



# PROMOTING FAMILY-FRIENDLY WORKPLACE POLICIES AND PRACTICES

## Landscape Analysis

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## INTRODUCTION

Work-life balance (WLB), often referred to as work-family balance or life-work balance, refers to an employee's ability to minimize stress by having an adequate balance between the responsibilities of work and home life.<sup>1</sup> Family-friendly practices, policies, benefits and programs provided by employers increase the well-being of employees and enhance support for families. Balancing work and family is a priority for most employees, with one study indicating that 46% of men and 43% of women regularly experience work-family conflict.<sup>2</sup>

A business case can be made for why family-friendly policies and practices should be a priority for organizations as well, since the success of any organization depends on the stability and productivity of its workforce. In addition to increasing employee and family well-being and support, family-friendly initiatives assist employers in achieving stability and maintaining productivity in a few ways:

1. The supports provided by some well-implemented WLB programs help reduce employee absenteeism stemming from family responsibilities such as child care or elder care needs. Certain initiatives also assist in reducing absenteeism due to employee stress and health issues that can lead to extended leaves of absence. Similarly, WLB programs can also help with presenteeism, the condition in which employees are physically present at work but mentally distracted<sup>3</sup> for a variety of reasons, including illness, injury and stress or anxiety about the workplace, child/elder care, finances, etc.<sup>4</sup>
2. Satisfied employees generally have a higher level of commitment to their employers. Initiatives that improve employee and family well-being can improve employee morale and engagement, and reduce burnout, thus increasing both work quality and output.<sup>5</sup>
3. Because most employees value WLB, employers who have family-friendly policies can benefit from enhanced recruitment and retention of top candidates. Employers with robust WLB benefits demonstrate a commitment to employees, and as such employers may be recognized as employers of choice because of the value they place on employee well-being.

Becoming an “employer of choice,” or one with an extraordinary work environment that attracts and retains superior employees, creates a competitive advantage for employers. This advantage is particularly important given the current level of job market competition. In late 2018 California's unemployment rate reached a record low of 4.1%, the lowest it has been since 1976 when the state began its current record-keeping format.<sup>6</sup> As of April 2019, the unemployment rate is remaining low at 4.3%.<sup>7</sup>

Employers should also be concerned with addressing the needs of a changing workforce when considering their WLB policies. Millennials, who according to the Pew Research Center are currently ages 23-38,<sup>8</sup> now make up nearly a third of the workforce. Within this age cohort, more mothers are working as primary breadwinners and fathers are taking on more caregiving responsibilities, making equitable, family-friendly policies significant. Stay-at-home caregiving is declining in popularity as more women enter the workforce. In 2016, the workforce participation rate for U.S. mothers with children under 18 was 70.5%. Those with school-age children participated in the workforce at the highest rates, but a majority (58.6%) of mothers with infants (under age 1) were in the labor force. More than 73% of the employed mothers with preschool or school-age children worked full time, while 70.8% of the employed mothers with infants worked full time.



<sup>1</sup> Legal Aid at Work, “Work-Family Balance [Fact Sheet],” n.d., <https://legallaidatwork.org/factsheet/work-family-balance/>.

<sup>2</sup> “Executive Summary: SHRM’s Effective Workplace Index: Creating a Workplace That Works for Employees and Employers” (Alexandria, VA: Society for Human Resource Management, 2017).

<sup>3</sup> Brad Gilbreath, “Supervisor Behavior and Employee Presenteeism,” *International Journal of Leadership Studies* 7, no. 1 (2012): 114–31.

<sup>4</sup> Tammy Prater and Kim Smith, “Underlying Factors Contributing to Presenteeism and Absenteeism,” *Journal of Business & Economics Research (JBER)* 9, no. 6 (June 2011).

<sup>5</sup> “Executive Summary: SHRM’s Effective Workplace Index: Creating a Workplace That Works for Employees and Employers.”

<sup>6</sup> “California Unemployment Rate Holds at Record Low 4.1 Percent in October,” News Release (State of California Employment Development Department, November 16, 2018), [https://www.edd.ca.gov/About\\_EDD/pdf/urate201811.pdf](https://www.edd.ca.gov/About_EDD/pdf/urate201811.pdf).

<sup>7</sup> “California Unemployment Rate Remains at 4.3 Percent in April,” News Release (State of California Employment Development Department, May 17, 2019), [https://www.edd.ca.gov/About\\_EDD/pdf/urate201905.pdf](https://www.edd.ca.gov/About_EDD/pdf/urate201905.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> “Millennials,” Pew Research Center, accessed November 10, 2018, <http://www.pewresearch.org/topics/millennials/>.

## OVERVIEW OF FAMILY-FRIENDLY WORKPLACE POLICIES AND PRACTICES

Employer work-life balance policies range widely given employer size, budget and organizational demands. Yet, given the current labor market situation, many employers have increased their benefits. According to the Society for Human Resource Management 2018 Employee Benefits report, 34% of organizations had increased their benefits offerings within the previous 12 months. Of those organizations the breakdown of WLB benefits increases were as follows:<sup>9</sup>

- 44% of organizations increased wellness benefits
- 39% of organizations increased employee programs and services
- 28% of organizations increased leave as well as family-friendly and flexible working benefits

### Parental and Family Leave Support

As the U.S. workforce continues to evolve, given demographic shifts, employers must be supportive of the growing number of employees who wish to stay productive but who also need time off for the addition of a new child, or to care for ill and aging family members. Transitions into parenthood and increases in family care responsibilities are difficult and can cause significant stress and financial hardship for employees. Government regulations on business practices and exemplary business leaders can support employees and play a key role in easing these life transitions.

Basic parental and family leave support in the U.S. is governed by the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). FMLA entitles eligible employees to take *unpaid*, job-protected leave for designated family and medical reasons. The threshold for compliance with FMLA in the private sector is 50 or more employees in 20 or more workweeks in the current or preceding calendar year. FMLA also applies to all public agencies, as well as public or private elementary and secondary schools, regardless of the number of employees.<sup>10</sup>

Eligible employees can take up to 12 workweeks of leave in a 12-month period for the following reasons:

- The birth of a child, adoption or foster care placement with the employee
- To care for a spouse, son, daughter or parent with a serious health condition

- For any qualifying urgent demand arising from the active military duty of a spouse, son, daughter or parent
- For a serious personal health condition that renders the employee unable to perform essential functions of their job

In January 2018, California's Parent Leave Act went into effect. Eligible employees can take up to 12 weeks of *unpaid*, job-protected parental leave to bond with a new child entering the family. The leave must be taken within one year of the child's birth, adoption or foster care placement.<sup>11</sup> Whereas FMLA requires employers with a staff of 50 or more employees to provide leave benefits, under the California Parent Leave Act employers with a staff of 20 or more are required to provide parental leave.

While leave under both FLMA and the Parent Leave Act are unpaid, the California Paid Family Leave insurance program exists to partially compensate for lost wages due to leaves. Under the California Family Right Act (CFRA), the Employment Development Division-managed State Disability Insurance Fund (SDI) allows eligible employees to access partial wage replacement for up to six weeks. The law, enacted in 2002, is funded through mandatory employee payroll deductions. Employees are eligible for up to 60 to 70 percent of their wages, depending on income, to bond with a new child entering the family and to care for seriously ill family members.<sup>12,13</sup>

### Policy Spotlight

California was the first state in the U.S. to pass a paid-leave bill. Since then, only three states have followed (New Jersey, New York and Washington, as well as Washington, D.C.). Washington state's paid leave bill, which will go into effect in 2020, is considered one of the country's most generous. It allows workers to take 12 weeks of paid family leave and 12 weeks of paid medical leave (and up to 18 if a serious health condition is experienced during a pregnancy). It also provides low-wage workers with at least 90 percent of their weekly income.<sup>14</sup>

To promote family bonding, California's governor, Gavin Newsom, wants to ensure that all newborns and newly adopted babies are cared for by a parent or caregiver for the first six months of life.<sup>15</sup> To this end, the governor proposed new legislation to expand paid family leave from six to eight weeks beginning in July 2020 with the plan to extend it to six months by 2021-22. If enacted, the expansion from six weeks of leave to six months of leave would make the program the country's most generous.

