



FAMILY-FRIENDLY WORKPLACE TOOLKIT



COLORADO
Department of Public
Health & Environment



TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Getting Started	1
II. Components of Family-Friendly Workplaces	6
III. The Need for Family-Friendly Workplaces	24
IV. Endnotes	27
V. Resource Guide	29

FOREWORD

It is the mission of the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment to protect and improve the health of all Coloradans where they live, learn, work and play. This toolkit can help employers support the health of their employees through practices and policies proven to enhance wellness.



Employers play a critical role in the lives of their employees. After all, the average person in the United States spends 8.9 hours a day at work¹ and should feel supported in the workplace. Stress and economic insecurity are risk factors for a number of health related issues, including psychological distress, chronic disease and obesity. These risk factors can often contribute to child abuse and neglect, sexual violence, child fatality and suicide.

The Family-Friendly Workplace Toolkit provides evidence-informed best practices for employers to implement within their organizations. These policies and practices are proven to support employees with different needs and ultimately, lead to better health outcomes. The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment acknowledges the business community and the role of employers as key stakeholders in the effort to create a healthy Colorado. Please join us in promoting these best practices.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Larry Wolk". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "L" and "W".

Dr. Larry Wolk, MD, MSPH
Executive Director and Chief Medical Officer
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment

I. GETTING STARTED

Here are some steps to making family-friendly changes in your workplace.

DETERMINE YOUR GOAL

What is the benefit to your organization to become more family-friendly? Is there a problem that needs solving? For example, does your organization have a problem with turnover? Is there a high rate of absenteeism? Are employees complaining about a lack of flexibility? Is your organization new and growing? Does it align with your core values? Does it help attract top talent? Or have circumstances presented an opportunity, such as an upper management decision to help employees improve the fit between work and their personal lives? If so, use this as a starting point. You might consider other changes as you continue the process.

Family-friendly policies will be more sustainable if they are grounded in your business strategy. While a flexible workplace certainly benefits employees and their families, that can't be the only reason for adopting workplace wellness. Rather than presenting new employee wellness policies as favors or privileges, consider them part of your overall human resources strategy, contributing to employee recruitment, retention, engagement, health and safety.

PULL TOGETHER YOUR TEAM

A solid, representative team or task force will provide more complete information, innovative ideas and a variety of perspectives. It will help create buy-in. Make sure the team represents everyone who needs to be at the table. Include a manager and representative employees, including those who are part-time and hourly. Think about including someone from facilities management and IT. If there is a union, make sure to coordinate with the representative to avoid any conflicts with the contract. Consider providing a "job description" (www.familyfriendlycolorado.com/jobdescription) so team members understand their roles and commitment to the process.

The presence of a senior manager, at least at the first meeting, emphasizes the value of employees to the organization and encourages buy-in. Make sure

everyone on the team understands the purpose of the task and any limits to the team's authority.

ASSESS WHAT YOU HAVE NOW

What types of policies and benefits does the organization have in place already?

Health Links (www.healthlinkscertified.org), a signature program of the Center for Health, Work, & Environment at the Colorado School of Public Health and EPIC (Executives Partnering to Invest in Children, www.coloradoepic.org) established a key partnership supported by CDPHE to connect businesses to each other and resources to help employees thrive at home, in the workplace and in their communities.



The Family-Friendly Assessment (FF+) identifies the needs and priorities of employers to create environments that are supportive of families. FF+ is divided into four sections that gauge family-friendly culture: Policies and Benefits; Flexibility; New Parents; and Communication, Education and Training. Identifying a FF+ baseline score will provide a benchmark for your business and highlight areas that might be improved. FF+ is free, easy, and takes about 20 minutes to complete (note: you need to know the policies and benefits at your workplace in order to complete FF+ in 20 minutes or less). For more information, visit: www.healthlinkscertified.org/certification/family-friendly.

When Work Works, a national initiative of the Society for Human Resource Management, offers Workflex Assessment, a free online questionnaire that will let you know how flexible your workplace is. It takes about 15 minutes to complete and you get a score immediately upon completion (www.whenworkworks.org/workflex-assessment).



“I think taking The Family Friendly Assessment (FF+) was an eye opener for everyone to identify simple things we can put in place right away to make Oakwood Homes a family-friendly workplace.

This is a great assessment that all employers could and should be using!”

- Jessica Weatherly, Corporate Wellness at Oakwood Homes
(new home builders operating in Colorado and Utah with over 470 employees)

ASSESS EMPLOYEE NEEDS

Determine what your team needs to know to move forward. Is there a specific issue to address? What data do you need to help find a solution? For example, if management is concerned about turnover, you’ll want to gather data on employee satisfaction and reasons for leaving, so you might conduct exit interviews or survey current employees about what they like and don’t like about their jobs.

Don’t underestimate the value of simply asking other employees what their challenges are and what would help them. However, realize that people may be more candid on an anonymous survey. You can include questions about employee needs in an organizational climate or employee engagement survey, if you normally do one.

Be very careful to ensure confidentiality. Surveys should be anonymous and ask no identifying questions. In small- to mid-size organizations (fewer than 50 employees), even asking about the ages of children may make survey respondents identifiable to others. If your organization can afford it, you may be able to hire a third party to conduct the survey. If there is doubt about whether a question is too personal or may produce a response that is identifiable, leave it off. Aside from protecting the privacy of employees, a truly anonymous survey will solicit more responses and ultimately, better results.

PRIORITIZE ISSUES AND RESEARCH POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Use the resource guide at the end of this toolkit as a starting point to explore options in more depth. You don’t need to re-invent the wheel. On the other hand, don’t try to read every source or take every assessment before you start to implement. There is a vast amount of material on work-life integration, so don’t let it overwhelm and paralyze your efforts. Getting started is what matters!

It may be helpful to consider the relative costs of problems and solutions. The Society for Human Resource Management hosts a free, online calculator that allows employers to calculate absenteeism or turnover costs for free. The Investing In People online calculator can also estimate how much might be saved by implementing a specific work-life program. You can find the calculator at www.hrcosting.com/hr/.

Take time to consider the variety of issues your organization is facing or will face in the near future. Also, make sure to reference the core values of your organization along with the business goals you developed when you started this process. Some important organizational issues may affect, or be affected by, new policies:

- A growing organization’s crowded office space could be a cue to think about a telework policy or job-sharing opportunity.

EMPLOYER EXAMPLE

CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL COLORADO

FAMILY-FRIENDLY WORKPLACE STEERING COMMITTEE (2016)

Children's Hospital Colorado employs more than 6,500 individuals (3,000 full-time and 3,500 part-time) at its main campus in Aurora, Colorado, and throughout Colorado at "network of care" locations. In 2016, Children's Hospital Colorado formed an internal steering committee to better understand and support family-friendly workplace policies and practices.

First, the committee created a brief "job description" (www.familyfriendly-colorado.com/jobdescription) outlining the responsibilities for potential family-friendly steering committee members. Setting clear and manageable expectations is important because family-friendly workplace conversations can quickly become overwhelming.

The Board of Trustees approved a new paid parental leave policy that provides two weeks of fully paid parental leave for all employees. Having executive level support from the beginning is important because sustainability requires buy-in from decision-makers.

Next, the family-friendly steering committee conducted a comprehensive review of all employee benefits. The goal was to narrow the focus specifically on policies and practices that impact families. More than 80 policies were selected to be included in the family-friendly conversation.

The next step was research, comparing policies to corporate best practices for employers of similar size and industry to provide evidence-informed recommendations. Once the analysis was complete, the steering committee moved to prioritization. It placed all policies and practices under review into three categories: Celebrate, Promote and Review.

- Strong policies and practices that can be celebrated include adoption assistance, IVF coverage and health care (medical/dental/vision) benefits.
- Under-utilized policies and practices that can be promoted include back-up/emergency dependent care, flexible scheduling, flexible spending accounts, lactation (breastfeeding) support and telework.
- Policies and practices that require review include child care support, college savings accounts, financial planning, paid time off (holiday/sick leave/volunteer) and tuition assistance.

