

NC State Government

Family-Friendly Workplace Policies and Caregiver Supports

Key Initiatives:

- The labor force participation rate in North Carolina was 61.3% in February 2020 but dropped to 59.5% by March 2021 as workers remained home for multiple reasons including childcare needs and perceived health risks. This issue is especially acute for women, who have left the workforce at higher rates than men.
- We know that more than half of North Carolina's 4-year-olds lack access to Pre-K. That's a problem not only for young kids, who miss out on critical learning and school preparation experience that affects their long-term chances of success, but also for North Carolina's employers—including the state government—who may struggle to recruit and retain employees because folks lack quality care for their children to enable them to stay in the workforce.

Key Initiatives:

- That's why Governor Cooper has called for increased investments to increase access to early education and childcare, including increased investments in childcare subsidies for working families, increasing compensation to recruit good, qualified pre-K teachers, and increasing the number of pre-K slots to serve more of North Carolina's children.
- Governor Cooper's American Rescue Plan investment recommendations includes these investments and we're hopeful that the ultimate budget that we see from the General Assembly shows the same commitment to family-friendly policy solutions.

Paid Parental Leave

- Paid Parental Leave (Executive Order 95) – Effective 9/1/2019
- Provides eight weeks of paid parental leave to eligible state employees who have given birth. It offers four weeks of paid parental leave to eligible state employees whose partners have given birth or anyone who has an adoption, foster care placement or other legal placement of a child.
- About 56,000 employees of North Carolina departments, agencies, boards and commissions under the governor's oversight are eligible to receive paid parental leave.

Paid Parental Leave

- In FY20-21, 1,145 employees used Paid Parental Leave (PPL) for 237,691 hours.
- The estimated cost was \$5,530,000.
- 91% of employees who took PPL belong to the Governor's Cabinet agencies.
- 56% of employees who took PPL were male and 44% were female.
- However, females took 60% of the hours. This is expected since females usually take 8 weeks and males are allowed up to 4 weeks of PPL.
- 62% of employees who took PPL were White, 29% were Black and 3% were Hispanic. PPL taken is in line with the State demographic distribution.

Other Family-Friendly Policies

- Reasonable Accommodation Policy
 - “qualified individuals with disabilities and those who are pregnant”
- Broad anti-discrimination policy which includes gender, gender identity, pregnancy, and race.
- Paid Sick Leave
- Paid Vacation Leave
- Statewide Teleworking Options
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
- Flexible Work Hours
- Removal of Salary History Information on Applications for Employment