<sup>9</sup> "2018 Employee Benefits Report: The Evolution of Benefits" (Alexandria, VA: Society for Human Resource Management, 2018).

<sup>10</sup> "Fact Sheet #28: The Family and Medical Leave Act," U.S. Department of Labor - Wage and Hour Division, 2012, <https://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs28.pdf>.

<sup>11</sup> "California's New Parent Leave Act (SB 63)," Legal Aid at Work, accessed January 17, 2019, <https://legalaidatwork.org/factsheet/californias-new-parent-leave-act-sb-63/>.

<sup>12</sup> Family members include child, parent, parent-in-law, grandparent, grandchild, sibling, spouse or registered domestic partner.

<sup>13</sup> "About Paid Family Leave (PFL)," accessed November 30, 2018, [https://www.edd.ca.gov/disability/about\\_pfl.htm](https://www.edd.ca.gov/disability/about_pfl.htm).

<sup>14</sup> "Passage of Washington State Paid Family and Medical Leave Bill a 'Monumental Victory for Working Families, for Washington, and for Our Nation,'" News Release (Olympia, WA: MomsRising, July 1, 2017). <https://www.momsrising.org/newsroom/passage-of-washington-state-paid-family-and-medical-leave-bill-a-%E2%80%98monumental-victory-for->

<sup>15</sup> "Governor Newsom Proposes 2019-20 'California For All' State Budget - California Governor," accessed January 14, 2019, <https://www.gov.ca.gov/2019/01/10/governor-newsom-proposes-2019-20-california-for-all-state-budget/>.

In addition to state-level policies, two cities in California have local ordinances that expand paid family leave. In 2016, the City and County of San Francisco took family leave benefits further by creating policies and processes to provide supplemental wage replacement to eligible employees who qualify for California Paid Family Leave. The San Francisco Paid Parental Leave Ordinance requires that the combination of Paid Family Leave wage replacement and employer compensation equal 100% of the employee's gross weekly wages. The supplemental compensation must be paid at the same time the employee receives their Paid Family Leave benefit, for up to six weeks within any 12-month period.<sup>16</sup>

Government policies set minimum standards for leave support, but there are also many employers offering paid maternal, paternal, adoption, foster child and surrogacy leave support. The prevalence of each of these types of voluntary supports is increasing nationally; however, larger organizations (>10,000 employees) are nearly twice as likely to offer paid leave when compared to smaller organizations (<500 employees).<sup>17</sup>

### Employer Spotlight

Etsy, a global online craft marketplace, is a company that believes that strong families make a strong business, and their parental leave policies exemplify this value. Beginning in April 2016 Etsy instituted a new parental leave policy in which employees are eligible for 26 weeks of fully paid leave when they become a parent through birth or adoption. The policy is gender-neutral and flexible, allowing parents to take the 26 weeks of leave over two years of a new child joining the employee's family. The company provides managers with anti-workplace-bias training, assistance in planning for leaves and the resulting staffing reorganizations needed to cover leaves, in addition to training for managers to help new parents manage careers through the transition into parenthood.

Deloitte, a professional services company, offers a comprehensive set of benefits focused on the well-being of its employees, including a paid family leave program. While Etsy offers much longer paid parental leave, Deloitte's paid leave program is more inclusive of employees in different life stages. Beginning in 2016, Deloitte broadened its parental leave program to 16 weeks a year of gender-neutral paid leave that can be used for elder care, spousal care, sibling care, grandparent care, bonding and care of a new family member, or for care of children beyond infancy.<sup>18</sup>

## Lactation-Friendly Workplace

Breastfeeding has a variety of benefits for children and mothers and can also yield economic benefits for employers. For infants, breastfeeding can improve cognitive development, bolster the immune system and reduce the risk of conditions like diabetes, lymphoma, leukemia and asthma later in life. Mothers may benefit from decreased instances of postpartum bleeding and menstrual blood loss, a faster return to pre-pregnancy weight and a decreased risk of breast and ovarian cancers.<sup>19</sup> Lactation-friendly accommodations in the workplace can improve employee productivity and morale, lower absenteeism, lower health care costs of breastfed infants, increase recruitment of female employees and boost retention of working mothers who breastfeed.<sup>20</sup> For example, Cigna found that for 343 employees who participated in a lactation program, there were \$240,000 in health care expense savings, 62% fewer prescriptions and \$460,000 in savings due to reduced absenteeism.<sup>21</sup>

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, approximately 83% of babies nationwide are breastfed at some point in their infancy.<sup>22</sup> The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends exclusive breastfeeding through the first six months of a child's life and continued breastfeeding until an infant is 1 year old,<sup>23</sup> yet research indicates that employment outside of the home has a negative impact on the duration of breastfeeding.<sup>24</sup> While not all mothers breastfeed for extended periods of time or do so exclusively, statistics (see Table 1) indicate that a large share of the U.S. and California workforce (where rates of breastfeeding exceed national averages) do breastfeed. Given that approximately 64% of mothers with children age 1 or younger are in the workforce<sup>25</sup>, it is clear that lactation-friendly policies are an important aspect of a family-friendly workplace that fosters work-life balance.

**Table 1:  
Breastfeeding Rates in the U.S. and California – 2015**

	United States	California
Ever breastfed	83.2%	87.2%
At 6 months	57.6%	66.7%
At 12 months	35.9%	40.2%
Exclusively through 3 months	46.9%	53%
Exclusively through 6 months	24.9%	26.3%

Source: [https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/data/nis\\_data/rates-any-exclusive-bf-state-2015.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/data/nis_data/rates-any-exclusive-bf-state-2015.htm)

<sup>16</sup> City & County of San Francisco, "Paid Parental Leave Ordinance Poster 2018: Notice of Rights for New Parents," accessed January 17, 2019, <https://sfgov.org/olse/sites/default/files/Document/2018%20parental%20leave%20poster%20FINAL%20Print.pdf>.

<sup>17</sup> "2018 Employee Benefits Report: The Evolution of Benefits."

<sup>18</sup> "Peace of Mind: Inclusive Culture + Paid Family Leave - Caring for Caregivers as They Grow Careers," Deloitte United States, accessed December 1, 2018, <https://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/pages/about-deloitte/articles/inclusion-family-leave-well-being-parental-caregiver.html>.

<sup>19</sup> Lindsey Murtagh and Anthony D. Moulton, "Working Mothers, Breastfeeding, and the Law," *American Journal of Public Health* 101, no. 2 (February 2011): 217–23, <https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2009.185280>.

<sup>20</sup> "The Business Case for Breastfeeding: Steps for Creating a Breastfeeding Friendly Worksite" (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Maternal and Child Health Bureau, 2008).

<sup>21</sup> "The Business Case for Breastfeeding: Steps for Creating a Breastfeeding Friendly Worksite."

<sup>22</sup> "Rates of Any and Exclusive Breastfeeding by State Among Children Born in 2015," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Department of Health and Human Services, accessed October 30, 2018, [https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/data/nis\\_data/rates-any-exclusive-bf-state-2015.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/data/nis_data/rates-any-exclusive-bf-state-2015.htm).

<sup>23</sup> Murtagh and Moulton, "Working Mothers, Breastfeeding, and the Law."

<sup>24</sup> Murtagh and Moulton, "Working Mothers, Breastfeeding, and the Law."

<sup>25</sup> U. S. Census Bureau, "Fertility - 2016 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates," American FactFinder, 2016.

Beginning in 2001, employers in California were required to provide reasonable break time to a woman to express breast milk, unless doing so would seriously disrupt the employer's business. The employer also had to make a reasonable effort to provide the mother with a private space close to her work area, other than a toilet stall, to express breast milk.

Supporting nursing mothers at work became federal law with enactment of the Affordable Care Act in March of 2010, which amended the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). The federal law, which is more stringent than California's labor code, requires all employers to provide, on an employee's request, clean, private spaces (excluding bathrooms) and reasonable breaks for nonexempt nursing mothers to express breast milk (but not to breastfeed) at work, for up to one year after the birth of a child.