- Building a new office space might create an opportunity to plan for on-site child care.
- A need for more coverage in the early morning or late afternoon might be a rationale for flexible scheduling.

If a specific solution is already under consideration, you might ask people whether they would be likely to take advantage of that flexibility or benefit if it were offered.

Note: Make sure not to raise hopes by offering a potential solution that leadership hasn't approved. If you are only gathering information, be very clear about that.

Note: Remember to consider benefits that meet the needs of employees without children. Every employee has a family. Assistance that isn't specifically targeted to parents, such as elder care support or even pet insurance, can improve total worker health and increase equity across the workforce.

CREATE A PLAN

Agree on what to implement and then prioritize. A small success, like creating a new breastfeeding room, may be just what you need to get the program off to a solid start. It will give the group the credibility and morale boost needed to tackle a more ambitious item.

Develop a detailed plan with a timeline. Some research and a brief cost/benefit analysis on proposed programs or policies will help. Consider categorizing recommendations into a cost/impact grid; oftentimes low cost/high impact recommendations determine initial priorities, while high cost/low impact ideas are tabled as unattainable. Determine how you will implement the new program or policy. Depending on what you are trying to implement, you might consider a pilot phase and then evaluate effectiveness and costs prior to full implementation.

Don't forget two crucial pieces of implementation:

- **COMMUNICATION/MARKETING:**

Your implementation plan will need to include steps for communicating or marketing to employees and decision-makers. How will you publicize the availability of the program/policy and its advantages?

- **EVALUATION:**

Build evaluation into your implementation plan. Monitoring and periodic evaluation provide an opportunity to tailor a policy or program and gives you the greatest chance for sustained success. Determine how and when you will evaluate the program/policy. How will you know if it is or is not working? How will you track how many employees are using the policy/program? Can human resources at your organization keep track of the data you need? Will you use a short survey? When will you collect the data and when will you review it?

IMPLEMENT

Remember to use your communication plan and collect key data as you go, that way you'll be able to evaluate and ground your policy/program with examples of success. A few key reminders, whether you are rolling out a pilot concept or a complete program:

- Survey employee needs regularly and listen to their feedback. Make sure the new policy/program is working for all employees. Even when a policy/program has been in place for a long time, it's important to check in and find out what is working and what could be better. In many small organizations, policies/programs that are valuable today may become less useful as turnover occurs or employees enter new phases of their lives.
- Communicate options to employees frequently. Remember that benefits and policies, such as paid family leave and breastfeeding (lactation) support for new moms may seem irrelevant to

employees on their first day and become significantly more important and useful after just a few years on the job.

- Participation and modeling from senior leadership is crucial. Without clear signals from senior executives, employees may wonder whether using family leave or flex-time could actually hurt their careers. A family-friendly boss should serve as a role-model. If employees see leadership occasionally shifting hours or using technology to work remotely, they may feel more comfortable asking to do the same.

EVALUATE

Review the data you collect. If the policy/program isn't working as you anticipated, try to figure out why. You may need to talk with your colleagues to learn about their experiences. Can the policy/program be adjusted to meet everyone's needs, rather than starting over?

Once the program is working as you anticipated, remember to document impact to build good will, ensure sustainability and think about what's next.

Congratulations! Start over again with your next plan! Some employers will benefit from laying each initiative out one at a time rather than trying to take on too much by implementing too many things at once.

Family-friendly workplace policies and practices don't have to be complicated. One small change can often provide big benefits for the organization and lead to greater focus on supporting employees.

Organizations of every size across the country are finding that a small investment in family-friendly benefits increases employee satisfaction and supports good will and mutual trust. It makes good business sense to go further.

**WE WISH YOU THE BEST OF LUCK ON
YOUR FAMILY-FRIENDLY WORKPLACE!**



II. COMPONENTS OF FAMILY-FRIENDLY WORKPLACES

FAMILY-FRIENDLY WORKPLACES CONSIDER:



LIVING WAGES IN COLORADO
different from minimum wages



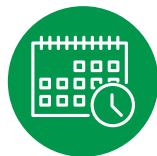
COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH BENEFITS
including dental and vision



PAID LEAVE POLICIES
that support all employees



CAREGIVING RESPONSIBILITIES FOR EMPLOYEES
child care, elder care, dependent care



FLEXIBILITY
in location and hours



SUPPORTIVE SERVICES
and other resources



CAREER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES
for all employees



COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT STRATEGIES
corporate social responsibility

POLICIES AND BENEFITS

It is almost impossible to make it in America today earning minimum wage. In many communities, families working in low-wage jobs do not make sufficient income to live locally given the local cost of living. Financial security supports a family's physical, social and emotional health. For parents, basic resources provided by a living wage and supportive benefits allow them to parent effectively, even under stress.

Increasing benefits may be an even more cost-effective strategy for employers and employees than providing a raise in salary. By offering non-taxable benefits rather than increases in salary, employers avoid paying additional FICA, state unemployment insurance and workers compensation insurance. Employees avoid paying income taxes on additional income while still receiving valuable benefits. When considering what benefits to provide to employees, take into account:

The Pros...

- A benefits package, especially one that offers good health insurance coverage (including dental and vision), helps attract and retain quality employees.
- Businesses get the tax advantage of deducting plan contributions, including health insurance, life insurance and pension plans.
- Offering benefits to employees can be advantageous to the business owner, who may be able to get personal benefits for less money than if purchasing them privately.
- Offering health insurance decreases absenteeism and improves employee health and morale; those with coverage are more likely to seek preventive care and live overall healthier lives.

Further Considerations...

- Providing benefits costs more for small employers than large ones; higher prices are due to less

buying power and higher administration costs.

- Small businesses have less choice in designing retirement plans due to administrative costs.
- There is administrative overhead for offering benefits; the more benefits you offer, the more overhead you will incur. This includes legal compliance and regulatory oversight.
- Health insurance costs continue to rise, making it less affordable to employers and making financial planning difficult (although small business provisions in the Affordable Care Act balance this by incentivizing employer-funded benefits).



LIVING WAGES IN COLORADO

Simply put, a living wage is one that covers the necessities for life: food, water, housing, health care, education, clothing, transportation and child care. A living wage is distinguished from a minimum wage. A living wage allows employees to meet their basic needs based on costs in a specific community, while maintaining a decent standard of living. A living wage includes several cost factors; two of the most important are housing and child care.

Accepted standard of pay is based on similar positions in the area, or in the case of hourly employees, minimum wage. When minimum wage is used as the standard of pay, an individual working full time (40 hours/week) in Colorado in 2017 earns \$19,344 annually. With the passage of Amendment 70 (www.familyfriendlycolorado.com/minimumwage), Colorado's minimum wage increased to \$9.30 per hour effective Jan. 1, 2017, and increases annually by 90 cents per hour each Jan. 1 until it reaches \$12 per hour in 2020.

An individual working full time (40 hours / week) at minimum wage in Colorado in 2020 will earn \$24,960 annually.



COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH BENEFITS

Note: The following is a general description of some common benefit options. It is not intended to be legal or tax advice. Consult your CFO or tax specialist.

HEALTH INSURANCE

As an employer, your ability to offer health insurance helps you attract and retain top talent. It helps keep your employees healthier, happier and more productive. Health insurance is a core benefit, that contributes to the financial stability and well being of employees and their families. Preventive care reduces absenteeism and lost productivity. Family-friendly employers make every effort to provide health benefits.

The Affordable Care Act requires employers with at least 50 employees to provide reasonably priced health insurance to full-time employees, but not to employees who work less than 30 hours per week. Employers with fewer than 50 full-time employees are not required to provide health insurance. Employees who are not covered can apply for Medicaid or buy their own insurance on a state exchange like Health First Colorado (www.healthfirstcolorado.com).

Even for employers who already provide health insurance, it's worth looking at adjustments that may provide lower premiums, lower co-pays or smaller deductibles, based on employee needs. Employees may be struggling to pay family premiums, putting off appointments to avoid co-pays or unable to afford care due to large deductibles. If so, there may be different policies that are more suitable to employees at your organization. Especially for those with families, the cost of premiums and high family deductibles can be significant obstacles.

