

FAMILY-FRIENDLY WORKPLACE POLICIES

ADDRESSING FAMILY VIOLENCE

Family violence, whether child abuse, neglect, or domestic violence, harms children, families, communities, and workplaces. Employers have a unique opportunity to prevent violence and build stronger communities by adopting family-friendly workplace policies. Safe, supportive, and inclusive workplaces not only protect employees and their families but also strengthen North Carolina's economy.

WHY IT MATTERS

Child safety is at risk. Research shows that family stress, economic insecurity, and lack of workplace support increase the risk of child abuse and neglect.

The workplace is often a frontline. More than 1 in 4 women and nearly 1 in 10 men experience domestic violence in their lifetime. For many, work is the only place where they can be safe or ask for help.

Violence impacts business. Domestic violence costs U.S. businesses billions of dollars annually in lost productivity, absenteeism, and turnover.

Prevention works. Employers who offer paid supportive leave, flexible schedules, and access to resources reduce stress, improve retention, and help prevent violence at home.

ACTIONS EMPLOYERS CAN TAKE

- 1. Invest in Family Supports and Economic Stability.** Prevent violence by ensuring adults have access to fair, family-sustaining wages plus family support programs, affordable child care, and health coverage.
- 2. Adopt Paid Leave Policies.** Ensure employees have paid sick leave that can be used for medical care, legal proceedings, or recovery related to domestic violence.



- 3. Provide Flexible Scheduling.** Allow flexibility for employees managing court dates, counseling appointments, or child care needs, reducing barriers to safety and healing.
- 4. Provide Pregnancy and Breastfeeding Support.** Offer accommodations like prenatal care time and nursing breaks to promote family stability and provide critical support for workers who may be experiencing violence.
- 5. Train Leaders and Managers.** Equip supervisors to recognize signs of domestic violence or child abuse and connect employees with confidential support services.
- 6. Offer Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs).** Provide access to counseling, mental health services, and referrals for legal or safety support.
- 7. Promote Inclusive and Safe Workplaces.** Establish clear policies against harassment and violence, and create a culture where employees feel safe to seek help.

LEGISLATIVE ACTION TO SUPPORT FAMILIES

Support Paid Leave Legislation. Pass policies that ensure all workers have access to paid sick, family, and safe leave to care for themselves or their families without risking job loss.

Expand Access to Child Care Solutions. Invest in affordable, high-quality child care options and support, such as financial incentives for employers to offer on-site care, child care stipends, or partnerships with local providers, to help working parents stay employed and focused.

Fund Awareness and Training Programs. Allocate resources for statewide initiatives that help employers recognize, prevent, and respond to domestic violence and child abuse.

PARTNERS IN NORTH CAROLINA

- [Positive Childhood Alliance NC](#)
- [NC Coalition Against Domestic Violence](#)
- [NC Coalition Against Sexual Violence](#)

When employers adopt family-friendly policies that support healthy children and families, they strengthen North Carolina's workforce, communities, and future prosperity. [Download the FREE Family Forward NC® Guide to Family Forward Workplaces.](#)



ACCESS TO PAID SAFE LEAVE MATTERS

Paid safe leave is taken by a survivor of violence or their family member to handle the consequences of the violence they've experienced, such as to attend court hearings.

Employee access to paid safe leave directly impacts business productivity in our economy. **The U.S. economy loses about \$137 billion in short-term productivity because of gender-based violence and harassment,** according to a 2017 national study.

Nearly one in 10 stalking victims are forced to change or quit their jobs.

A 2018 study estimated that **U.S. workers miss a total of 741 million days of work** over their lifetime because of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking.

73 percent of people who had experienced domestic violence (most of whom were women) said they remained in an abusive relationship due to financial security.

Employers can help decrease violence, abuse, and harassment, in part by offering paid safe leave and paid family medical leave.

ABOUT FAMILY FORWARD NC®

Family Forward NC® is an initiative of the North Carolina Early Childhood Foundation. It partners with employers to design and implement family-friendly workplace policies that improve child and family well-being while strengthening businesses. Through research, case studies, and a certification program, Family Forward NC® helps employers play a pivotal role in building a safer, thriving workforce. [**familyforwardnc.com**](http://familyforwardnc.com)