California further codified federal regulations in September of 2018 with the passage of Assembly Bill 1976. This bill amended California's labor code, providing further guidance on lactation room accommodations. Employers must still make reasonable efforts to provide an employee with the use of a room or other location (other than a bathroom) near the employee's work area for the employee to express milk in private. The new law adds that an employer can provide a temporary lactation location used exclusively for lactation purposes if a permanent location would cause hardship because of operational, financial or space limitations. The recent law also included language to protect agricultural workers by requiring an agricultural employer to provide employees wanting to express milk with a private, enclosed and shaded space including, but not limited to, an air-conditioned cab of a truck or tractor.<sup>26</sup>

### Policy Spotlight

In January 2018, the City and County of San Francisco implemented a Lactation in the Workplace Ordinance that created a higher standard for lactation policies than federal and state law. Notably, the ordinance requires that:<sup>27</sup>

- The lactation location be safe and clean, contain a clean surface to place a breast pump and other personal items, have a place to sit and provide access to electricity

- The lactation room be near the employee work area and provide access to a refrigerator and a sink with running water
- Employers develop, implement and explain policies and processes regarding lactation accommodations
- Employers articulate the non-retaliation clause of the ordinance
- Lactation spaces will be required in new buildings of at least 10,000 square feet and in some building remodels

### Employer Spotlight

In terms of public policy, San Francisco has made progress to ensure that mothers and babies are supported with regards to breastfeeding, but many employers are also going above and beyond federal and state requirements with their lactation accommodations. Mutual of Omaha, an insurance and financial services firm, and the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD)/The Pentagon demonstrate exemplary practices in this regard.<sup>28</sup>



Mutual of Omaha provides state-of-the-art lactation rooms that can accommodate three nursing mothers at a time. These rooms include electrical outlets, locks on the doors for privacy, recliners, tables or flat surface for pumps, disinfectant wipes, access to running water, soft lighting and attractive decor. The company also provides hospital-grade electric pumps, refrigerators for storage of milk, an on-site registered nurse to educate and support nursing mothers, and flexible scheduling of lactation breaks.

The U.S. Department of Defense (DOD)/The Pentagon has multiple nursing rooms that can accommodate several employees at a time. Lactation rooms contain sinks, refrigerators, comfortable chairs and tables. The DOD/Pentagon also allows for a gradual transition back to work and will allow part-time employment or telecommuting before mothers resume full-time work. They also give employees the option of working longer hours four days a week in exchange for a scheduled day off in the middle of the week, to break up the time mothers spend away from their infants. The DOD/Pentagon also allows flexibility with lactation breaks, allowing mothers to make up time from extra lactation breaks before or after work.

<sup>26</sup> Assembly Bill 1976, 2017-2018 Reg. Sess., Chap. 940, 2018 California Statute.

<sup>27</sup> San Francisco, California, Police Code §3300I, Ordinance No. 131-17.

<sup>28</sup> "Easy Steps to Supporting Breastfeeding Employees," The Business Case for Breastfeeding: Steps for Creating a Breastfeeding Friendly Worksite (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, Maternal and Child Health Bureau, 2008).

## Child Care Support

The success of children and families is a goal for many early childhood advocates and practitioners, yet this goal requires the participation of a broad range of partners, including business leaders. Reliable, affordable child care is often difficult for families to find, given shortages in availability and the high average cost of such care. According to a 2017 analysis by the Center for American Progress (CAP), 62% of people in California live in a child care desert.<sup>29</sup> The CAP study defines child care deserts as neighborhoods or communities that are either lacking any child care options or have so few child care providers that there are more than three children for every licensed child care slot.<sup>30</sup> Among non-working poor adults with young children, about 70% cite that they are not in the workforce due to home/family responsibilities.<sup>31</sup> In 2016 nearly two million parents of children age 5 or younger had to quit a job, not take a job or greatly change their job because of problems with child care. The highest numbers were seen in California, with nearly 200,000 people impacted.<sup>32</sup>

While not mandated by law, businesses that provide families with high-quality child care supports stabilize the existing workforce by providing resources that help employees eliminate stress related to being without care for their children. Through these types of benefits such employers also help to increase job satisfaction and reduce levels of unemployment/underemployment, absenteeism/presenteeism and attrition.<sup>33,34</sup> The benefits of quality child care support extend to the future workforce as well. Research shows that the first five years of a child's life are critical to their cognitive and social development.<sup>35</sup> The earliest years of a child's life set the foundation for long-term health and well-being, and for the education and training of tomorrow's workforce.<sup>36</sup> There are many child care support programs available to employers, with varying levels of required resource allocation to implement and maintain. It stands to reason that larger employers, defined as those with more than 1,000 employees, invest significantly more in child care support programs than do small employers with staff sizes less than 100 employees (see Table 2).<sup>37</sup>

**Table 2:**  
**Prevalence of Child Care Supports by Employer Size**

Support Type	Percentage of Small Employers (<99 Employees)	Percentage of Large Employers (>1000 Employees)
Access to information to help locate child care in the community (Child Care Resource and Referral)	37%	61%
Child care at or near the worksite	5%	20%
Payment for child care with vouchers or other subsidies that have direct costs to the organization	1%	8%
Dependent Care Assistance Plans (DCAPs) that help employees pay for child care with pre-tax dollars	49%	76%
Child care for school-age children on vacation*	3%	9%
Backup or emergency care for employees when their regular child care arrangements fall apart	4%	9%
Sick care for the children of employees	3%	10%

\*Differences in prevalence are not statistically significant

Source: <http://whenworkworks.org/downloads/2016-National-Study-of-Employers.pdf>

<sup>29</sup>“Do You Live in a Child Care Desert?,” Center for American Progress Child Care Deserts, accessed November 29, 2018, <https://childcaredeserts.org/>.

<sup>30</sup>Includes all child care centers; family child care providers; Head Start providers; and both public and private preschools.

<sup>31</sup>Angela Rachidi, “America’s Work Problem: How Addressing the Reasons People Don’t Work Can Reduce Poverty” (Washington D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 2016).

<sup>32</sup>Leila Schochet and Rasheed Malik, “Two Million Parents Forced to Make Career Sacrifices Due to Problems with Child Care,” Center for American Progress, September 13, 2017, <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/early-childhood/news/2017/09/13/438838/2-million-parents-forced-make-career-sacrifices-due-problems-child-care/>.

<sup>33</sup>“Early Childhood Investment: The Bridge to a Stronger Future for Children and California’s Economy,” White Paper (First 5 California Association, 2018).

<sup>34</sup>“Businesses Have a Critical Role in Supporting Public Investments in Child Care,” Fact Sheet (Washington, D.C.: National Women’s Law Center, September 2017).

<sup>35</sup>“Businesses Have a Critical Role in Supporting Public Investments in Child Care.”

<sup>36</sup>Ibid.

<sup>37</sup>Kenneth Matos, Ellen Galinsky and James T. Bond, “2016 National Study of Employers” (Alexandria, VA: Society for Human Resource Management, 2017).

## Employer Spotlight

Coffee retailer Starbucks recently partnered with Care.com to offer Care@Work, an online service connecting families and caregivers. Starbucks' U.S.-based store employees will receive up to 10 subsidized backup care days a year for children and adults in addition to a premium membership to Care.com, which serves as a resource and referral service as well. Employees pay only \$1/hour for in-home backup child or adult care, or \$5/day per child for in-center care. With more than 180,000 U.S. employees, Starbucks is among the largest retailers to offer this benefit.<sup>38</sup>

While the prevalence of on-site child care is declining nationally Johnson & Johnson, who opened its first on-site child development center in 1990, currently has six child care centers across company campuses. These centers offer subsidized programs to employees, for infants through kindergarten. For employees who do not work on the campuses offering on-site child care, Johnson & Johnson provides a discount with national child care provider KinderCare, along with various local providers.<sup>39</sup>

## Infant-at-Work Policies

The ability to bring babies to the workplace for purposes of nursing, bonding or child care is growing in the U.S. More than 200 organization in 35 different industries — including credit unions, law firms, consulting companies, manufacturing companies, technology firms, retail stores, schools, dance studios, libraries and government agencies — participate in infant-at-work programs.<sup>40</sup> While the number of employers offering these types of programs are limited, that number has doubled in roughly the past 10 years.<sup>41</sup>

Infant-at-work policies, like other family-friendly policies, can reduce employer and employee infant healthcare-related costs and costs associated with recruiting and hiring new employees, improve the public perception of a business and increase the productivity of a new parent through reduced absenteeism.<sup>42</sup> This type of policy also reduces the cost of infant care and can either supplement or replace the need for employer-sponsored child care support. Infant-at-work policies can also motivate new parents to return to work sooner than they otherwise would have, using benefits from FMLA.