Some employers have switched to providing fixed, monthly health insurance subsidies to employees, allowing them to purchase their own insurance. These "defined contribution plans" allow employers

to keep health care costs within defined budgets regardless of the benefit plans employees choose.

Small(er) employers can provide a small business health plan from Colorado's health insurance marketplace, Connect for Health Colorado (www.connectforhealthco.com), or allow employees to choose from the options there. Federal tax credits are available for small businesses and nonprofit organizations to help cover the cost of health insurance for employees. In 2017, the tax credit will pay as much as 50 percent of premium costs for small businesses and 35 percent for nonprofit organizations. This credit is available to employers for two years. To qualify, small employers must:

- Provide health insurance to employees and cover at least 50 percent of the cost of single coverage.
- Employ fewer than 25 full-time workers (employers with fewer than 50 part-time workers may be eligible).
- Pay average annual wages below \$50,000, excluding the wages of owners and their families.

A small but growing number of Colorado employers are opening medical clinics at their worksites. Typically contracted out to medical companies, worksite clinics are most often found at larger, self-insured companies that have a spare room or space on their campuses to turn into health care areas. Some smaller firms are beginning to combine their resources and offer "near-site" clinics as well. On-site or near-site clinics often increase employee productivity, reduce absenteeism and help keep health care costs in check. The goal is better health care access for employees; the added benefit is employee satisfaction. The clinics also can help workers sign up and participate in worksite wellness programs.

Alternative care delivery models are maturing rapidly in Colorado: clinically integrated networks, near-site clinics and direct primary care are becoming more available. Bundled payments and direct contracting are emerging solutions as the health information technology infrastructure is now in place to connect systems and streamline services.

Savvy benefits advisors are leading the way, embracing these alternative models and helping employers determine best fit.

DENTAL AND VISION INSURANCE

As with other health insurance, dental and vision insurance allow employees to receive preventative care for themselves and their families. Preventative care reduces absenteeism. Insurance also lessens the potential risk of a major expense that jeopardizes family economic stability.

SECTION 125 “CAFETERIA PLANS”

A cafeteria plan, including a Flexible Spending Account (FSA), provides participants an opportunity to receive qualified benefits on a pre-tax basis. It allows your employees to choose between receiving cash or taxable benefits, instead of certain qualified tax-exempt benefits. If an employee chooses to receive a qualified benefit under the plan, the fact that the employee could have received cash or a taxable benefit instead won't make the qualified benefit taxable.

Generally, a cafeteria plan doesn't include any plan that offers a benefit that defers pay. However, a cafeteria plan can include a qualified 401(k) plan as a benefit. Also, certain life insurance plans maintained by educational institutions can be offered as a benefit even though they defer pay.

A cafeteria plan can include the following benefits:

- Accident and health benefits (but not Archer medical savings accounts /Archer MSAs or long-term care insurance).
- Adoption assistance.
- Dependent care assistance.
- Group-term life insurance coverage (including costs that can't be excluded from wages).
- Health savings accounts (HSAs).

- Distributions from an HSA may be used to pay eligible long-term care insurance premiums or qualified long-term care services.

Other financial benefits that support the financial stability of employees and their families:

- Life insurance.
- Retirement benefits.
- Transportation benefits such as a commuter transit pass.

For descriptions of a range of taxable and non-taxable benefits, see IRS Publication 15-B, Employer's Tax Guide to Fringe Benefits (www.familyfriendlycolorado.com/irs), and consult your CFO or tax specialist.

SHORT-TERM DISABILITY INSURANCE

Short-term disability insurance provides financial help to individuals who are temporarily unable to work because of illness, injury or pregnancy. “Short-term” means a person's absence from work cannot be permanent and is usually limited to two years.

Typical short-term disability plans (STDs) are inexpensive. On average, monthly premiums are less than 25 cents per \$10 of protected wages. Benefits are calculated as a percentage of weekly wages and cover as much as 60 percent or two-thirds of weekly income, and have a weekly maximum benefit amount. STD benefits usually begin the first day of an accident or the eighth day of an illness or for maternity leave, with some variation depending on plan design. Benefits are typically payable weekly for 12-26 weeks.

STD claims are generally handled on a weekly renewable basis after initial claims are made. Covered employees submit regular claim forms and proof from their doctors that they are unable to work. Checks are mailed or directly deposited for the duration of the disability or until the term of the policy is met.

If employees pay STD premiums with pre-tax dollars, or if STD plans are employer-paid, then the

benefits are considered taxable income to employees. If STD plans are paid with after-tax dollars, then the benefits are tax-free.

Three of four STD plans are paid in full by employers as an employee income protection mechanism. In cases where employers cannot afford to pay for STD, they should still offer it on a voluntary or employee-paid basis. The bottom line is that this benefit is important to the financial health of families and employees can access these products regardless of whether the employer or the employee pays for it.

Disability claims related to pregnancy and childbirth are steadily increasing and account for approximately 15 percent of new disability claims for female wage earners.² When considering short-term disability insurance for pregnancies, ensure the coverage begins before conception. The coverage time may be affected by complicated births (i.e. cesarean delivery), so it is also important to confirm what each policy covers.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS (EAPS)

Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) are voluntary, work-based programs that offer free and confidential assessments, short-term counseling, referrals and follow-up services to employees who have personal and/or work-related problems. EAPs often address a broad and complex body of issues affecting mental and emotional well-being, such as alcohol and other substance abuse, stress, grief, family problems and psychological disorders.

EAP counselors work in a consultive role with managers and supervisors to address employee and organizational challenges and needs. Many EAPs are active in helping organizations prevent and cope with workplace violence, trauma and other emergency response situations. EAPs help managers and offer mediation to address communication difficulties and resolve conflicts. EAPs often provide referrals to child and elder care resources.

EMPLOYER EXAMPLE

PINNACOL ASSURANCE PROVIDING EMPLOYEES SHORT-TERM DISABILITY PLANS TO SUPPORT LONG-TERM SERVICE TO THE COMPANY

Pinnacol Assurance provides workers compensation insurance to Colorado employers. It has more than 600 employees headquartered in Denver, Colorado. Full-time employees (working at least 30 hours per week) at Pinnacol are eligible to receive benefits under the Short-Term Disability Plan (STD). Pinnacol pays 100 percent of the plan and benefits received are taxable. However, they are not considered retirement-eligible earnings.

After six months of service, Pinnacol employees receive as much as four weeks of STD: two weeks paid and two weeks at 60 percent pay. After one year, employees receive as much as eight weeks of STD: two weeks paid and six weeks at 60 percent pay. After two years, employees receive as much as 13 weeks of STD: two weeks paid and 11 weeks at 60 percent pay. Pinnacol employees can use accrued paid time off to supplement their STD benefits.



PAID LEAVE POLICIES

SICK LEAVE

In a family in which all adults are working, parents without paid sick leave face difficult decisions when their children are ill. Child care for sick children is hard to find and expensive. If a parent misses work, he or she endangers the family’s financial stability. When employees earn paid sick leave, they can recover from their own illnesses or care for sick children without losing crucial income. They can seek preventive care for themselves and their children, reducing the risk of spreading disease and more serious illnesses.

- Paid sick leave increases employee morale and overall job satisfaction.

- Offering paid sick leave reduces the spread of illness in the workplace (both to co-workers and clients or customers).
- Paid sick leave reduces “presenteeism,” a condition in which employees are present but unproductive at work due to illness.
- In jobs where occupational injuries are more common, healthy workers are safer and less likely to be injured on the job. Individuals who are working while sick are more likely to be injured on the job.⁶

VACATION TIME

Vacation time allows employees to recharge mentally and physically and enables families to rest and spend time together. Employees with paid vacation leave have lower rates of stress and depression.⁷ Although employers may provide paid vacation leave, there may

EMPLOYER EXAMPLE

DENVER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

PAID SICK LEAVE BANK (SLB) ALLOWS ELIGIBLE EMPLOYEES TIME TO BE FULLY RESTORED TO HEALTH.

