

California Work *and* Family Coalition

About Us

The California Work and Family Coalition is a diverse coalition of advocates, community groups and labor unions that promotes family friendly workplace policies for California's working families through policy work and grassroots activism.

Background

The Coalition was founded in 1999 to protect and expand the rights of working families in California. As a committed and dynamic alliance, we have furthered a family friendly policy agenda in California.

Highlights:

- ◆ In 2002, the Coalition partnered with the California Labor Federation on the successful passage of the Paid Family Leave Law, making California the first state in the nation to adopt a comprehensive paid family leave policy.
- ◆ In 2006-2007, the Coalition advocated for the expansion of California's paid and unpaid family leave laws and the prohibition of discrimination based on family responsibilities. Although the bills were passed by both houses, the bills were vetoed by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger in October 2007.
- ◆ In 2007, the Coalition's advocacy led to the creation of a new department at the California Economic Development Department to do outreach and education for the State Disability Insurance program, which includes Paid Family Leave.
- ◆ In 2008, the Coalition helped mobilize support for legislation guaranteeing all California workers the right to earn paid sick days. This ground-breaking legislation passed the California Assembly and was considered but not passed by the California Senate.

Family friendly workplace policies are a critical part of a broader effort to promote economic security for working families. The broader agenda includes: the right to a living wage; quality health insurance coverage for families; more worker control over scheduling and limits on mandatory overtime; affordable child and elder care with well trained and well compensated teachers/providers; and rights to unionize and collectively bargain.

Priority Policy Areas 2009 – 2011

Working families have fundamental rights to financially sustain and to care for themselves and their families. We support policies that help California workers keep their jobs and fulfill their caregiving responsibilities. Our priority policy areas for 2009 – 2011 are:

Paid Sick Days

Millions of Californians—over 40% of all workers in the state—can not take time off when they or someone in their family is ill, negatively impacting family and community health. Across demographic, economic, ethnic and party lines, three in four Californians support a law to guarantee workers paid sick days. The Coalition supports guaranteeing the right of all California workers to earn paid sick days to care for themselves or a sick family member so that no one will be forced to work sick because of fear of reprisal, losing their job, or losing pay.

Expansion of Paid and Unpaid Family Leave

Many California workers can not take time off to care for their sick or disabled family members without losing pay or risking job loss. Studies show that over half of employed Californians expect they will need to take a family or medical leave from work in the next five years. The Coalition supports expanding and strengthening paid and unpaid family leave laws to allow more workers the opportunity to care for loved ones without jeopardizing their financial security.

Employer Discrimination based on Family Caregiving Responsibilities

Although the vast majority of workers are responsible for the care of a family member, employers continue to make unfair employment decisions against workers because of their family responsibilities. Research shows that mothers are often paid less and are less likely to be hired than non-mothers with the same qualifications. Male employees are often penalized at work when they take an active role in caring for their children or sick family members. The Coalition supports expanding protection from workplace discrimination because of familial status or family responsibilities.

Our Approaches

With broad expertise in how workplace policies affect working families, the Coalition educates and informs policymakers and other decision-makers about policies that help workers balance work and family responsibilities. Through grassroots organizing, the Coalition mobilizes labor unions, advocates and community groups to influence change and support legislation that protects working families. To raise awareness about work family issues in our communities, the Coalition engages in strategic public education and outreach efforts.

Join Us

The Coalition is growing and we need you to join our efforts. Together we can support working families and healthy workplaces in California.

To join the coalition, endorse this platform by visiting our website or contacting the Labor Project for Working Families at (510) 643-7088 or info@working-families.org. We welcome your participation in the Coalition according to your organization's capacity.