Generally, employer policies allow parents with infants who are up to 6 months old, or ones who do not yet crawl, to participate. While there can be concerns about employee productivity and disruption, this is typically not

the case. Young children can often be soothed quickly and organizations report that parents are extremely motivated to stay productive so that they may continue to bring their infants to work.<sup>43</sup>

Many concerns can emerge with regards to infant-at-work programs, both from the employer perspective and from the perspective of colleagues. To address concerns, employers should be thoughtful and comprehensive when developing written policies. Additionally, employers should evaluate whether all or most employees would be able to utilize the program, in order to avoid decreased morale based on job classification or duties. Infant-at-work programs generally work best for employees who have desk-based assignments and enough space in their work area to have infant furniture such as a bassinet or playpen, toys, etc.

## Policy Spotlight

In California, Assembly Bill 2481, which stalled in the Senate, would have introduced a voluntary program for state agencies through which they could elect to adopt an infant-at-work program. The major obstacle was the unknown but potentially high fiscal impact of the program.<sup>44</sup> Specifically, concerns were raised about costs associated with required infrastructure improvements, administrative expenses for drafting regulations, potential workplace accidents involving children and potential fiscal strain to the state due to unused leave credits.

## Employer Spotlight

Both the Washington Department of Health and the Arizona Department of Health Services have infant-at-work policies. In Washington parents and caregivers may bring an infant 6 weeks to 6 months old to work. To ensure a safe working environment, typically only employees working in an office setting are considered eligible for the program. Supervisors and human resources staff make final determinations about eligibility. Participating employees can use flex hours or submit leave to accommodate an excessive loss of productivity, and they must designate a volunteer co-worker to provide care for the infant when the primary caregiver is unavailable.<sup>45</sup>

Arizona allows parents or caregivers to participate in the program for the first six months of the child's life. Employees are asked to recognize and consider whether their specific work environment is appropriate for the arrangement and they must consult with and receive approval of a superior prior to beginning parental leave.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>38</sup>Linda Dahlstrom, "New Starbucks Benefit Offers Backup Child and Adult Care," Starbucks Newsroom, October 9, 2018, /news/new-starbucks-benefit-offers-backup-child-and-adult-care.

<sup>39</sup>Christina Vercelletto, "11 Employee Benefits That Help Make Johnson & Johnson a Great Company," Johnson & Johnson Careers, October 31, 2017, <https://www.jnj.com/innovation/employee-benefits-that-help-make-johnson-johnson-a-great-company>.

<sup>40</sup>"Baby-Inclusive Organizations," Parenting in the Workplace Institute, accessed November 15, 2018, <https://www.babiesatwork.org/organizations>.

<sup>41</sup>Catey Hill, "These Companies Decided to Let Employees Bring Their Babies to Work Every Day," MarketWatch, April 23, 2016, <https://www.marketwatch.com/story/what-would-you-do-if-parents-brought-their-babies-to-the-office-every-day-2016-04-22>.

<sup>42</sup>Jennifer Church, Tammy Chapman and Josie Emunah, "Babies in the Workplace," Policy Brief (Tucson, AZ: Association of State Public Health Nutritionists, 2013).

<sup>43</sup>"Frequently Asked Questions About Babies-at-Work Programs," Parenting in the Workplace Institute, accessed December 21, 2018, [https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/b9f1d1\\_e68c9c543b8f41368e566c22cc9a9172.pdf](https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/b9f1d1_e68c9c543b8f41368e566c22cc9a9172.pdf).

<sup>44</sup>Assembly Bill 2481, 2017-2018 Reg. Sess., Senate Committee on Appropriations Fiscal Summary [http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billAnalysisClient.xhtml?bill\\_id=201720180AB2481](http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billAnalysisClient.xhtml?bill_id=201720180AB2481).

<sup>45</sup>Washington Department of Health, "Department of Health Policy: Infant at Work Program," July 2015, <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/1000/InfantPolicy.pdf>.

<sup>46</sup>"Infant at Work - FAQs," Arizona Department of Health Services, accessed December 21, 2018, <https://www.azdhs.gov/prevention/nutrition-physical-activity/breastfeeding/infant-at-work/index.php#infant-faqs>.

## Workplace Wellness Programs

Workplace wellness programs typically include a variety of employer-based or employer-sponsored benefits meant to promote positive health-related behaviors that help prevent and manage disease.<sup>47</sup> These programs are largely designed to reduce the prevalence of so-called “lifestyle diseases,” i.e., chronic diseases such as diabetes and heart disease that often stem from practices such as poor nutrition, inactivity, tobacco use and excessive

alcohol consumption.<sup>48</sup> There is no formal definition of what constitutes a workplace wellness program and employers generally establish and manage programs based on available resources and employee need. Program offerings can be categorized into five general categories (see Table 3 for categories and common interventions) and range in scope from very limited offerings such as making healthy snacks available to comprehensive interventions like outsourced counseling.

**Table 3:  
Types of Wellness Programs and Sample Interventions**

Category	Sample Interventions
Wellness Resources and Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quarterly wellness tips or information</li> </ul>
Wellness Programs and Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Onsite seasonal flu vaccinations</li> <li>Annual health risk assessments</li> <li>Rewards or bonuses for completing certain health and wellness programs</li> <li>Smoking cessation program</li> <li>Weight loss program</li> <li>Company-organized fitness challenges</li> <li>Onsite stress management program*</li> <li>Health fairs**</li> <li>Onsite health screenings**</li> </ul>
Wellness Classes, Services and Tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CPR/first aid training*</li> <li>Access to 24-hour nurse line</li> <li>Personal or life coaching</li> <li>Onsite blood pressure machine</li> <li>Onsite massage therapy services*</li> </ul>
Wellness Spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Standing desk*</li> <li>Onsite quiet room for personal use (prayer, meditation, etc.)</li> </ul>
Fitness Center, Classes and Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offsite fitness center membership subsidy**</li> <li>Onsite fitness center*</li> <li>Onsite fitness classes</li> <li>Offsite fitness class subsidy*</li> </ul>
Health Care Premium Discounts/Surcharges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Smoking surcharge for health plans</li> <li>Health care premium discount for not using tobacco products</li> <li>Health care premium discount for participating in a smoking cessation program</li> <li>Health care premium discount for getting an annual health risk assessment</li> <li>Health care premium discount for participating in a wellness program</li> <li>Health care premium discount for participating in a weight loss program**</li> </ul>

\*Statistically significant growth in use between 2014 and 2018  
\*\*Popular, but has had statistically significant decline in use between 2014 and 2018  
Source:<https://www.shrm.org/hr-today/trends-and-forecasting/research-and-surveys/Documents/2018%20Employee%20Benefits%20Report.pdf>

<sup>47</sup>Soeren Mattke, Christopher Schnyer and Kristin R. Van Busum, “A Review of the U.S. Workplace Wellness Market” (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2012).

<sup>48</sup>Soeren Mattke et al., “Workplace Wellness Programs Study: Final Report” (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2013).