Denver Public Schools offers employees the option to enroll in a voluntary Sick Leave Bank (SLB). The SLB assists individuals in need due to illnesses or injuries by providing eligible employees the ability to obtain additional paid sick days once all accumulated paid leave is exhausted. The days in the bank are donated by SLB members for other members to use. A condition for continued membership is that all members agree to donate at least one accrued sick day each year.

The SLB is sustained by ongoing contributions of personal accumulated sick days by members. The SLB can be used for personal illnesses that require five or more full days of consecutive absence.

EMPLOYER EXAMPLE

ANTON COLLINS MITCHELL
INCENTIVIZING EMPLOYEES TO TAKE A
FULL WEEK OF PAID VACATION TIME

Anton Collins Mitchell (ACM) has approximately 150 employees who work in a fast-paced environment. While employees always have been able to accrue paid time off, very few individuals were actually using it to take a real vacation (40 consecutive hours away from work). A consistent and often demanding work schedule increases stress among employees.

As such, ACM instituted a new paid vacation leave policy in 2017. All individuals who choose to take a full week (40 consecutive hours) of paid time off are eligible to receive a cash payout toward the vacation. The payout equals one week of full-time pay (40 hours). ACM employees submit vacation plans for partner approval, including travel budget requests and transfer of work responsibilities while on vacation.

be subtle pressure from managers not to use it. This can be counterproductive.

The Society for Human Resource Management has found that employers who encourage employees to take vacation time see a reduction in turnover, workers compensation claims and health care costs, as well as an increase in productivity.⁸ Some employers believe that vacation time is important enough that they require employees to take a minimum amount of vacation time each year.⁷

PERSONAL LEAVE

Some employers provide paid personal leave, or general leave, for purposes such as appointments or events at a child's school, or other types of personal business that may not be covered by other types of leave. Supporting parents through paid personal leave is closely connected to children's academic achievement and behavioral

health.⁹ This family-friendly benefit directly impacts both the employee and the child.

PAID TIME OFF (PTO)

Employers are increasingly offering paid time off rather than separately tracking sick, vacation and personal time. Combining types of time off reduces record keeping for employers and may reduce unscheduled absences. When employees can determine how best to use their paid time off, they are more likely to arrange absences in advance and less likely to call in sick when they need time off for personal business.

PAID PARENTAL LEAVE

Paid parental leave gives birth mothers the ability to take sufficient time to recover from childbirth. For all parents, it allows them time to bond with and care for a newborn or newly adopted child.

EMPLOYER EXAMPLE

WESTERN UNION

PAID PARENTAL LEAVE HELPS FINANCIAL TECHNOLOGY COMPANIES COMPETE FOR TOP TALENT.

Western Union believes that people drive success, which is one reason the company offers a suite of family-friendly benefits to support the health and well-being of all employees. Headquartered in Colorado, Western Union has more than 2,000 U.S. employees located in Denver and other offices across the United States, with more than 10,000 employees globally.

In 2016, the company updated its U.S. maternity leave policy to extend the amount of paid leave received by new mothers. In 2017, Western Union extended the policy and introduced parental leave to include both mothers and fathers, as several studies suggest that expanded and paid leave benefits lead to happier and healthier children and parents. Previously, Western Union offered mothers who gave birth six weeks of leave at two-thirds pay through short-term disability insurance. After reviewing time-off data, Western Union found that new mothers often supplemented short-term disability with accrued paid time off.

After considering many factors, including feedback from employees who had taken maternity leave, Western Union expanded its maternity leave benefit to 12 weeks. Expanding the policy supports the wellbeing of both employees and children, while ensuring the company remains competitive in attracting and retaining top talent.

In 2017, Western Union expanded leave for new parents, including those who have adopted and/or welcomed a foster child. Western Union offers two weeks of fully paid leave to all new parents. Combined with the enhanced maternity leave, new mothers who give birth now receive 14 weeks of fully paid leave.

Since introducing changes to the policy, many employees are taking advantage of the full amount of leave. Preliminary feedback suggests that extending the amount of paid leave has enabled new parents to return to work more engaged and productive.

For birth mothers and their babies, paid maternity leave offers a host of health benefits.

- Paid maternity leave is associated with lower infant mortality rates.¹⁰
- Mothers who are able to take paid maternity leave are more likely to breastfeed, and to breastfeed longer, which benefits both mothers and babies.
- Women who are able to delay returning to work after giving birth are happier and healthier, less likely to suffer from depression.
- Successful breastfeeding and the ability to take longer leave are associated with lower rates of child abuse and neglect.¹¹

For fathers, same-sex parents and adoptive parents, the ability to take paid parental leave supports bonding with the new child, helping brain development and laying a solid foundation for healthy relationships and the ability to learn. Establishing a safe, stable and nurturing relationship with a caregiver is crucial for a child to thrive and grow into a happy, healthy and productive adult.

Parents with access to partial or fully paid parental leave are more financially stable. When a new mother is able to take longer paid parental leave, she is more likely to sustain financial self-sufficiency. She is less likely to require public assistance and her family's income is less likely to drop below the poverty level.¹²

Now America's largest generation, Millennials are more likely to take paid parental leave and take longer leave than previous generations.¹³ Approaching prime childbearing age, Millennials are particularly interested in flexibility and paid parental leave. Employers addressing this dynamic are rewarded with improved recruitment and increased engagement and retention among Millennials.

PAID FAMILY LEAVE

In 2017, Boston Consulting Group (BCG) released, "Why Paid Family Leave is Good for Business," highlighting five imperatives in designing a paid family leave policy²:

1. Policies reflect company values. There is a clear trend toward inclusive policies – equal amounts of paid leave for male and female parents, covering birth, adoption and surrogacy for both salaried and hourly workers. Providing paid leave to care for ill family members ensures that everyone, not just parents, has access to the benefit.
2. Amount of leave is not the only value driver. While the trend is toward more time off, flexibility - offering non-consecutive weeks off or the option to take longer leave at less pay - may be equally important to employees.
3. Leaders set the standard. Leaders encourage using the policy by taking time off themselves when they need it. As visible champions, they can foster a sense of normalcy for paid family leave.
4. Support systems are crucial. Smart support systems consider employees who are out on leave and those covering them while they are gone. These include human resource processes and checklists for managers handling leaves and systems that help employees ramp down before they go on leave and ramp up once they return.
5. Measure success. Just a small number of metrics are needed to measure the success of a policy. Include statistics on usage, employee replacement costs, retention rates among employees who take paid family leave and employee perceptions of the program.

Benefits of paid family leave include:

1. Improved employee retention. Women with paid family leave are 93 percent more likely to be working one year after the birth of a child than those who take no leave.
2. Better talent attraction. In a Deloitte survey, 77 percent of workers said that paid family leave policies sway their choice of employers.
3. Reinforced company values. Company leaders frequently cite improved paid family leave policies as reinforcing the organization's core values.

4. Improved employee engagement. In an EY survey, more than 80 percent of companies with paid family leave reported a positive impact on morale. More than 70 percent reported a boost in productivity.
5. Enhanced brand equity. Improving paid family leave policies attracts media attention. This can be particularly true for early movers in an industry or for companies offering new or more expansive policies.



CAREGIVING RESPONSIBILITIES FOR EMPLOYEES

CHILD CARE

Currently, 63 percent of children under age 6 in Colorado live in households where all parents/caregivers are working.³ As such, child care represents an essential support that fuels Colorado’s \$250 billion economy. Access to quality child care increases a parent/caregiver’s likelihood of completing postsecondary education, raises labor force participation rates, increases productivity and helps businesses attract and retain talent.³

Child care is also a significant expense for Colorado families. The costs of trained personnel, safe facilities and well-balanced meals account for the high cost of providing care. Unlike the K-12 system, in which the costs of a child’s education are covered by public funding, working parents assume the cost of child care. Thus, a significant portion of a family’s income is spent on child care. Infant care (under age 3) costs nearly 20 percent of median family income in Colorado. This share climbs to nearly 50 percent in single-parent households.³ While home-based child care can cost less, the average cost for full-time, home-based care is more than \$8,000 per year for an infant and \$4,000 for a school-aged child.³

To add to the challenge, it can be difficult to find an opening at a center or child care home, particularly for an infant. In less-populated rural areas, long distances between a parent’s workplace and a child’s caregiver can be another barrier. Employees

with varying and unpredictable schedules and those who work evenings or weekends may need to piece together child care with help from family, friends and neighbors.

