

Delaware Poised to Join New Jersey With Statewide Paid Family & Medical Leave Policy in 200 Words

[Family & Community Health](#)

Date Posted:

Mar 23, 2022

Delaware [may soon](#) become the 10th state in the country to enact a statewide policy on paid family and medical leave. Although state policies differ in their details, legislation poised to pass in Delaware would put the state alongside others, including New Jersey, that guarantee paid leave for most employees.

Paid leave is an important policy lever to improve health equity and is a critical component of [a caregiving agenda](#). The COVID-19 pandemic [has heightened](#) the call to action to improve paid family and medical leave policy, which is essential to the health and well-being of families. For example, paid maternity leave is associated [with improved physical and mental health of both mothers and children](#), including a decrease in postpartum maternal depression and intimate partner violence, improved infant attachment and child development, and reduced infant mortality.

While federal efforts to advance paid leave legislation [have stalled](#), Delaware's new law would take effect in 2026. It would provide new parents with up to 12 weeks of paid leave and all workers up to six weeks of paid leave every two years for medical leave or to care for a sick family member. The requirements differ based on the size of the employer, which means that those working for the smallest employers may still not be covered. Nonetheless, this legislation could have significant effects on the health and well-being of Delaware families, and marks an important step forward.

This post is part of our “_____ in 200 Words” series. In this series, we tackle issues related to children's health policy and explain and connect you to resources to help understand them further, all in 200 words. If you have any suggestions for a topic in this series, please send a note to PolicyLab's Strategic Operations & Communications Director [Lauren Walens](#).



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