



December 12, 2018 Public Policy Committee Meeting Summary

Paid Family Leave

Zero to Three Senior Policy Analyst Whitney Pesek joined us for a rich discussion on paid family leave. A wealth of valuable resources are available in Zero to Three's [Paid Family Leave Toolkit](#). A copy of her presentation can be found [here](#).

Sometimes likened to temporary disability or unemployment insurance, family and medical leave insurance (FAMLI) differs from paid sick leave. FAMLI would be used to cover longer term leave for an employee's medical issue, for the birth or adoption of a child, or to care for a family member. Paid sick leave is a benefit offered to employees for short term illnesses or medical needs. Funded by a combination of contributions from employers and deductions from employees, a Maryland FAMLI program would establish a pool of funds that can be accessed by an employee who has a qualifying event. It would involve some level of wage replacement, likely calculated as a percentage of earnings on a progressive sliding scale, in an effort to equalize the opportunity to take the leave.

Currently six states and the District of Columbia have paid family leave policies. California led the way in 2004, and in 2018 Massachusetts became the latest state to implement a policy. National Partnership for Women and Families published a state by state [comparison of existing State Paid Family and Medical Leave Insurance Laws](#). According to Zero to Three, there are proposed paid leave policies in 30 states.

A Maryland Task Force to Study Family and Medical Leave Insurance was created by statute in 2016 and issued a [final report](#) with recommendations in December 2017. (MFN Director of Public Policy Clinton Macsherry served on the Task Force.) [Those recommendations](#) will form the basis of legislation to be introduced in the 2019 Session of the General Assembly. Supporters of paid family leave [are forming a coalition](#) that incorporates a diverse group of stakeholders whose constituencies value time for caring. Additional resources will be available on MFN's website in the coming weeks.

Update: A [summary of the Time to Care Act of 2019](#) is now available.

Other Announcements & Future Meetings

The next meeting of the Public Policy Committee will be in Baltimore at MFN on January 9.