IN COLORADO, PARENTS PAY MORE TO PLACE AN INFANT OR A FOUR-YEAR-OLD IN A CHILD CARE CENTER FOR A YEAR THAN THEY WOULD FOR A YEAR OF IN-STATE TUITION AT A FOUR-YEAR PUBLIC UNIVERSITY.⁴

The bottom line: All parents want high quality, reliable care for their children. In order to stay employed, succeed at their jobs and provide for their families, they often struggle to make all of the pieces fit. Employers can support employees by providing resources, increasing access to child care and/or assisting with the cost of care.

There are several tax-advantaged strategies that can help employers support working parents and affordable child care. Using these tools to invest in quality child care makes good sense, investing wisely on the front-end reduces the costs of remediation down-the-road. “Cafeteria Plans” offer a menu of benefits tailored to meet the needs of employees while reducing income tax withholding, FICA and unemployment taxes. Employees can set aside pre-tax income for child care expenses of as much as \$5,000. “Dependent Care Assistance Programs” allow employers to fund a portion of an employee’s child care expenses. Employers can contribute towards an employee’s child care expenses (as much as \$5,000).

Additionally, Colorado leads the nation in providing tax-advantaged tools for child care through the Child Care Contribution Tax Credit (CCTC). This unique public/private partnership allows individuals and

EMPLOYER EXAMPLE:

PATAGONIA

**THE BUSINESS CASE
SUPPORTING ON-SITE
CHILD CARE**

Patagonia supports working families by providing quality, on-site child care at its corporate headquarters (Ventura, California) and its distribution center (Reno, Nevada). Basic math gives Patagonia confidence that this employee benefit balances out financially. The company estimates that it recovers 91 percent of calculable costs annually related to operating the child care program.

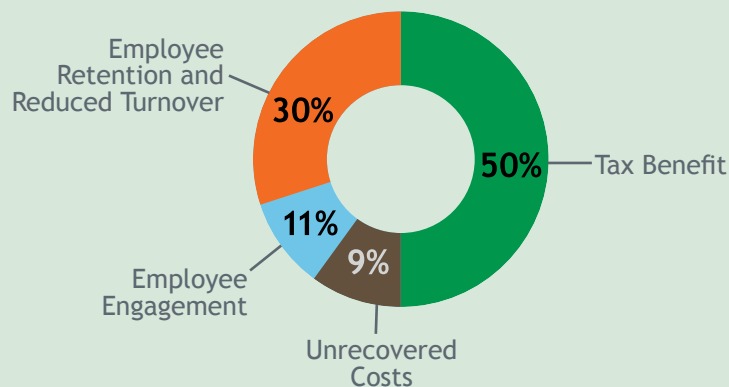
TAX BENEFIT - 50% Federal tax law recognizes the value of on-site child care to both working parents and the economy. Patagonia’s child care program qualifies for an annual tax credit of as much as \$150,000. The company deducts unrecovered costs as a business expense (see IRS Form 8882 (www.familyfriendlycolorado.com/irs) for more information).

EMPLOYEE RETENTION AND REDUCED TURNOVER- 30% Over the past five years, Patagonia has seen 100 percent of moms return to work after maternity leave. Patagonia’s turnover rate for parents who have children enrolled in the child care program runs 25 percent less than the general employee population.

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT-11% Patagonia’s child care program supports working parents in being more present, focused and engaged. This high engagement creates higher levels of customer satisfaction and business performance. And, that increased engagement means the Company does better financially.

Patagonia’s child care program also has several intangible benefits, including:

- **More women in management.** At Patagonia, women make up 50 percent of the workforce, including roughly half of upper management positions.
- **Greater employee and customer loyalty.** Patagonia earns the trust of its employees and the loyalty of its customers, who will buy from a better brand with a better reputation, all else being equal.
- **Stronger workplace culture of trust.** At Patagonia, working parents who use on-site child care benefit from being able to check-in and have lunch with their children during the workday. Employees who are not parents benefit because they realize they are building products that impact future generations.



Sick kids. School closings. Summer vacation. Competing work and family priorities can be challenging. Fortunately, Janus Henderson Investors enables its 900+ employees to find last-minute child care through a partnership with benefits operator Care.com. Individuals working at Janus Henderson Investors have real-time access to a large network of in-home providers and child care centers:

- During school vacations or when child care is closed.
- When a child is ill and the employee needs to work.
- When the employee has to work late or on weekends.
- When the employee needs care for a child with special needs.
- When a nanny goes on vacation or leaves unexpectedly.
- Any time there is a gap or disruption in regular child care arrangements.

Employees at Janus Henderson Investors have access to two backup child care options based on their preferences and situations. In-center backup child care, for children ages 6 weeks to 12 years, is available Monday-Friday during normal operating hours, which vary by center. In-home backup care for children from birth to 17 years is available every day, night or day. Employees pay a subsidized rate for the care and have access to a combined total of 10 calendar days of backup child care each year.



“The back-up care benefit supports the whole family and supports us to have a more engaged workforce. It’s one of those benefits that you don’t hear a lot of buzz about until a person uses it, and it gets them out of a jam.

When employees see us taking care of them, they work their hardest and do their best to support us. If we didn’t have back-up care, at the end of the day, we’d pay for it anyway. The costs creep in one way or another.”

-Demesha Hill, Community Relations Manager,
Janus Henderson Investors

EMPLOYER EXAMPLE:

JANUS HENDERSON INVESTORS

A BACK-UP CHILD CARE PROGRAM TO SUPPORT THE NEEDS OF WORKING PARENTS

EMPLOYER EXAMPLE

THE U.S. NATIONAL CENTER FOR ATMOSPHERIC RESEARCH (NCAR)

USING ON-SITE CHILD CARE AS AN EMPLOYEE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION TOOL

The U.S. National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) in Boulder, Colorado, is one of a few workplaces in Colorado with an on-site child care facility. NCAR recruits worldwide for top talent, making child care a critical benefit. The child care center is operated by a third party provider (Bright Horizons) and is open to the surrounding community.

NCAR's child care center has room for 80 children. While employee families receive priority enrollment, the center has always been open to the public. It sits on land and in a building owned and maintained by NCAR.

NCAR also offers employees a variety of resources and programming related to care through a relationship with a third party provider (Bright Horizons Care Advantage program). In addition to discounts at other after-school programs and child care centers, NCAR employees can access as much as 100 hours annually of backup/emergency child care at subsidized rates. Finally, NCAR family-centric benefits include flexible work arrangements and dependent care flexible savings accounts.

EMPLOYER EXAMPLE

TURNING THE CORNER LLC

MAKING "FAMILY FIRST" THE MOTTO FOR DOING BUSINESS



"Family First" is the sign at the door when you enter Turning the Corner LLC (TTC), a human capital management firm headquartered in Boulder, Colorado, with a 15-person staff. At TTC, being a family-friendly workplace is simply part of doing business. "Family obligations come before anything else," says Chief Marketing Officer Mark Popenhagen, "especially in stressful situations or emergencies. We are all cross-trained to pick up each other's responsibilities at a moment's notice."

TTC holds core hours one day per week on Thursday's from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. when everyone needs to be in the office. Otherwise, staff members have the flexibility to work remotely from home or at the office. TTC also incorporates job-sharing through part-time roles. The company has two office managers/receptionists that split responsibilities for incoming calls and general email inboxes. This division of responsibility gives each part-time employee the flexibility he or she needs.

As a project-based firm, TTC employees are not "on the clock." They are allowed to make up time off that hasn't been accrued. Trust and accountability are key. Additionally, TTC always has plenty of free, healthy snacks around the office. As Popenhagen notes, "Free, healthy food is huge! You never know when you are going to have to run out of the office without time to eat. Having plenty of snacks available for our team shows that we are supportive and flexible."

businesses to claim a 50 percent state income tax credit for qualified contributions to child care providers (up to \$200,000). CCTC is used to establish and operate licensed child care facilities, fund grant programs (scholarships) for parents who need help paying for care and supplement professional development costs for individuals working in the childcare sector. Learn more about CCTC at www.coloradokidstaxcredit.org.



