



MILWAUKEE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Supervisor Liz Sumner - District I

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 24, 2022

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Board of Supervisors Approves Paid Parental Leave Policy for County Employees

MILWAUKEE – Today the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors unanimously adopted a [proposal](#) by Supervisors Liz Sumner and Ryan Clancy to provide eight weeks of paid parental leave for county employees.

“At its core, paid parental leave is a needed investment in the health, happiness, and retention of our Milwaukee County employees,” said Supervisor Sumner. “The research on this is clear: offering paid leave is a win for parents, for kids, and for employers. I would like to thank Alderwoman Marina Dimitrijevic for her leadership on this issue at the City of Milwaukee and my Legislative Aide Dan Brophy for his efforts to move this policy forward.”

County Board Chairwoman Marcelia Nicholson, County Executive David Crowley, and County Supervisors Shawn Rolland, Steven Shea, Jason Haas, Joseph J. Czarnecki, Felesia A. Martin, Willie Johnson Jr., Sequanna Taylor, Priscilla E. Coggs-Jones, Russell Antonio Goodwin, Sr., and Sheldon A. Wasserman enthusiastically cosponsored the resolution.

“Both a birth and a loss require space from a compassionate employer,” said Supervisor Clancy. “I have been privileged to be able to take time off from work after the birth of my children and can speak personally to what an amazing and powerful experience that was. It is time for Milwaukee County to extend that same opportunity to its employees.”

Eligible employees will have eight weeks of paid leave available for the birth of a child or adoption of a child under the age of 5 under the new policy. A birthing parent will be eligible for additional days of leave in instances of devastating situations such as stillbirth or miscarriage. Paid leave will extend, in the case of birth or adoption, to parents and guardians alike.

“I am proud that Milwaukee County will soon offer paid parental leave to its employees, and that we were able to adopt this policy during Women’s History Month,” said Chairwoman Nicholson. “We’ve seen the disparate outcomes that occur when women are forced to take vacation days, sick time, or even unpaid leave to care for a newborn or adopted child, especially during the pandemic. Women should not have to choose between their families and their careers.”

According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, paid parental leave is associated with improved physical and mental health for new parents, decreased infant mortality, and increased financial security for caregivers.

This policy better aligns the county's employee benefits with its vision of becoming the healthiest county in Wisconsin by achieving racial equity. Black and Brown workers are less likely to have access to paid leave. This new paid parental leave policy will bolster Milwaukee County's commitment to racial equity, health and wellness, and creating a welcoming and attractive environment for all employees.

"Paid Parental Leave policy is equity in action as we seek to support our employees and reverse the effects of generations of discriminatory policies that prevented families of color from earning higher wages, building emergency savings, and accessing financial resources that would allow them to take the time needed to care for their children – at any stage of their development," said Milwaukee County Executive David Crowley. "I look forward to signing this legislation and hope employers in Milwaukee County follow our lead in providing employees more flexibility to care for their children."

Milwaukee County employs around 4,000 individuals, and like many businesses and organizations across the country, faces headwinds in hiring for open positions. Paid parental leave aims to increase the competitiveness of the county's benefits package and set Milwaukee County apart from peers that do not offer parental leave.

The resolution now heads to the desk of County Executive Crowley. Once signed, eligible employees can request parental leave beginning June 6, 2022.

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