While research shows that these measures appear to improve employee health and well-being, from the employer perspective the benefits of these programs lie mainly in the potential for a reduction in health care claims and/or lower premium plan costs, as well as a reduction in loss of productivity due to absenteeism and presenteeism. Evidence that wellness programs provide these benefits to employers is mixed.<sup>49,50</sup> The use of incentives has been shown to increase the employee uptake of workplace wellness programs, and employers tend to incentivize participation, rather than results. Incentives also increase the cost of wellness initiatives, given that they are more effective when they include financial benefits for employees.<sup>51</sup>

Despite mixed evidence of effectiveness, workplace wellness programs have become very common in the United States, with a reported 75% of employers indicating that they have some type of workplace wellness initiative.<sup>52</sup> The wellness initiative that has shown the largest increase amongst employers who offer wellness programs, from 28% in 2017 to 38% in 2018, is company-organized fitness competitions/challenges. Overall, the most popular wellness initiative among employers who offer such programs is the provision of general wellness resources and information. Approximately 73% of employers that have wellness programs offer this benefit.

### Employer Spotlight

Cisco Systems, a multinational technology conglomerate, takes a holistic approach to employee wellness. Their comprehensive package of wellness benefits includes programs that cover everything from financial counseling to onsite mindfulness workshops, but the company's offerings in the area of health stand out as exemplary. Cisco Systems' San Jose headquarters is home to the 24,000 square foot LifeConnections Center. The center offers onsite primary medical care, fitness centers, outdoor sports courts, hiking and biking paths, and a child care center.

While many large and well-resourced technology companies like Cisco Systems, Facebook and Google offer comprehensive wellness programs, so do relatively unknown companies like Draper Inc., a large manufacturer and seller of window shades and coverings, gymnasium

equipment and projection screens. The Indiana-based company has a strong management commitment to employee health and well-being and features a Wellness Park on its grounds that includes workout stations, volleyball courts and a one-fifth-mile track. Employees take part in annual health fairs, a Weight Watchers class and Zumba exercise sessions. They also utilize the services of a dedicated Safety and Wellness Director and an employee wellness committee, who help ensure the uptake of programs.<sup>53</sup>



### Flexible Work Benefits

Flexible work benefits include a range of approaches, but at their core they all enable employees to choose when and where they work. Studies show that most employees want or need some sort of workplace flexibility. For example, a recent study by Werk found that 96% of employees surveyed stated that they needed flexibility, yet only 47% had it.

The survey measured six types of flexibility: to adapt their location as needed, the ability to adapt their schedule as needed (e.g., leaving work for part of the standard work hours to attend a school play but making the hours up later), regularly work remotely, regularly work a shifted schedule, travel minimally and work part-time.<sup>54</sup> Flexible work benefits may also include part-time work achieved through a job-sharing program, which involves splitting a full-time job between two employees.<sup>55</sup>

The gap between needing flexibility and not getting it in the workplace has real consequences for employees. The 2018 Werk survey, for example, found that one third of respondents felt that the lack of flexibility at work made it challenging for them to be the type of parent they wanted to be, and about one third felt that the lack of flexibility affected their productivity because they were less able to perform their duties in a sustainable way.

In addition to impacting productivity, a lack of flexible work benefits is having a growing impact on employee retention and turnover. FlexJobs conducts an annual survey on flexible and remote work and found that the percent of respondents who had quit a previous job because it lacked flexibility went from 13% in 2014 to 31% in 2018. An additional 13% of respondents had considered leaving their inflexible job but decided to stay.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>49</sup>Mattke et al., "Workplace Wellness Programs Study: Final Report."

<sup>50</sup>Damon Jones, David Molitor and Julian Reif, "What Do Workplace Wellness Programs Do? Evidence from the Illinois Workplace Wellness Study" (Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research, January 2018).

<sup>51</sup>Mattke et al., "Workplace Wellness Programs Study: Final Report."

<sup>52</sup>"2018 Employee Benefits Report: The Evolution of Benefits."

<sup>53</sup>John Pidgeon, "Draper Wellness Program," Draper, Inc. blog site (blog), July 1, 2011, <https://blog.draperinc.com/2011/07/draper-wellness-program/>.

<sup>54</sup>Annie Dean and Anna Auerbach, "96% of U.S. Professionals Say They Need Flexibility, but Only 47% Have It," Harvard Business Review, June 5, 2018, <https://hbr.org/2018/06/96-of-u-s-professionals-say-they-need-flexibility-but-only-47-have-it>.

<sup>55</sup>"Part-Time & Job Sharing," U.S. Office of Personnel Management, accessed January 14, 2019, <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/hiring-information/part-time-and-job-sharing/>.

<sup>56</sup>Brie Weiler Reynolds, "FlexJobs 2018 Annual Survey: Workers Believe a Flexible or Remote Job Can Help Save Money, Reduce Stress, and More," FlexJobs, September 8, 2018, <https://www.flexjobs.com/blog/post/flexjobs-2018-annual-survey-workers-believe-flexible-remote-job-can-help-save-money-reduce-stress-more/>.

## Policy Spotlight

The Federal Employees Part-Time Career Employment Act of 1978 expanded part-time career employment opportunities throughout the federal government, including job sharing that benefits both employees and the employing federal agency.<sup>57</sup> The development of federal part-time work was not as successful as originally anticipated, and in 1990 Congress provided funding to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to establish a program to facilitate job sharing arrangements.<sup>58</sup> The federal government continues to promote job sharing as an option when federal employers seek to staff a position on a full-time basis.<sup>59</sup>

In October 2013, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors passed the Family Friendly Workplace Ordinance and the law became effective on January 1, 2014. According to a legislative fact sheet from San Francisco Board of Supervisor David Chiu's office (Supervisor Chiu introduced the law), San Francisco has the lowest percentage of children of any major city in the U.S., with thousands of families having left San Francisco between the 2000 Census and 2010 Census.<sup>60</sup> This "family flight" was particularly significant among families of color, and the law was introduced as a way to fight more "family flight" from the city.

The San Francisco ordinance requires employers with 20 or more employees to allow any employee who is employed within the geographic boundaries of the City, regularly works at least eight hours per week, and has been employed for six months or more, to request a flexible or predictable working arrangement to assist with caregiving responsibilities for 1) a child or children under the age of 18, 2) a person or persons with a serious health condition in a family relationship with the employee, or 3) a parent of the employee, age 65 or older.<sup>61</sup> The employer must meet with the employee within 21 days of the employee's request for a flexible or predictable working arrangement and must respond to the employee's request within 21 days of that meeting. An employer who denies a request must explain the reason in a written response, and there must be a bona fide business reason.

A similar law also exists in the state of Vermont and came into effect the same time as the San Francisco ordinance, in January 2014. The Vermont law applies to all Vermont employees and gives them the right to request a flexible work schedule for any reason. Employers are required to discuss and consider these requests at least twice per calendar year. While the law does not stipulate which requests must be honored, it does elevate the issue and provides a "framework for meaningful dialogue" about flexibility in the workplace.

Following on the heels of San Francisco's success, the city of Berkeley approved the Family Friendly and Environment Friendly Workplace Ordinance in January 2017. The Berkeley law is structured in a similar way to the San Francisco and Vermont laws — it requires employers to consider employees' requests for flexibility but does not mandate a particular response from the employer. Berkeley added to their ordinance the potential benefits to the environment by lessening the environmental footprint of unpredictable and inconvenient work schedules (e.g., reduced traffic).

## Employer Spotlight

Ryan, located in Dallas, is a global tax service and software company that offers "myRyan," the firm's award-winning flexible work program. The MyRyan program allows employees to work where and when they choose, and they are given the flexibility to choose their own schedule. In addition to the flexible schedule, Ryan also offers telecommuting, compressed work weeks and many other family-friendly benefits.<sup>62</sup>

Intertech, an information technology consulting firm based in Eagan, Minnesota, was named one of Fortune's 50 Best Workplaces for Flexibility in 2016. Approximately 50% of its staff telecommute and/or use flex-time schedules. While the company offers compressed workweeks and job sharing, relatively few of the firm's 50 employees use these benefits.<sup>63</sup> Intertech's website explicitly states its commitment to employees through a smart workplace, and highlights its over 20 state and national awards for being a "great place to work."<sup>64</sup>



<sup>57</sup> "Federal Employees Part-Time Career Employment Act of 1978: Overview," Memos and Fact Sheets (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Law Center, 2010).

<sup>58</sup> "Federal Employees Part-Time Career Employment Act of 1978: Overview."

