

# Family Friendly America

## Connecticut



Connecticut workers need public policies that allow them to better manage the dual demands of work and family. Family friendly workplace laws help workers maintain their economic security when they give birth, adopt, raise children or grandchildren, deal with illness, and care for parents, grandparents, spouses or partners.

### Working Families by the Numbers

- **925,676 Connecticut women** work, making up **48 percent** of the state workforce.<sup>1</sup>
- **40,387 Connecticut women** gave birth between 2008 and 2009.<sup>2</sup>
- **580,040 Connecticut children (74 percent)** live in families where all parents work.<sup>3</sup>
- **71,536 Connecticut grandparents** live with grandchildren who are under 18.<sup>4</sup>
- **380,000 adults in Connecticut** serve as family caregivers.<sup>5</sup>

### Existing Family Friendly Workplace Laws

#### **Paid Sick Leave**

- In June 2011, Connecticut passed the nation's first statewide paid sick leave law. The law applies to workers in 68 service occupations who work for businesses with 50 or more employees. It allows these workers to earn one hour of paid sick leave for every 40 hours worked, up to 40 hours annually (approximately five days for a full-time worker).
- The paid leave taken under the law may be used for the worker's own health needs or a family member's health needs. "Family member" includes the worker's child or spouse, including a same-sex spouse under state law. Leave may also be used for needs related to domestic violence or sexual assault.
- The law will take effect in January 2012.

#### **Expanded Family and Medical Leave**

- Connecticut's family and medical leave law extends access to unpaid, job-protected leave to more workers than the federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). Connecticut workers who work for employers with 75 or more employees may take leave after working 1,000 hours during the previous year (rather than 1,250 under federal law). The Connecticut law provides workers with up to 16 weeks of leave in a 24-month period (rather than twelve weeks in a 12-month period under federal law).<sup>6</sup>
- In addition, because same-sex marriage is legal in Connecticut, same-sex spouses may take job-protected leave to care for a new child or for a spouse disabled by pregnancy.

## Pregnancy Disability Leave

- Connecticut law prohibits businesses with three or more employees from refusing a worker a “reasonable leave of absence” for a pregnancy-related disability.<sup>7</sup>

## Flexible Use of Sick Leave

- Private-sector workers who earn sick leave are entitled to use up to two weeks for the birth or adoption of a child, or to care for a child or ill family member.<sup>8</sup>

## Place to Pump

- All female workers are entitled to a place other than a toilet stall to express breast milk at work, for an unspecified period of time after childbirth.<sup>9</sup>

# Family Friendly Workplace Legislation Introduced in 2011

## HB 5466, Employers Provide Paid Sick Or Medical Leave

Introduced: 01/18/2011

Sponsor: Lemar (D)

- Guarantees all workers one hour of paid sick leave for every 30 hours workers, up to 56 hours per year.

## HB 5461, Employees Who Breastfeed Or Express Breast Milk

Introduced: 01/18/2011

Sponsor: Flexer (D)

- A statement of purpose by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly intended to provide more protection for employees regarding breastfeeding and the expression of breast milk.
- An amended version would allow workers who are denied right to express breast milk in the workplace to file a complaint with the Labor Commissioner to enforce employer compliance and prevent further discriminatory or retaliatory action.

*For more information about family friendly laws or to get involved in a state campaign, contact the National Partnership for Women & Families at [info@nationalpartnership.org](mailto:info@nationalpartnership.org).*

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. (2009). *Selected Social Characteristics in the United States: 2009: CT*. Retrieved 18 March 2011, from [http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/ADPTable?\\_bm=y&-geo\\_id=04000US09&-qr\\_name=ACS\\_2009\\_1YR\\_G00\\_DP2&-context=adp&-ds\\_name=&-tree\\_id=309&-\\_lang=en&-redoLog=false&-format=](http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/ADPTable?_bm=y&-geo_id=04000US09&-qr_name=ACS_2009_1YR_G00_DP2&-context=adp&-ds_name=&-tree_id=309&-_lang=en&-redoLog=false&-format=)

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Census Bureau (2009). *Selected Economic Characteristics in the United States: 2009: CT*. Retrieved 18 March 2011, from [http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/ADPTable?\\_bm=y&-context=adp&-qr\\_name=ACS\\_2009\\_1YR\\_G00\\_DP3&-ds\\_name=ACS\\_2009\\_1YR\\_G00\\_-tree\\_id=309&-redoLog=false&-\\_caller=geoselect&-geo\\_id=04000US09&-format=&-\\_lang=en](http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/ADPTable?_bm=y&-context=adp&-qr_name=ACS_2009_1YR_G00_DP3&-ds_name=ACS_2009_1YR_G00_-tree_id=309&-redoLog=false&-_caller=geoselect&-geo_id=04000US09&-format=&-_lang=en)

<sup>3</sup> See note 1.

<sup>4</sup> See note 2.

<sup>5</sup> AARP Public Policy Institute. (2007). Valuing the Invaluable: A New Look at State Estimates of the Economic Value of Family Caregiving (Data Update). *Data Digest 158R*, 3. Retrieved 21 March 2011, from <http://www.caregiving.org/data/AARPDDataUpdate-StateEstimatesofEconomicValue.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> Conn. Gen. Stat. § 31-51 et seq.

<sup>7</sup> Conn. Gen. Stat. § 46a-60(a)(7).

<sup>8</sup> Conn. Gen. Stat. § 31-51 et seq.

<sup>9</sup> Conn. Gen. Stat. Ann. § 31-40w.



*The National Partnership for Women & Families is a non-profit, non-partisan advocacy group dedicated to promoting fairness in the workplace, access to quality health care and policies that help women and men meet the dual demands of work and family. More information is available at [www.nationalpartnership.org](http://www.nationalpartnership.org).*