

Unlike the [majority](#) of developed countries worldwide, the United States does not guarantee paid annual leave, paid time off for illness or family care, or paid parental leave. Without these policies, balancing the responsibilities of [meha`WdZ`Wc`_p`YWd`X\[`Z`_`Yk`b`^eh`\[c`f`to`\[`i` `d`\[\]`W`j`\[-`ly` impacting productivity, making recovery from major \[h`o`\\[`i` `i` `i` `eh` `d` `k` `h`\\[`i` `Z`_` `Yk` `b` `W` `d` `i` `ec` \\[`Y` `W` \\[`i` `d` `^` `X` `j` `d` \\]\]\(#\) the healthy development of children. For the millions of Americans without paid sick days, a decision to stay home to care for a sick child or family member could jeopardize their job or family income.](#)

AAUW in Action

All public policy actions take direction from the [AAUW Public Policy Priorities](#), voted on by members every two years. [77KM`i` `W`d`e`f` `V`h` `d`W`](#)

- j Working in coalition with other gender equity organizations, including the National Work and Family Coalition and Paid Leave Legislative Working Group.
- j Mobilizing AAUW advocates and members through targeted calls to action on important legislation, like the [FAMILY Act](#) and [Healthy Families Act](#).
- j Engaging directly with elected leaders and the public through calls, [letters](#) [je`f`e`b`j`_`Y`W`e` \`Y`\[`i` `W`d`Z` `Y`e`c` `c` \[`d` `j` `i` `W`d`Z`](#) testimony in hearings.
- j Providing voter education resources on key equity issues to consider during elections and offering information on how [\[`h` `Y` `j` \[`Z` `e` \` `Y` `V`b` `^` `W` \[`1` `e` `j` \[`Z` `d` `j` `^` \[`f` `W` `j` `1` `c` `e` `h` \[`V` `X` `e` `k` `j` `^` `i` `W` `d` `Z`](#) Get Out the Vote guides at the [AAUW Action Fund](#)).

Paid Family and Medical Leave

At some point, most workers will need time away from work to deal with a serious personal or family illness or to care for a new child. Unfortunately, only [\(\)`fi` `e` `j` `^` `ei` \[`i` `meha`-`ing`](#) for employers with more than 500 employees have access to paid family leave through their employer; and only [/fi` `e` `j` `^` `ei` \[`i` `meha` `d` \] `^` `eh` \[`c` `f` `to` \[`h` `i` `m` `j` `^` `k` `d` `Z` \[`h` `&&` \[`c` `f` `to`-`ees` do. Among the lowest-wage workers, many of whom cannot afford to lose income by taking time off work, only \[-`fi` `^` `W` \\[`W` `Y` \\[`i` `i`\]\(#\) to paid family leave. Without access to \[f` `W` `Z` `h` `W` \\[`meha` \\[`h` \\[`i` `f` \\[`Y` `W` `o` `m` `e` `c` \\[`d` `W` `d` `Z` `c` `e` `j` `^` \\[`h` `W` \\[`\]\(#\) the continuing economic disadvantage of lost wages and are forced to prematurely return to work.](#)

[M` `^` `h` `j` `^` \[`^` `W` `c` `h` `W` `d` `Z` `C` \[`Z` `Y` `W` `B` \[`W` \[`7` `Y` `j` `1` `<` `B` `7` `Z` `e` `V` ` /` ` /` \]](#)

those at companies with fewer than 50 employees, those

[cannot afford](#) their economic security.

newborn and child health by allowing both parents the time

er and [enables people](#) to help their loved ones to recover from illness and avoid complications, thereby reducing hospital readmissions and health care costs.

Paid leave [helps businesses](#) by improving employee retention and reducing the high costs of turnover, such as advertising, interviewing, and training new hires. A comprehensive review found that the cost of turnover can range from [.` `#` `&&` `fi`](#) of an employee's annual compensation, making

