

Federal Government Eyes Paid Leave

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Currently, six states and the District of Columbia have implemented paid family leave laws, including New York, New Jersey and California. Recently, there have been several efforts to expand this type of leave at the federal level.

The budget proposal recently introduced by President Trump includes six weeks of paid leave for new parents. The proposed plan calls for \$750 million in funding to aid in the creation of paid leave programs at the state level that are “most appropriate for their workforce and economy.” While the President has discussed paid family leave several times in the past, this appears to be the first time a budget line item has been dedicated to the idea.

Additionally, both political parties have introduced competing legislation establishing federal paid leave programs. The following chart highlights some of the details from these bills

	FAMILY Act	Healthy Families Act	CRADLE Act
	Senator Kirsten Gillibrand (D-N.Y.)	Senator Patty Murray (D-Wash.) and Representative Rosa DeLauro (D-Conn.)	Joni Ernst (R-Iowa) and Mike Lee (R-Utah)
Paid Sick Leave	Yes	Paid if Employer has more than 15 employees. Unpaid for smaller groups	No
Paid Parental Leave	Yes	See above	Yes
Paid Family Leave	Yes	See above	No
Sick leave for employee only or also for sick loved ones?	Yes	See above	No
Length of Leave	12 weeks	7 days	Up to three months
Accrual or immediate?	Unknown	Accrued at 1 hour for every 30 hours worked.	Unknown
Who pays?	Employer and Employee	Employer	Federal Government (parent must agree to postpone Social Security benefits)

These proposed plans are very much in their infancy. However, there appears to be both support from the President and bipartisan interest in a paid leave benefit, opening the door for possible agreement and future legislation.

Employers should be aware of the federal interest in a paid leave program and identify whether employees work in states that are already subject to state paid leave requirements.

We will continue to keep you apprised of any developments.