

Paid Leave That Works for Ohio



Ohio workers should not have to choose between a paycheck and caring for a new child, recovering from a personal medical issue or supporting an aging parent. Ohio Senate Bill 396 outlines a practical, affordable program designed to support families and help businesses retain valued employees. Below are answers to common questions about how the proposal would work.

Q: Who would be eligible for paid family leave?

A: Both full-time and part-time employees would be eligible. Independent contractors and freelancers could opt into the program if they choose to participate.

Q: How much paid leave could someone take?

A: Eligible workers could receive:

- Up to 14 weeks of paid leave in a 12-month period.
- Up to 18 weeks total in rare cases where a second qualifying event occurs within the same year, such as childbirth followed by a serious medical issue.

Q: Is this the same as the federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)?

A: No. FMLA provides unpaid leave only and excludes many workers. This proposal would provide job-protected paid leave, expanding access to the estimated 77% of Ohio workers who currently have no guaranteed paid leave.

Q: How much of my paycheck would I receive while on leave?

A: Paid leave would vary based on wage levels in order to ensure lower- and middle-income workers could earn enough while on leave, so they could afford to take it:

- Workers earning up to approximately \$70,000 annually would receive up to 85% of their wages.
- Higher-income earners would receive a lower percentage with a capped maximum weekly benefit.

Q: How much would I receive if I am a worker who is paid hourly?

A: The wage reimbursement for hourly workers would be based on the wage, average hours per week and the average number of weeks worked in the previous year.

Q: How does the bill protect against abuse of the system?

A: Each request for paid leave will require documentation similar to that of the FMLA. The documentation will be reviewed by the state agency overseeing the program. Activities unrelated to caregiving or medical needs would not qualify.

Q: How much would I pay into the program?

A: Employees would contribute approximately 0.4% of their wages, which equals:

- About \$4.60 per week for someone earning \$60,000 per year.
- About \$7.70 per week for someone earning \$100,000 per year.

These contributions would only apply during working periods and not while the employee is on leave.

Q: How much do employers pay?

A: Employers would contribute approximately 0.4% of payroll, matching the employee contribution. Businesses with fewer than 15 employees would be exempt from the employer contribution, though their workers would pay 0.4% into the program and still be eligible for paid leave benefits like other Ohio workers.

Q: What happens to an employee's salary while they're on leave?

A: The state program would pay wage replacement directly to the employee. Employers would retain the equivalent of the employee's full wage during the leave period and may use those funds at their discretion.

Q: How does this affect businesses that already offer paid leave?

A: Employers that already offer paid leave have two options: They may switch to the state plan or they may keep their existing paid leave benefit as long as it meets or exceeds state program requirements.

Q: Would this increase the administrative burden for employers?

A: Administration would be handled by the state. Employers would not be responsible for approving claims or managing benefits directly.

**TIME TO
CARE** 
OHIO

Learn more at
timetocareohio.org