<sup>59</sup> "Part-Time & Job Sharing."

<sup>60</sup> "San Francisco Family Friendly Workplace Ordinance," Legislative Fact Sheet (San Francisco, CA: City and County of San Francisco Board of Supervisors District 3), accessed December 21, 2018, <https://sfbos.org/sites/default/files/FileCenter/Documents/45824-FactSheet--SFFamilyFriendlyWorkplaceOrdinance.pdf>.

<sup>61</sup> "Family Friendly Workplace Ordinance," Office of Labor Standards Enforcement, accessed December 21, 2018, <https://sfgov.org/olse/sites/default/files/FileCenter/Documents/11256-FFWO%20Official%20Notice.pdf>.

<sup>62</sup> "Ryan - 50 Best Workplaces for Flexibility," Fortune, March 29, 2016, <http://fortune.com/best-workplaces-flexibility/ryan-1/>.

<sup>63</sup> "50 Best Workplaces for Flexibility," Fortune (blog), March 29, 2016, <http://fortune.com/best-workplaces-flexibility/>.

<sup>64</sup> "Our Story - Intertech," Intertech - Instructors Who Consult. Consultants Who Teach, accessed January 15, 2019, <https://www.intertech.com/about>.

## Employee Community Engagement Opportunities

Employee community engagement opportunities are often embedded in an employer's corporate social responsibility (CSR) program. CSR is described as a set of activities that corporations engage in to enhance reputation and strengthen market position, and to contribute to communities from which they draw resources.<sup>65</sup> While CSR is used as a strategy to strengthen a company's brand, aspects of CSR such as employee community engagement opportunities can benefit employers internally through increased employee engagement and morale, as well as an improved workplace atmosphere.<sup>66</sup>

Employees may feel more engaged at work when their values align with their employers, and when employees feel able to bring more of their whole, authentic selves to work. Employer-sponsored volunteer opportunities may allow employees to express roles that are typically held outside of work — parent, community member, church member, etc. — but researchers caution that too many of these types of outside-of-role responsibilities may negatively impact employees.<sup>67</sup> Despite the potential for a negative impact, the trend of including volunteer duties in employee performance reviews is growing.

To help ensure that organizational goals are met with regards to employee volunteer opportunities, employers must consider and balance the following needs:

- Companies want to promote volunteer opportunities that match their strategy, brand and culture.
- Employees want volunteer opportunities that match their interests, skills and schedules.
- Receiving organizations want volunteers whose skills and interests match their programs, priorities and values.

There are generally two categories of volunteer opportunities: skills-based, which is growing in popularity, and traditional volunteerism. Employers may choose

to include volunteer activities as part of an employee's duties. Organizations may also choose to provide paid time off to employees to pursue these opportunities, which is more common with traditional volunteerism.

Skills-based volunteering allows organizations to leverage employee volunteer time to achieve CSR goals, and potentially employee professional development and networking goals.<sup>68</sup> This type of volunteerism deploys employees into communities to provide specialized, professional-level skills. Skills-based volunteer opportunities may include:

- Staff serving on a board or advisory committees
- Short- or long-term project consulting
- Pro-bono legal services or other direct client services

The more common, traditional volunteerism involves those opportunities that are non-specialized, where a volunteer may serve as an extra set of hands for a specific or ongoing project. These assignments are typically less complicated and do not require significant planning on the part of an employer or employee. In many cases, while traditional volunteerism allows employees to pursue a wider range of interests and apply the skills of their choosing, the return to the employer may be diminished when activities are not coordinated with organizational goals. In this instance, the employee-sponsored benefits are mostly related to employee satisfaction measures.

### Employer Spotlight

Salesforce, a customer relationship management platform provider, provides a few opportunities for employee community engagement. The organization allows employees to take as much as 56 hours, or seven days per year, of paid volunteer time off (VTO) for the project(s) of their choice. As an incentive to complete the seven days of VTO, Salesforce offers a \$1000 grant to be donated to the nonprofit of the employee's choice. Additionally, Salesforce offers a skills-based volunteering program, whereby nonprofits and higher-education institutions apply to receive professional support in implementing Salesforce within their organizations.<sup>69,70</sup>

Novo Nordisk, a global health company, offers 80 hours, or 10 days per year, of paid time off to volunteer as part of its TakeAction! Program. The company allows employees to select and pursue projects of their liking. Novo Nordisk also has a Social Awareness Team comprised of a cross-functional group of employees who review and organize strategic management- recommended volunteer opportunities.<sup>71,72</sup>

<sup>65</sup> Amy O'Connor, "Corporate Social Responsibility," in *The International Encyclopedia of Organizational Communication* (American Cancer Society, 2017), 1-13.

<sup>66</sup> Deloitte Development LLC, "2017 Deloitte Volunteerism Survey," (June 2017).

<sup>67</sup> Ante Glavas, "Corporate Social Responsibility and Employee Engagement: Enabling Employees to Employ More of Their Whole Selves at Work," *Frontiers in Psychology* 7 (May 31, 2016).

<sup>68</sup> Christine Letts and Danielle Holly, "The Promise of Skills-Based Volunteering," *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, 2017, [https://ssir.org/articles/entry/the\\_promise\\_of\\_skills\\_based\\_volunteering](https://ssir.org/articles/entry/the_promise_of_skills_based_volunteering).

<sup>69</sup> Kia Kokalitcheva, "These 8 Employers Will Pay You to Volunteer," *Fortune*, March 21, 2016, <http://fortune.com/2016/03/21/companies-that-offer-paid-time-off-to-volunteer/>.

<sup>70</sup> "Pro Bono Program," *Salesforce.org*, accessed December 21, 2018, <https://www.salesforce.org/volunteers/probono/>.

<sup>71</sup> Kokalitcheva, "These 8 Employers Will Pay You to Volunteer."

<sup>72</sup> "The Blueprint for Change Program: Creating Shared Value Through Socially Responsible Initiatives in the United States" (Novo Nordisk, January 2012), [https://www.novonordisk-us.com/content/dam/USA/AFFILIATE/www-novonordisk-us/Home/Whoware/Documents/Blueprint\\_for\\_Change.pdf](https://www.novonordisk-us.com/content/dam/USA/AFFILIATE/www-novonordisk-us/Home/Whoware/Documents/Blueprint_for_Change.pdf).

## INITIATIVES TO PROMOTE FAMILY-FRIENDLY WORKPLACE POLICIES AND PRACTICES

The following section highlights several initiatives and organizations that are working to support and incentivize organizations and government to adopt family-friendly workplace policies. This section includes examples of initiatives that include Chambers of Commerce from across the country, examples of awards and certifications and a listing of additional organizations who are also working to promote family-friendly workplace policies and practices and could be potential partners for First 5 LA and the L.A. Area Chamber's efforts.

### Family-Friendly Policy Initiatives and Chambers of Commerce

A web search using the terms “Chamber of Commerce” and “family friendly” as well as “work-family” uncovered several efforts across the country in which local Chambers of Commerce are involved in some way with initiatives to increase knowledge and awareness about family-friendly policies, and to incentivize and support businesses to adopt family-friendly policies. Their involvement ranges from sharing information and opportunities with members to actively engaging and supporting collaborative efforts to advocate for family-friendly policies with businesses and government. Below are some examples of these efforts.