BACKUP OR EMERGENCY CARE

Many employers provide short-term support for employees when regular child care falls through, such as when providers are sick or during unexpected school closings. Employers can provide in-home or center-based care for children who are mildly ill or recovering from health problems that keep them from attending school or child care. Backup care can be provided on-site or through relationships with third party providers like Bright Horizons or Care.com.

ON-SITE CHILD CARE

There are financial costs to offering on-site child care and they can be expensive if you offer high-quality programs or subsidize the cost of care. However, the benefits - financial and otherwise - pay for themselves every year. Business leaders (and their chief financial officers) should take note. Ultimately, companies like Patagonia, Printing for Less, USAA and others believe that offering on-site child care is the right thing to do for employees, working parents, and the life of the workplace.

ELDER CARE

As with child care assistance, employers may offer assistance to those with elder care needs with referrals, including those available through their

EAP, a dependent care spending arrangement, subsidies or direct services.

Allowing leave for elder care will become increasingly important as our population ages. Just as parental leave affects more Millennials, elder care tends to be a bigger concern for Generation X families. A study of working couples in the “sandwich generation” found that the strategies they use to accommodate the demands of caretaking take a toll on their mental health, financial stability and job performance.¹⁵ Elder care creates family stress, particularly when there is work-life conflict, making it a health and productivity issue for employees.⁵

Along with reducing stress on employees, paid leave for elder care also provides benefits to seniors who receive care from families, allowing them to stay in their homes longer and return there sooner after an illness or accident.

Elder care is a retention issue for employers, as caretakers without paid leave are more likely to leave the workforce entirely.⁴

PET CARE

In some workplaces, every day is take your dog to work day. Having canines in the office can increase morale, teamwork and productivity. Pet-friendly workplaces are common in Silicon Valley and they are growing in popularity throughout Colorado.

Millennials often acknowledge that dogs in the office make a company “a cool place to work.” So, given the race to recruit Millennial talent, pet insurance is among the fastest-growing employee benefits.

According to Nationwide, the largest insurance provider for pet coverage in the United States, about one in three Fortune 500 companies offers employees pet insurance – not only to appeal to animal-loving prospective hires, but also to help retain current pet-owning employees.

Companies trying to control the cost of pet care benefits have a range of choices, from paying 100 percent of pet premiums to simply passing along a discount on insurance, which can then be deducted from payroll or paid directly by the employee.



FLEXIBILITY

A CULTURE OF FLEXIBILITY

Flexibility can be defined as allowing work to be done outside of the traditional Monday through Friday, 9-to-5 schedule or in different locations. Employer policies that allow flexibility in the time or place work is performed are helpful to employees in managing their work and personal responsibilities.

Flexibility isn't as easy as creating policies. A truly flexible workplace needs both supportive policies and supportive managers. Policies by themselves accomplish little if managers subtly or overtly discourage employees from using flextime, working from home or taking family leave. Employees must know they can succeed at the organization, whether or not they use the flexibility offered. On the other hand, leaving flexibility up to individual managers can result in a culture of inequity that harms employee morale and may ultimately undermine the family-friendly environment that is intended.

Flexibility requires a culture of mutual trust and an emphasis on results over face time. Developing this trust between management and employees may be difficult, but experts agree it is essential to a flexible workplace — and perhaps to any successful workplace.

Ideally, managers contribute to the development of policies, understand the business rationale behind them, and receive training or guidance on how to implement them. As with any other organizational goal, opportunities for staff input, managerial commitment, transparency about policies and fairness in implementation result in the establishment or enhancement of a family-friendly environment.

TIME FLEXIBILITY

Modifying work hours is probably the most widely used family-friendly policy in the United States, used by employers of all sizes and industries. Small(er) organizations have been leading the way over the past decade in regards to flexibility. Because they often have less formal cultures, small employers

are more likely than large organizations to, for example, allow employees to take time during the day to attend to personal or family needs or let employees set their own break times and adjust their schedules.

Flexibility isn't only for higher wage jobs. Retailers have successfully implemented flexibility for front-line service jobs. Cross-training, allowing employees to swap part or all of a shift and letting employees take leave in small (one or two hour) increments are strategies that benefit employers as well as employees.¹⁷ Manufacturing companies have adopted flexibility strategies such as compressed work weeks, alternative shift arrangements, shift swapping, flexibility in start and stop times, and employee input into break times.¹⁸

There are a variety of ways that employers offer time flexibility:

- **Occasional flexibility:** Allowing employees to come in later or leave earlier than usual to tend to occasional personal matters, such as meetings at a child's school. Employees make up the time rather than taking leave.
- **Alternate schedule:** An employee's regular schedule may start earlier or later than other employees to accommodate personal demands/schedules.
- **Core hours:** The employer sets core hours when employees must be at work or in the office. Otherwise, employees are allowed flexibility in completing their work day. If core hours are set from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., employees must work those hours but may start work earlier or finish later.
- **Compressed work week:** Employees work four 10-hour days in a week or nine 9-hour days in two weeks.
- **Part-time work:** Offering part-time options allows employers to attract and retain employees who aren't able to work more traditional hours/shifts. The opportunity to reduce hours can be mutually beneficial when employees are preparing to retire or coming back from parental leave.

- Job sharing: Two employees work part-time, sharing a single position, receiving full or pro-rated benefits. This may allow an employer to retain two employees who wish to reduce hours when a part-time position is not feasible. Job-sharing employees also bring two sets of skills and twice the knowledge. They can check each other's work and provide continuity on sick days and during vacations.

LOCATION FLEXIBILITY OR “TELEWORK”

Another familiar form of flexibility is telework, the ability to work from home or off-site. Sometimes the term “flexplace” is used, and working from home can be called “telecommuting.” Employees might telework regularly or on occasion.

Working at home allows employees to spend less time commuting, so they can enjoy more time with their families. It also reduces commuting costs and stress. Occasional telework can be a good solution when an employee has a minor illness or an appointment near home, allowing them to take less time away from work. It is important to note that working from home should not be considered a substitute for dependent care (children, elders and pets).

Successful employers and teleworkers recommend establishing clear expectations, including an employer telework policy and individual telework agreements that specify work hours and who will pay for equipment, office supplies and internet access. Employers who have successfully implemented telework arrangements often document increases in productivity, reductions in turnover and lower overhead/real estate costs. An additional benefit is having productive employees able to work offsite in cases of bad weather or major traffic disruptions.

STABLE, PREDICTABLE SCHEDULES

Many employees, particularly low-wage and part-time workers, have schedules that change, sometimes dramatically, from week to week. Moreover, they sometimes don't know what their schedules will be until a few days in advance. Others work “on-call” and must be available to work with little

notice. Sometimes managers change schedules at the last minute. All of these situations create problems for employees and their families:

- Employees who are counting on full-time work struggle to make ends meet when they don't work 40 hours in a week.
- When employees spend money on transportation and child care, they can actually lose money when they are sent home before working a full shift.
- When an employee is expecting full-time work, or expecting a certain schedule, they aren't able to take a second job.
- Students who work part time aren't able to plan their classes (or keep their jobs) without predictable schedules.
- Child care providers may be unwilling to save a place for a child that doesn't attend regularly, so parents with unpredictable schedules may need to find new providers.

Creating a stable schedule with a consistent number of hours and offering as much advance notice as possible of schedule changes reduces emotional and economic stress on employees and their families. Employers who offer stable, predictable schedules save on reduced turnover and associated recruitment and training costs, and see an increase in employee morale and engagement.

EDUCATION, TRAINING AND COMMUNICATION

Experts in family-friendly workplace policies and practices emphasize the importance of the manager's role in implementing a flexible workplace. Ideally, managers are involved throughout the process, from identifying issues to generating possible solutions through piloting and implementation. Along the way, managers may need to adopt a new frame of mind regarding supervision and employee evaluation. For individuals who are accustomed to evaluating employees based on seeing them working, the transition to evaluation based on results may require some coaching, training and sensitivity.

