



MAKING UTAH EVEN BETTER FOR FAMILIES

Extend Paid Maternity Leave for State Employees + Protect Pumping in Public

House Bill 329 State Employee Maternity and Leave Amendments
Sponsors: Representative Ariel Defay & Senator Michael McKell



Policy Snapshot: Expand paid maternity leave for state employees to nine weeks and codify pumping protections to improve maternal and infant health, strengthen workforce retention, and support families when infant care costs are highest.

The Problem

Maternity Leave

- 6 Utah provides six weeks of paid leave for new mothers, which research shows is insufficient.
- Shorter leave increases health risks for mothers and disrupts early bonding essential to child development.
- At the same time, infant care is the most expensive and burdensome child care cost for Utah families.

Pumping Breast Milk in Public

- Utah law protects public breastfeeding, but does not explicitly protect public pumping.
- This legal gap creates uncertainty for nursing moms when outside the workplace.

The Solution

Maternity Leave

- Extend paid maternity leave from six to nine weeks and extend coverage to include the adoption of children under age six.

Pumping Breast Milk in Public

- Amend existing law to explicitly allow pumping breast milk in any public space where breastfeeding is permitted.

The Potential Impact

Benefits of Increased Maternity Leave:
Positive child development outcomes, improved maternal physical and mental health, and increased employee retention

70% less turnover among working mothers with 12 weeks of paid leave

Funding



No funding needed, as existing department budgets would absorb the cost.

Our Approach

The Policy Project is taking a holistic approach to family affordability, giving families the flexibility to choose what works best — whether they need two incomes, want a parent at home, or need a new mother to keep her income.

Boost Financial Flexibility for Parents

- Increase Tax Credit Participation (RFA)
- Expand Child Tax Credit Eligibility (HB290)

Increase Access to Child Care

- Grants for Home-Based Providers (SB214)
- Business Child Care Tax Credit (HB190)

Support New Mothers

- Extend State Maternity Leave (HB329)
- Protect Pumping Breast Milk (HB329)

For more information or in-depth research, visit thepolicyproject.org/familyaffordability.