- The Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce launched an Excellence in Work-Life Harmony Award in 2016 to spotlight employers who implement extraordinary family-friendly policies and practices. The award provides companies a unique opportunity to showcase benefits, such as wellness programs, flex schedules, family leave, child care support, community engagement opportunities, and workplace culture, thus distinguishing them as an exemplary workplace for employees and families.
- The Santa Rosa, CA Chamber of Commerce provides information and resources on their website for employers regarding the benefits of family-friendly policies and provides a Lactation Toolkit to help employers implement a worksite lactation support program. They also provide weblinks to other resources and trainings related to family-friendly policies.<sup>73</sup>
- Family Forward NC<sup>74</sup> is an initiative of NC Early Childhood Foundation and its mission is to “engage, support and promote employers of all sizes and in all sectors in adopting family-friendly policies that improve child and family health and well-being, and provide direct business benefits to employers.” It was launched in summer 2018 and the Asheville Chamber of Commerce hosted a public policy luncheon with the NC Early Childhood Foundation to unveil the new statewide initiative. The Chamber President and CEO, Kit Cramer, serves on the Family Forward NC Advisory Council and is a vocal advocate for family-friendly policies on behalf of the Chamber. The Asheville Chamber included the expansion of access to quality early care and education for the workforce on their 2018 Legislative Agenda.<sup>75</sup>
- The Lafayette, Colorado Chamber of Commerce partnered with local nonprofits and the Boulder County Department of Public Health to advertise a Family Friendly Workplace Forum to its members. The Forum (held in February 2019) included a panel of employers from various sectors who shared their experiences successfully implementing family-friendly policies within their organizations.<sup>76</sup>
- The Greater Nashua Chamber of Commerce in New Hampshire established a partnership with the New Hampshire Women's Foundation to bring author and keynote speaker Josh Levs to speak to their members about family-friendly workplace policies. Josh Levs is the author of the book *All In: How Our Work-First Culture Fails Dads, Families, and Businesses - And How We Can Fix It Together*. After the speaking engagement, the Chamber created a page on their website with links to additional resources for businesses to continue to explore family-friendly policies.
- Early Matters Greater Austin is a coalition of business leaders in Austin, Texas who recognize the importance of early childhood education. It is an initiative of the United Way of Greater Austin and the E3 Alliance. Business leaders “lend their experience, influence and voice to reinvent early childhood education in Austin.” One of the major areas of focus for Early Matters is promoting the advantages of family-friendly workplaces. In addition to providing general information and links to resources, they have developed a Family-Friendly Workplace Toolkit<sup>77</sup>, which is endorsed by the Austin Chamber of Commerce. The toolkit includes information on how to make family-friendly changes in your workplace, profiles of leading local companies who are family friendly, national and state resources that businesses can use, and a menu of family-friendly workplace options to inspire and spark change.

<sup>73</sup>“Family Friendly Policies,” Santa Rosa Metro Chamber of Commerce, accessed January 17, 2019, [wheel/family-friendly-policies/](http://wheel/family-friendly-policies/).

<sup>74</sup>“Business Smart. Family Friendly. Future Ready.” Family Forward NC, accessed January 17, 2019, <https://familyforwardnc.com/>.

<sup>75</sup>“Chamber Advocates Family Forward NC,” Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce, July 2, 2018, <https://www.ashevillechamber.org/news-events/chambers-advocates-family-forward-nc/>.

<sup>76</sup>“Boulder County Family Friendly Workplace Forum,” accessed January 17, 2019, <https://business.lafayettecolorado.com/events/details/boulder-county-family-friendly-workplace-forum-7724>.

<sup>77</sup>“Family-Friendly Workplace Toolkit,” Early Matters Greater Austin, accessed January 17, 2019, <https://www.earlymattersgreataustin.org/toolkit/>.

## Family-Friendly Business Recognition and Certification

### Bright Beginnings Initiative in Monterey County, California

The Bright Beginnings Initiative<sup>78</sup> in Monterey County uses a collective impact framework to promote community investment in early childhood development for children prenatal through age 8. They have four main areas of focus: (1) an equitable system that supports all, (2) empowered and resilient parents, (3) families surrounded by support, and (4) caregivers who help children grow and learn. Some of the specific supports within each of these four areas include early developmental screening and support, home visiting, early care and education, and supports for parents. In addition, the initiative has the goal to “expand paid family leave, protect and support breastfeeding, and increase family-friendly business practices and policies.” Bright Beginnings promotes family-friendly business practices and policies by sharing information and resources and recognizing businesses that are family friendly and child welcoming. The website provides information for businesses about what it means to be family friendly, its benefits, how to become recognized as a family-friendly employer (through the award described below), and numerous links to information, research and resources such as California’s child-friendly/family-friendly laws.<sup>79</sup>

*Family-Friendly Business Recognition.* The Family-Friendly Business awards offered by Bright Beginnings are offered at three levels — Gold Award, Silver Certificate of Recognition and Bronze Certificate of Recognition — and the level of “certification” depends upon the number of family-friendly policies and practices the organization has adopted. Gold Award recipients have at least 10 family-friendly policies and practices, Silver Certificate recipients have at least four and Bronze recipients at least two. The incentives also vary depending upon the level. Gold awardees receive a window decal, a web badge that they can place on their website and a certification of recognition. Bright Beginnings also promotes the Gold Award recipients across various media outlets and platforms. Silver Certificate recipients receive a web badge and a certificate of recognition and Bronze recipients receive the certificate of recognition. Businesses that are interested in receiving recognition and an award or certificate can apply online or nominate a business. The application is brief and those submitting can also upload photos or documents to demonstrate their organization’s family-friendly policies. As of January 2019, there were 13 family-friendly businesses listed on their website.

*Child Welcoming Business Recognition.* The Child Welcoming Business recognition offered by Bright Beginnings is for businesses that invite children and families to interact in their place of business through child-friendly materials and activities, child-friendly, nutritious food options, images and art. These businesses promote healthy parent-child interactions and are welcoming to children and families. Businesses can apply (or be nominated) through an online application and once approved they receive the Child Welcoming Business window decal, a web badge, a certificate of recognition and online promotion by Bright Beginnings through various media outlets and platforms (like the Family Friendly Business Gold Award). As of January 2019, there were 10 child-welcoming businesses recognized on the Bright Beginnings website.

### Santa Clara County Family-Friendly Workplace Awards and Toolkit

In Santa Clara County, the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) and The Office of Women’s Policy (OWP) jointly sponsor the Family-Friendly Workplace Award.<sup>80</sup> Organizations of any size can receive the award and it is open to public, private and non-profit businesses that are physically located in Santa Clara County. Awards are given annually and fall into three categories, like Bright Beginnings’ Award: Gold, Silver and Bronze. While the criteria are detailed on their website, they fall into three policy categories and each awardee must meet all three: (1) pregnancy and parental leave and accommodations, (2) lactation accommodations and (3) work-family balance. The application is available online and the process is open for three months between June and September.

The application itself is a self-assessment in the form of a checklist, with three columns representing each level of the award and the rows representing the three policy areas. The Bronze level generally corresponds to the current legal requirements in California. While the application is a self-assessment, the applicant may be contacted to provide additional information and/or copies of written policies. The Santa Clara Department of Public Health, Healthy Mother’s Workplace and the Legal Aid Society – Employment Law Center collaborated to develop the assessment and accompanying toolkit.

The toolkit that accompanies the Family-Friendly Workplace Award is a collection of tools including a (1) maternity leave and return toolkit for employers, (2) lactation accommodation policy template, (3) public health lactation accommodation policy and (4) fact sheet about a mother-friendly employer program and award offered by the Department of Public Health that seems to have ended in 2015.

<sup>78</sup> “Bright Beginnings | Early Childhood Development Initiative,” accessed January 17, 2019, <https://brightbeginningsmc.org/>.  
<sup>79</sup> The Bright Beginnings website also has a consistent disclaimer that they are not providing legal or Human Resources advice and that the information provided is for general information purposes only.  
<sup>80</sup> “Family-Friendly Workplace Award,” County of Santa Clara Women’s Policy, accessed January 17, 2019, <https://www.sccgov.org/sites/owp/econ-adv/pages/ffwa.aspx>.

### Family Friendly Workplace™ Certification Initiative

The United Way of St. Croix Valley's Success by 6 (SB6) program in Wisconsin created a trademark-registered program called the Family Friendly Workplace™ certification initiative.<sup>81</sup> Similar to the Bright Beginnings initiative in Monterey and the Santa Clara County Family-Friendly Workplace Award, this initiative gives businesses the opportunity to earn the certification at Bronze, Silver and Gold levels. There is an online application<sup>82</sup> and responses are verified by an Engagement Specialist after the application is received. Once certified, businesses receive a plaque and media toolkit.