EMPLOYER EXAMPLE

BOULDER COUNTY GOVERNMENT

A FORMAL INFANTS-AT-WORK PROGRAM THAT SUPPORTS ALL WORKING PARENTS

Boulder County Government promotes a positive work environment, recognizing parent responsibilities to their jobs and their infants. Officials instituted the “Infants-at-Work Program” for its 2,000 employees in 2016. The program encourages new mothers, fathers or legal guardians to return to work sooner by allowing them to bring their infant to work until the child is mobile. The maximum age an infant is allowed at work is 12 months.

Boulder County acknowledges that there may be work circumstances that are unsuitable for infants. While all full-time employees are eligible to participate in the program, participation is subject to the specific job responsibilities of the parent and physical safety of the infant. Parents participating in the program are expected to work closely with their supervisors to ensure that all parties are aware of what duties can and cannot be reassigned. And, parents are expected to make alternate child care arrangements when required.

Before an infant is brought into the workplace, a meeting takes place between the parent, the supervisor and Human Resources. Parents obtain written permission and establish a work schedule satisfactory to their supervisors. Parents are expected to make their work area suitable for the new baby and provide all supplies and equipment needed to care for the infant. Parent worksites must always be kept clean and sanitary.

Employees are expected to maintain acceptable work performance and ensure that the presence of the infant does not create any office disturbances. Time spent tending to an infant is not considered time worked, except for standard paid breaks. When problems arise that cannot be resolved, employees understand that the program may be discontinued.

Boulder County’s Infants-at-Work Program acknowledges that when infants stay with parents, there are benefits to the family, the employer and society.

EMPLOYER EXAMPLE

KPMG

NEW PARENT BENEFITS

International audit, tax and advisory services firm KPMG supports employees who are new parents throughout the various phases of their journey. The firm provides a new parent guide that offers helpful information on firm benefits, a maternity checklist and much more. KPMG offers a comprehensive lactation program that includes a hospital-grade pump as well as consultative phone calls to assist new mothers during prenatal, after birth, and transition back to work. Once back at work, KPMG recognizes the need for privacy for nursing mothers and provides lactation rooms in most of their offices.

To further support to new parents, the firm provides New Parent Career Coaching, up to five 1:1 coaching sessions. Coaches help men and women navigate short term adjustments and stress to achieve long term career success.

KPMG hosts parent networks for employees in many local offices. The parent network groups are designed to share experiences and exchange ideas on raising a family as a working parent. KPMG’s Parents Who KNOW program connects working parents with other parents who can provide guidance and support on navigating through a variety of challenges new parents face. The program encourages establishing mentoring relationships with more experienced working parents.

Similarly, employees who work a compressed work-week or work off-site for part of the week may need help with new issues, such as working out a communication schedule with their teammates and supervisors. Training can build these new skills, answer questions, and inform both managers and employees about performance goals and expectations. Training might be conducted separately for managers and employees at first, and then in teams so they agree on what they need from each other to do their best work.



SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

LACTATION (BREASTFEEDING) SUPPORT

A strong employer-supported lactation program can be a win-win. When breastfeeding mothers feel comfortable expressing milk at work, they are more likely to return to work after maternity leave, and often return to work sooner. Breastfeeding has substantial health benefits for mothers, lowering their risk of diabetes, heart disease, breast cancer, depression and ovarian cancer, and helping them recover more quickly from childbirth.²⁰

It is important to note that not all mothers are physically able to breastfeed or choose to breastfeed. Above all else, every employee's needs and privacy should be respected.

Breastfed babies are healthier, which means mothers are less stressed and less likely to miss work. Because breastfed babies get sick less often, one-day absences from work are half as common among mothers who breastfeed.¹⁹

Federal and Colorado law require employers to accommodate nursing mothers in expressing breast milk at work as often as needed. While federal and state requirements are slightly different, employers must comply with the requirements most protective of employees. Briefly, an employer must provide reasonable break time and a private location (not a toilet stall) for an employee to use while expressing milk for as long as two years after her child is born. Employees may use paid or unpaid break time or mealtime to express milk.²¹

While not part of legal requirements, but as a practical matter, nursing mothers also should have a chair, a door that locks, an electrical outlet, access to a sink and a place to refrigerate breast milk. Workplaces of all sizes and in a variety of sectors (including manufacturing and retail) successfully accommodate nursing mothers.

Other options employers can consider:

- Allowing the nursing mother to take break time to go to the baby.
- Allowing a caregiver to bring the baby to the workplace for feeding.
- Telework, with the understanding that the employee has a caregiver watching the baby between feedings.

EXPECTANT AND NEW PARENT PARKING

Designated parking spaces for expecting parents are important for customers as well as employees. This is a matter of safety for expecting parents, especially if there is inclement weather or when the pregnancy causes additional health challenges. Similarly, these parking spaces are useful for new parents. New parents benefit from having more space to unload children and the ability to get in and out more quickly.

INFANTS-AT-WORK POLICY

A written "Infants at Work" policy supports parents who want to bring babies into the office or workplace. A clear written policy outlines parent responsibilities and co-worker expectations and generally provides guidance on the age of babies permitted at work. Written policies often clarify with "until the infant reaches the age of 1 or starts to crawl, whichever comes first." Some employers allow a parent to bring a mildly ill child to work with them if there's a quiet room or empty office, so the parent can keep an eye on the child while working.

NEW PARENT SUPPORT GROUPS

Caregiver support groups are a workplace option that can reduce employee stress. Some employers host lunch and learn workshops with topics such as parenting or stress reduction. Small employers might consider working together to host such groups/workshops.



CAREER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Employees at all levels are interested in advancing their careers, whether that means a worker in a retail job asking to be cross-trained so he can pick up more shifts or a manager seeking a mentor to help her move into an executive position. Career development programs are a win-win. Employers benefit by having satisfied employees with increased knowledge who are more engaged and stay at their jobs longer. Employees and their families benefit from increased earnings, greater job security and higher satisfaction.

Components of career development may include:

- On-site or off-site professional development training (e.g., communication, assertiveness, time management, conflict resolution, personnel management, industry specific growth and knowledge opportunities).
- Opportunities for growth and feedback.
- Formal mentoring programs.
- Tuition reimbursement.
- Cross-training for frontline staff.
- Promoting from within.
- Lunch & Learn workshops.
- Paid professional organization memberships.
- Allowing volunteer commitments during the work day.

Barriers to career development often include:

- Reluctance among employers to hire or promote women of childbearing age.
- Creating a “mommy track” or “daddy track” with long-term consequences for working parents who take a pause in their careers for the birth of a new child.

- Developing promotion schedules and earnings trajectories that penalize a working parent for pausing to stay home and bond with a child.
- Inadequate paid parental leave for either men or women, which may contribute to inequity.
- Offering parental leave to certain employees only, whether only to women or only to employees that are at a certain level of pay.



COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT STRATEGIES

Consider supporting community initiatives and organizations that promote the interests of working parents. Family-friendly employers often support initiatives in the community and at a public policy level that promote the health of families as part of corporate social responsibility.

Employers that provide paid sick days, predictable schedules or paid family leave might back local ordinances or legislation that require these benefits as a way to support economic development and the wellbeing of children and families in the community.

Employers that give to local schools and their employees directly support the community by sponsoring local teams; offering free or discounted meeting spaces; or providing food, clothing, books or other needed items. Consider donating to charities or offering an employer match for employee contributions to local nonprofit organizations.

Support local projects. Offer your staff paid volunteer hours to help others, gain hands-on experience and demonstrate that social responsibility is important to your organization, especially as it relates to your employees.

Consider what training you can offer to the community. Offering individuals the opportunity to learn a trade or new skill to gain employment builds good will and trust. Community involvement supports the needs of individuals and promotes your brand as a local ambassador and an organization that cares.

III. THE NEED FOR FAMILY-FRIENDLY WORKPLACES

Ask CEOs about the secret to their success and many say they find the right people at the right time and help them do their best work. Others say they treat their employees like family, earning their loyalty and dedication. Ask employees about working for a family-friendly employer and many say that they feel happy, healthy and supported at their job.

