

THE PAID LEAVE PROJECT

Tips for Employers in States with Pending Paid Leave Laws

The regulatory environment facing U.S. employers is complex. Various forms of legislation on paid family leave have been proposed at the national level. Five states, and the District of Columbia, have already passed paid leave laws and more than 18 are actively discussing similar policies. The Paid Leave Project equips employers with resources to successfully implement, or expand, their paid leave benefits – whether for voluntary adoption or to comply with legislation. These best practices can provide useful guidance for employers working to adhere to state and local paid leave laws.

- 1) Be in the know.** Ensure you and your employees are aware of documentation needed for leave according to state requirements. Know the basics of your state or locality's new paid family and medical leave ([PFML law](#)), including how it's being financed.
- 2) Do financial forecasting.** Download The Paid Leave Project's [Labor Cost Estimation Calculator](#) to project the annual labor costs of providing PFML. Members of organizations like the [Integrated Benefits Institute](#) and [Disability Management Employer Coalition](#) can also access their tools and resources for implementation.
- 3) Compare your existing plan to the state plan.** If you already offer paid leave benefits to your employees, you'll want to understand how the state law may impact your existing program. You may be able to take advantage of the state plan when expanding benefits for your employees.
- 4) Connect with your insurance carrier(s).** See what, if any, kind of changes you may need to make to your existing coverage.
- 5) Stay compliant.** If you are a multi-state employer, ensure you are up to date with pay practices and mandates from each state, as payroll contributions and effective dates vary.
- 6) Communicate with employees.** Develop, post and maintain workforce notices about the new benefit in a conspicuous place. Also, let your employees know what impact this will have on their payroll.
- 7) Be transparent.** Identify employees who will not qualify for the minimum amount of time required for eligibility and inform them of alternative options.
- 8) Update internal processes.** Get ready to adapt your company's systems and processes to meet all regulatory requirements. This includes setting a date for payroll deductions in accordance with the individual state law. Note that in some cases, such as [Washington state](#), payroll deductions may come before the law goes into effect.
- 9) Update human resources (HR) materials.** Review and update written materials, including employee handbooks and leave of absence policies. If you don't have a handbook or written policy, prepare written guidance for your employees so they understand what they are entitled to and how to file a claim.



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- 10) Organize employee resource groups.** Many companies have found creating a safe space for employees to share the challenges and successes of being a new parent or caregiver contributes to a more open and friendly work environment, fosters loyalty and increases job productivity.
- 11) Do leave management planning.** When a law does go into effect, employees may take leave for longer periods, which effects workforce management. Strategies for managing employee coverage will differ according to business needs.
- 12) Train staff.** Train HR and other relevant staff on the new law and how to comply. It's also important to train managers on the new benefit, as they are typically employees' first line of contact.

Remember, paid leave benefits not only employees, it benefits employers, too. Take time to learn and maximize the [business benefits](#). Providing paid leave to employees can result in improved employee retention, productivity, and morale.

To learn about how to measure the impacts of your program, check out:

- Lessons learned from large employers and resources and tools, including industry benchmarking and a cost calculator, at paidleave.org
- The resources [LeaveLogic](#) has created, including their [ROI calculator](#)
- Detail on specific state policies and compliance on the following sites: [California](#), [New York](#), [New Jersey](#), [Rhode Island](#) and [Washington](#)