What is unique about this initiative is that they charge employers \$250 to apply for the award and also charge a certification fee of \$10 per Full-Time Equivalent employee per year. The proceeds from the certification process are used by United Way to "benefit educational programs and services delivery for early childhood development." According to their website, there are 19 organizations that are currently certified, including the United Way of St. Croix Valley itself and the Hudson Area Chamber of Commerce.

### Healthy Mothers Workplace Award and Employer Toolkits

The Healthy Mothers Workplace Coalition<sup>83</sup> was initiated by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors Taskforce and is comprised of community organizations, government agencies and employers, with the goal of promoting health and equity for working parents and their children in the San Francisco Bay Area. Their website provides videos to help parents know their rights as well as fact sheets and other resources created by Legal Aid at Work. In addition to those resources, they also provide toolkits for employers and employees, including: (1) a *Maternity Leave & Return Toolkit* that includes model policies, a checklist for employers and employees to complete prior to and after returning from maternity leave, sample forms and links to other resources, as well as (2) the *Healthy Mothers Workplace Assessment Tool* to assess policies related to parental leave, breastfeeding accommodations and work-family balance. This tool is used to assess an organization's policies and assigns a level of Bronze (meets requirements), Silver (exceeds requirements) or Gold (sets a gold standard). The Assessment Tool is used to support the annual Healthy Mothers Workplace Award Program, which recognizes local employers with policies that promote health and equity for working parents and their children. The Coalition has given 116 awards for excellence to 62 employers over the program's first four years and their award structure and resources have also helped a number of employers move up to a higher award level.



<sup>81</sup> "Family Friendly Workplace," United Way St. Croix Valley, accessed January 17, 2019, <https://www.unitedwaystcroix.org/family-friendly-workplace>.

<sup>82</sup> "Certification Application," Family Friendly Workplace - United Way St. Croix Valley, accessed January 17, 2019, <http://familyfriendlyworkplace.org/certification-application/>.

<sup>83</sup> "Healthy Mothers Workplace Coalition," Legal Aid at Work, accessed January 17, 2019, <https://legalaidatwork.org/our-programs/healthy-mothers-workplace-coalition-2/>.

## Additional Organizations Promoting Family-Friendly Policies

The following is a list of additional organizations who provide family-friendly information and resources to employers and employees, as well as organizations that are advocates for family-friendly policies.

### Cleo

<https://hicleo.com/>

Cleo is an app that employers can offer to their employees “on their journey from considering, to pregnancy, to parenthood, and back to work again.” The app allows employees to virtually connect with their network of health and financial counselors or schedule in-person and at-home visits. Their network of experts to help new parents includes certified lactation specialists, birth doulas, baby-sleep consultants and career consultants.

### Families and Work Institute

<https://www.familiesandwork.org/>

This nonpartisan research institute studies the changing workforce and offers resources in categories such as Work and Life, Publications for Caregivers, Parenting Videos and Life Skills for Children.

### Mamava

<https://www.mamava.com/>

Mamava is a business with the motto “nursing should be a right, not a privilege” that seeks to support nursing mothers with freestanding lactation suites, while raising awareness and support for breastfeeding. The lactation suites are all-in-one lactation solutions for offices and public spaces such as airports.

### MomsRising.org

<https://www.momsrising.org>

MomsRising.org is a grassroots organization of more than a million people with the goal of educating the public and mobilizing major grassroots efforts to bring the voices of women and mothers to local, state and national leaders. They have a number of campaigns to advance workplace justice policies that affect women and families.

### National Council on Family Relations

<https://www.ncfr.org/>

NCFR is the oldest nonprofit, nonpartisan, multidisciplinary professional association focused solely on family research, practice and education. They publish three journals as well as numerous research and policy briefs related to families, including some on family-friendly policies.

### Parenting in the Workplace Institute

<https://www.babiesatwork.org/>

PIWI is a resource for companies to access best practices and guidelines for starting a babies-at-work program.

### The Bay Area Council Economic Institute

<http://www.bayareaeconomy.org>

The Bay Area Council Economic Institute is a think tank focused on economic and policy issues facing the San Francisco/Silicon Valley area, including family-friendly workplace policies.

### Working Mothers Best Companies

<https://www.workingmother.com/best-companies-for-women>

provides an annual list of the top 100 companies that support working mothers and bestows what is probably the most well-known award for family-friendly employers. In 2018 they also began the list of the Best Companies for Dads.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### Advocate for Family-Friendly Workplace Policies

While businesses and business leaders are integral to the development of family-friendly workplaces and work-life balance for employees, creating policies at various levels of government would ensure these practices become standard for all, or most, organizations. Businesses can build coalitions by sector and/or join existing advocacy groups by issue area (like paid family leave or breastfeeding) to lobby and advocate for greater family-friendly policies. Businesses want to protect their return on investment and may not wish to bear the burden of potential associated costs, so advocates should ensure that the business case is clear and that policies address the concerns of sectors and smaller businesses that may face hardship due to available resources.

Flexible policies might include modifications dependent on operating budget, revenue and/or staff size, but advocates should be mindful of exemptions to potential policies. Often, the employers who offer the fewest benefits due to resource deficiencies are the ones whose employees could benefit greatly from WLB initiatives, such as low-wage and unskilled workers.<sup>84</sup>

### Develop, Codify and Share Policies Widely

Employers who choose to pursue family-friendly initiatives should aim to develop clearly articulated and detailed written policies, so that management and employees alike can familiarize themselves with WLB benefits. Policies, program descriptions and processes for eligibility should be reviewed with and readily accessible to new and existing employees. WLB policies can be included in areas with policies that require posting through federal mandates, like minimum wage posters and workplace safety posters.<sup>85</sup>

### Support and Reward Leadership in Family-Friendly Workplace Policy and Practice

In addition to clear articulation and sharing of policies, an organizational culture that values family-friendly policies and practices must be established so that employees take advantage of benefits. To develop buy-in, top leadership, human resources managers and employee managers may require training to fully understand policies and the benefits of those policies. Training may increase the likelihood that leaders within the organization utilize WLB benefits, thereby modeling behavior for staff. A proactive approach to discussing benefits with staff may also increase employee retention and engagement.

## Evaluate Policies and Programs

Evaluation before and after the implementation of WLB initiatives can be useful to gauge employee need and satisfaction, but also to measure an employer's return on investment. Employers can engage employees in surveys to understand which benefits may be most useful. Usage logs and WLB program intake and exit surveys can help employers determine which initiatives are or are not used frequently. This allows employers to make informed decisions about resource allocation in WLB initiatives.

Additionally, some policies will naturally complement each other. Evaluation of utilization rates may help determine which combinations are most effective for both employers and employees. For example, flexible work options combine well with lactation support policies. Similarly, infant-at-work policies may reduce the need for child care support. Workplace wellness programs that focus on the provision of resources and information could use evaluative data to determine what types of information would be most useful.

## CONCLUSION

Family-friendly workplace policies and policies that support work-life balance benefit everyone involved. Organizations that are family-friendly support children, parents and seniors, but ultimately support the health and well-being of the broader community as well. For the organizations themselves, their employees are more productive, they are able to retain good employees and they have more to offer job candidates, so they are able to recruit and retain better employees. Promoting family-friendly policies can be done in several ways — through advocacy, education and information sharing, rewarding and incentivizing family-friendly leaders, and contributing to what is known about the impact and effectiveness of various approaches.

<sup>84</sup>David Villano, "Work-Life Balance Benefits Low-Wage Workers, Employers," Pacific Standard, September 7, 2011, <https://psmag.com/economics/work-life-balance-benefits-low-wage-workers-employers-35733>.

<sup>85</sup>"Posting Requirements," U.S. Department of Labor, accessed December 21, 2018, <https://www.dol.gov/general/topic/youthlabor/postingrequirements>.



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### About First 5 LA

First 5 LA is a leading early childhood advocate organization created by California voters to invest Proposition 10 tobacco tax revenues in Los Angeles County. In partnership with others, First 5 LA strengthens families, communities and systems of services and supports so that all children in L.A. County enter kindergarten ready to succeed in school and life. Please visit [First5LA.org](http://First5LA.org) for more information.

