



## New Paid Parental Leave for State Employees

State Employees can soon take 60 days of paid leave anytime during the first six months following the birth or adoption of a child under six years old. The new parental leave policy, which begins in October, was announced by Governor Hogan at a public meeting of his Cabinet in Olney, MD this morning.

Maryland Family Network (MFN) championed legislation (SB 859 / HB 775) “State Employees - Parental Leave” sponsored by Sen. Bill Ferguson (Baltimore City) and Del. Ariana B. Kelly (Montgomery County) during the 2018 Session that led to this policy change, which will give parents the opportunity to care for their families during a critical window of child development.

[The Governor's announcement](#) adds a provision that will provide more flexibility to parents. The 60 days of paid leave may be used anytime within the first six months following the birth or adoption and does not have to be used all at once or in a bloc.

While this benefit will affect only State employees, MFN believes it will set a compelling example for all Maryland employers. We are not alone in this sentiment. During his remarks Governor Hogan stated “It is our hope that other employers and small businesses throughout the state will follow our lead.” In the 2019 Session, the Governor will propose a tax credit for small businesses who offer paid parental leave for their employees. MFN will continue to advocate for paid parental leave to become an option for all Marylanders in the near future.

Parental leave has demonstrated benefits for families, including improving child and maternal health and maximizing the potential for child development. New mothers who take paid leave are more likely to breastfeed and less likely to suffer from maternal depression. Their children are more likely to attend their well-baby visits, to receive their immunizations and to have a lower mortality rate. Parents with paid leave are better able to balance work and family responsibilities, and they have greater economic security than parents without access to paid leave.