THE IMPORTANCE TO EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES

Research indicates family-friendly workplace policies and practices result in increased productivity, improved loyalty and commitment, and resilient, happier and healthier employees. Bottom-line benefits to employers include improved on-boarding, less turnover and lower absenteeism.

Employers are finding that it is not enough to invest in employees only during the hours they are “on the job.” Just as tensions from work spill over into home life, we often carry our personal issues into the workplace as well, where they impact stress, focus and productivity.

Aside from the bottom-line benefits, most employers and managers genuinely care for the people who work for them and want them to succeed at work and at home. Many employers offer family-friendly workplace policies and practices for both business and altruistic motives, citing reasons such as “Helping employees manage work and family life,” “It is the right thing to do” and “We are a caring organization.”

Colorado employers have already shown their willingness to invest in the future of our state and its citizens by starting and maintaining businesses and organizations that contribute to the tax base and employment. This toolkit provides a guide for employers who want to create or enhance a workplace that supports wellness for every individual and family. Many of these recommendations help employers attract and retain a capable, diverse and talented group of employees.

Research continues to show that early childhood is a crucial window for healthy development, with long

range impacts that depend on all of us. Family-friendly employment is a key strategy that contributes to safe, stable and nurturing relationships and environments for young children.

Colorado thrives when our children thrive because they are our future workforce, leaders and community members. Employers of every size and industry in every corner of our state have an important role to play. While they may not be directly involved in raising children, their support for family-friendly workplace policies and practices is good for business and good for Colorado.

EMPLOYER EXAMPLE

PROCTOR & GAMBLE

IMPROVING THE LIVES OF THE WORLD'S CONSUMERS STARTS WITH EMPLOYEES.

Proctor & Gamble is one of the world's largest consumer products companies, whose purpose as a company is “to improve the lives of the world's consumers.” Proctor & Gamble realizes that the only way to fully deliver on that purpose is to first improve the lives of its employees. The company does that in many ways, offering a comprehensive benefits program and investing in a broad range of programs and policies to support employees.

About 15 years ago, Proctor & Gamble opened its first child development center for employees with young children in Cincinnati, Ohio (global headquarters). Today, it operates two high-quality child care centers and accommodates more than 300 children.¹⁶

THE DEFINITION OF FAMILY HAS CHANGED



Fifty years ago, more than half of American children were growing up with married parents, a father employed full-time and a mother who was not in the workforce.

TODAY, ONLY ONE IN FIVE CHILDREN LIVE IN SUCH A FAMILY.



Over the past 50 years, households in which all adults are employed outside the home has increased from 40 percent to more than 60 percent.

IN COLORADO, MORE THAN 240,000 CHILDREN UNDER AGE 6 HAVE ALL AVAILABLE PARENTS IN THE WORKFORCE.³



Gender norms have changed. Fathers increasingly take on the role of primary caregiver and same-sex couples are common.

IN THE PAST 25 YEARS, THE NUMBER OF FAMILIES WITH A STAY-AT-HOME FATHER AND A WORKING MOTHER HAS DOUBLED.

ONE IN FIVE SAME-SEX COUPLES ARE RAISING A CHILD.

THE DEFINITION OF “FAMILY”

Families have changed dramatically over the past 50 years. Their importance to society has not. The family is a unit where we provide and receive financial and emotional support. Typically, our family members are the most important people in our lives. That’s true no matter what our family looks like.

This toolkit emphasizes policies and benefits that support employees with young children. Often, employees consider parents, grandparents, siblings, aunts and uncles, nieces and nephews, grandchildren and even pets as family. Except in cases where a specific legal relationship is defined in law or tax code, this toolkit uses a broad definition of “family” and we encourage you to do the same.

CHANGES IN SOCIETY

American society also has changed dramatically over the past half century. Women enter the labor force in growing numbers and families increasingly rely on more than one earner to make ends meet. Oftentimes, a parent or caregiver will have to choose between economic vitality (work responsibilities) and responding to the needs of their dependents. Children still need to be taken to the doctor and elderly parents still need care. Is the choice between being a good employee and being a good caregiver something that individuals should be forced to make?

POSITIVE PARENTING WORKS

Family-friendly workplace policies and practices make a big difference in parents’ abilities to raise their children to be healthy, succeed and participate in Colorado’s future. Research shows that healthy child development is built on ensuring safe, stable and nurturing relationships and environments. When smart business policies help strengthen families, children thrive and can achieve their full potential.

SUPPORTING CAREGIVERS

Implementing family-friendly workplace policies and practices does not mean providing benefits only to women who are mothers. While supporting mothers and other women who are caregivers is crucial, women are not the only caregivers.

Strategies that provide special treatment only to women can backfire and open employers to charges of discrimination. Even well-intentioned decisions, such as a manager not considering a mother for a promotion because it might increase her workload and negatively impact her family, can be problematic.

Along with the need for parental bonding, the ability for both men and women to take paid parental leave is a factor in pay equity. When only mothers can take parental leave, the result can be reluctance among employers to hire or promote women of childbearing age and the creation of a “mommy track” with long-term consequences for women in the workplace. Taking time off for the birth of a child creates a pause in a woman’s career and earning trajectory from which it can be difficult to recover.

A CHALLENGE AND AN OPPORTUNITY

Employees are multidimensional; they have personal lives, family responsibilities and competing demands on their time and attention. Family-friendly employers have a competitive advantage to attract and retain skilled employees. Increasingly, the Millennial workforce expects family-friendly policies and practices at the workplace.

This Toolkit is designed to help employers explore the benefits of family-friendly workplaces. We believe that supportive policies and practices increase organizational productivity and support the physical and emotional health of employees and their families. We hope you take the first or the next step to increase family-friendliness at your workplace. The partners highlighted in our resource guide are here to help.

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RESOURCES

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Denver Thrives when Women Thrive!
A Guide for Working Toward an Equitable Workplace


Denver Thrives When Women Thrive is an employer tool created by the Denver Women's Commission.

There is no right or wrong way to use it; the exercise is about:

YOUR organization,
YOUR objectives, &
YOUR people!
YOU are in control.

Denver Thrives When Women Thrive will help your organization do its part in making Denver the best city to live & work—by instituting evidence-based best practices and working toward operationalizing industry-wide gender equity standards. Together, we can promote economic opportunity and broad participation for ALL of Denver's employees.

Check out the Denver Thrives When Women Thrive Guide online:
www.Denvergov.org/Women



RESOURCES




Assess Workplace Culture
Build a Family-Friendly Workplace
Connect to Like-Minded Businesses
Visit the Website to Get Started

 HEALTH LINKS

 EPIC
Executives Partnering
to Invest In Children

 www.FamilyFriendlyColorado.com




HEALTH LINKS


Healthy business is better business. Organizations that foster a healthy, safe work environment have healthier, happier employees.

That's why we collaborate with employers to build a culture of health and safety in the workplace.

Join Our Network
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Health Links™ is a signature program of the Center for Health, Work & Environment at the Colorado School of Public Health.



Healthy Beverage
PARTNERSHIP

Work environments can be a major factor in making lifestyle choices. Does your organization want to create a culture of health and offer healthy food and beverage choices to staff and visitors?

Learn how with the [Healthy Beverage and Food Policy and Practice Toolkit](#)



www.familyfriendlycolorado.com/healthybeverage



Diabetes can cost U.S. employers
\$69 BILLION
in lost productivity each year.

Diabetes is a serious workforce issue. For employers, it is much more cost effective to prevent diabetes than it is to treat the consequences of the disease.

National Diabetes Prevention Programs (NDPP) are proven lifestyle change programs that can cut a person's risk for developing type 2 diabetes in half.

Check out our new, free tool designed to allow self-insured employers to assess the value of offering National Diabetes Prevention Programs as an employee benefit.

TRY IT:
WWW.COLORADO.GOV/CDPHE/NDPP-ECONOMIC-TOOL

This tool was developed by researchers from the University of Colorado School of Medicine under contract with the Colorado Business Group on Health.



RESOURCES



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