses of all sizes.

A 2017 Boston Consulting Group study of 250 employers with paid leave policies found that **paid parental leave helped or had no effect on the bottom line**. Companies studied reported a positive return on investment, particularly related to other benefits they could provide.

*Source: Bird, Liz; Gabrielle Fitzgerald; Shalini Unnikrishnan; Trish Stoman; and Wendy Woods. "Why Paid Family Leave is Good Business." Boston Consulting Group. February 7, 2017.*

**Fifty percent of US fathers and 75 percent of US mothers** have turned down work opportunities, changed jobs or quit altogether to care for their children.

*Source: Craighill, Peyton and Danielle Paquette. "The surprising number of parents scaling back at work to care for kids." The Washington Post. August 6, 2015.*

The cost of replacing an employee who leaves is approximately **33 percent of an employee's salary**, or \$15,000 for a worker who makes \$45,000, according to The Work Institute's 2018 Retention Report.

*Source: The Work Institute. "2018 Retention Report."*

A 2016 Ernst and Young survey of more than 1,500 employers with paid leave benefits, including parental and family medical leave, showed that employers of all sizes saw positive business outcomes as a result:

**82%**

reported better  
employee  
morale

**71%**

reported lower  
employee  
turnover

**63%**

reported increased  
**profitability**  
(including nearly half  
of employers with 100  
employees or fewer)

**71%**

reported improved  
**productivity**



Below are three different cost calculators that can help employers estimate the costs of providing new benefits.

**INTUIT**

**Humana**

**qb intuit quickbooks**

**Intuit**

This calculator shows how much an employee currently costs an employer beyond wages, including taxes and current benefits offered.

**Humana**

Humana has a calculator that helps employers understand what benefits will cost for health, vision, and dental.

**Quickbooks**

This resource helps figure out the true cost for an employee and provides an overview of labor costs, payroll taxes and overhead.

**make sure employees understand what your policies are and how to use them**



Many times, employees are not fully aware of all the family-friendly policies that they have access to. Help educate employees by:

**Offering thorough and frequent tutorials** or sessions that inform employees about ways to facilitate work-life balance.

**Creating HR manuals that are free of jargon.** Spell out policies in layman’s terms to encourage increased knowledge and use of current family-friendly policies.

**Writing down policies that aren’t documented.** Doing so will clear up confusion, and it will help with any employee misconceptions that policies aren’t available or are subject to change based on individual manager preferences.

**Providing educational resources** to help employees determine how benefits can help them financially.

**Requiring people managers to know the policies** and support their employees who could benefit from and use the resources.

## create a family-friendly workplace culture



Having family-friendly policies in place only goes so far if your workplace culture does not encourage employees to use those policies. To create a family-friendly workplace culture:

- Make sure leaders understand the value of family-friendly policies and communicate your commitment to being family-friendly to employees at all levels.
- Celebrate your family-friendly policies both internally and externally.
- Connect with national efforts to raise awareness such as the [Moms Rising #IPumpedHere](#) campaign to encourage the use of lactation facilities.
- Set clear expectations for managers and ensure that leaders throughout your organization:
  - Understand how family-friendly policies fit into your organizational mission.
  - Offer support and respect for employees who take advantage of workplace policies. [Your Flex Work Culture Doesn't Help Employees If It Hurts Their Careers \(hbr.org\)](#)
  - Model behavior by taking advantage of family-friendly policies.





learn more @ [littlemomentscount.org](http://littlemomentscount.org)

# Sample Employee Survey

*Editor's Note: This survey is meant as a starting point and can be customized as needed.*

We recognize the value of our employees and want to ensure that we offer the best workplace we can. To be most effective, we want to hear from you about which benefits work well for you and your family and where there may be gaps that our company should understand and seek to address. We want to ensure the best fit for the people who work here! Please take a few minutes to answer the survey.

1. What is your job title? \_\_\_\_\_

2. What is your age?  18-25  26-35  36-45  46-55  56-65  65+

3. If you have children, please share their ages: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Do you consider our workplace "family friendly?"  Yes  No

5. Please tell us why you think that. How can we provide a workplace that promotes work-family balance?

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6. What are three things that our company does for employees that you love?

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7. How satisfied are you with the current benefits offered?

- Very Dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Somewhat Satisfied
- Satisfied
- Very Satisfied



**8. Which of the benefits offered do you use or have you used in the past? Please check all that apply.** *Note: Employers should list all benefits offered. Examples are parental leave, sick and safe leave, dependent care spending account, telecommuting, job sharing, lactation room, on-site gym, backup or emergency child care.*

**9. Of the benefits you checked in Question 8, please rank them in priority to you and your family, with 1 being the most important.**

**10. Are there benefits not listed in Question 8 that you would use if offered?**

- Yes       No

**If yes, please explain:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**11. Is there anything else that you would like to share?** \_\_\_\_\_

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**12. Which best describes your race?**

- Black  
 White  
 Hispanic (non-White)  
 Asian  
 Native American or Other Pacific Islander  
 American Indian/Alaskan Native

**13. What is your highest level of education?**

- Less than high school  
 High school or equivalent  
 Some college  
 College  
 Graduate degree

**14. What is your marital status?**

- Married  
 Single  
 Divorced  
 Other

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