



Paid Parental Leave

EO95

Governor Roy Cooper signed Executive Order No. 95 to provide paid parental leave to cabinet agency state employees in North Carolina. Parents shouldn't have to choose between caring for their families and staying in their careers, but the reality is many—especially women—are forced to. Providing paid parental leave promotes the physical and mental health of families, improves worker productivity and reduces gender inequality in the workforce. This policy, which takes effect September 1, 2019, will help the state recruit, retain and support the best and brightest talent to serve North Carolinians.

What does Executive Order No. 95 do?

Executive Order No. 95 provides eight weeks of paid parental leave to eligible state employees who have given birth. It offers four weeks of paid parental leave to eligible state employees whose partners have given birth or anyone who has an adoption, foster care placement or other legal placement of a child. Paid parental leave may be used within 12 months of the birth, adoption, foster and other legal placement of a child with the state employee. Parents will receive 100 percent of their regular pay while they are on paid parental leave.

Who is an eligible state employee?

About 56,000 employees of North Carolina departments, agencies, boards and commissions under the governor's oversight are eligible to receive paid parental leave. Full-time employees who have been employed by the state for at least one year are eligible to receive parental leave and part-time employees employed by the state for one year are eligible to receive paid parental leave on a pro-rated basis.

Why is Executive Order No. 95 necessary?

Paid parental leave has been shown to [promote mental and physical family health](#), [increase worker retention](#), [improve worker productivity and morale](#) and [reduce the demand on the social safety net](#) by reducing the likelihood that working parents must apply for taxpayer-funded benefits. Paid parental leave can also reduce gender inequities in the workplace and at home, where [women are more likely to bear the burden](#) of unpaid caregiving responsibilities on top of their careers. Furthermore, [research suggests](#) that babies born to mothers with paid parental leave are less likely to be born prematurely and more likely to be born at a healthy weight, and children whose parents have access to parental leave are more likely to [attend well care visits](#) and [exhibit fewer health problems](#). When paid parental leave is available, women who give birth are [less likely to experience postpartum depression](#) and men are [more likely to be involved fathers](#).

Do other states or private employers provide paid parental leave?

Yes. [Five states](#) provide paid family leave statewide to both public and private employees and eight states—[Delaware](#), [Illinois](#), [Indiana](#), [Kansas](#), [Maryland](#), [Missouri](#), [Ohio](#) and [Virginia](#)—provide paid parental leave to state employees. Most of North Carolina's largest private employers provide paid parental leave benefits to their employees.

Why are teachers, community college and university employees, and other Council of State agency employees not covered by Executive Order No. 95?

Executive Order 95 provides paid parental leave for state agencies under the control of the Governor. These are primarily "Cabinet" agencies. Unfortunately, the Governor does not have the authority to provide paid parental leave to teachers, university or college employees, or other Council of State agency employees, as these employing entities are not under his jurisdiction. Executive Order 95 encourages entities outside of the authority of the Governor to provide paid parental leave for their

employees, and Governor Cooper's Office of State Human Resources has reached out to these entities to offer their technical assistance in implementing paid parental leave. Additionally, the NC General Assembly could pass legislation providing paid parental leave to teachers, college and university employees, and employees of other state agencies not under the Governor's control—and there is a bill pending in the NC General Assembly that would do just that. Governor Cooper has urged state legislators to give that legislation, and other legislation that would extend paid parental leave to all North Carolinians, the attention those bills deserve.

If a state employee covered by Executive Order No. 95 gives birth/adopts/fosters a child before September 1st, are they eligible for paid parental leave?

The Executive Order provides that paid parental leave will be made available to eligible state employees who have a qualifying event on or after September 1, 2019. As with the start of any new program, an implementation date must be maintained and unfortunately means that paid parental leave will not be available to employees for qualifying events that take place prior to September 1, 2019. However, each agency's human resources benefits staff is available to discuss other leave options, and the Office of State Human Resources can provide additional guidance.