

## WHEREAS IMPROVED PARENTAL LEAVE POLICIES WILL:

- **Improve the physical and mental health of both UF employees and their children, as:**
  - Short or nonexistent paid parental leave can significantly challenge working parents, increasing domestic conflict and compromising their ability to maintain health-protective behaviors, such as sleep and exercise, during a period marked by:
    - Heightened stress<sup>1</sup>;
    - Vulnerability to mood disorders<sup>2</sup>;
    - Changes in physical health, including weight gain,<sup>3</sup> and;
    - Changes in immune and inflammatory function.<sup>4</sup>
  - Mothers who took fewer than 12 weeks of leave experience increased postpartum symptoms of depression.<sup>5</sup>
  
- **Enhance childhood development, as:**
  - Paid parental leave policies are strongly associated with reduced infant mortality rates<sup>6</sup>;
  - Working mothers in the US who had access to paid leave were more likely to give birth to children with healthy birth weights<sup>7</sup>;

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<sup>1</sup> Reid, K. M., & Taylor, M. G. (2015). Social support, stress, and maternal postpartum depression: A comparison of supportive relationships. *Social Science Research*, 54, 246-262.

<sup>2</sup> Paulson, J. F., & Bazemore, S. D. (2010). Prenatal and postpartum depression in fathers and its association with maternal depression: a meta-analysis. *Jama*, 303(19), 1961-1969; Stowe, Z. N., & Nemeroff, C. B. (1995). Women at risk for postpartum-onset major depression. *American Journal of Obstetrics & Gynecology*, 173(2), 639-645.

<sup>3</sup> Umberson, D., Liu, H., Mirowsky, J., & Reczek, C. (2011). Parenthood and trajectories of change in body weight over the life course. *Social science & medicine*, 73(9), 1323-1331.

<sup>4</sup> Denney, J. M., Nelson, E. L., Wadhwa, P. D., Waters, T. P., Mathew, L., Chung, E. K., ... & Culhane, J. F. (2011). Longitudinal modulation of immune system cytokine profile during pregnancy. *Cytokine*, 53(2), 170-177.

<sup>5</sup> Stearns, J. (2015). The effects of paid maternity leave: Evidence from Temporary Disability Insurance. *Journal of Health Economics*, 43, 85-102;

Rossin, M. (2011). The effects of maternity leave on children's birth and infant health outcomes in the United States. *Journal of health Economics*, 30(2), 221-239;

Kornfeind, K. R., & Sipsma, H. L. (2018). Exploring the link between maternity leave and postpartum depression. *Women's Health Issues*, 28(4), 321-326;

Huang, R., & Yang, M. (2015). Paid maternity leave and breastfeeding practice before and after California's implementation of the nation's first paid family leave program. *Economics & Human Biology*, 16, 45-59

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

- Longer parental leave results in higher quality relationships between infants and their parents, which can help develop learning foundations, positive relationships, and self-control,<sup>8</sup> and;
  - Leave time facilitates the early detection of potential developmental delays at a time when problems can be effectively addressed.<sup>9</sup>
- **Support gender equity in the workplace and advance the University of Florida’s goals to recruit and retain the most talented employees.**
  - **Advance the University of Florida’s ‘Rise to 5’ initiative, by making UF’s leave package competitive with those of its highest-performing peer and aspirational peer institutions,<sup>10</sup> including:**
    - The University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill, which allows all new parents on a 9-month appointment to take a full semester of paid leave, and offers 15 weeks of paid leave for those without teaching responsibilities<sup>11</sup>;
    - The University of Michigan, which offers six weeks of paid maternity leave and up to six weeks of additional paid parental leave for all new parents<sup>12</sup>, and;
    - The University of Virginia, which offers 8 weeks of paid leave<sup>13</sup>.
  - **Reaffirm UF’s position of preeminence among Florida public institutions of higher education, by making UF’s leave package competitive with those of other Florida public universities, including:**

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<sup>8</sup> Plotka, R., & Busch-Rossnagel, N. A. (2018). The role of length of maternity leave in supporting mother–child interactions and attachment security among American mothers and their infants. *International Journal of Child Care and Education Policy*, 12(1), 1-18.

ZERO TO THREE, report December, 2018; The Child Development Case for a National Paid Family and Medical Leave Program. (2018, December 17). Retrieved from <https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/204-the-child-development-case-for-a-national-paid-family-and-medical-leave-program>

Carneiro, P., Løken, K. V., & Salvanes, K. G. (2011). A Flying Start? Long Term Consequences of Maternal Time Maternity Leave and Investments in Children During Their First Year of Life.

<sup>10</sup> While UF’s current leave policy is equal to or better than the policies of several other top-ten public institutions, the University now lags behind several of its peer or aspirational peer institutions.

<sup>11</sup> For UNC-Chapel Hill’s full policy, visit: [https://academicpersonnel.unc.edu/faculty-policies-procedures-guidelines/leave/faculty-serious-illness-major-disability-and-parental-leave-policy/#P24\\_550](https://academicpersonnel.unc.edu/faculty-policies-procedures-guidelines/leave/faculty-serious-illness-major-disability-and-parental-leave-policy/#P24_550)

<sup>12</sup> For the University of Michigan’s full policy, visit: <https://hr.umich.edu/working-u-m/my-employment/leaves-absence/maternity-childbirth-parental-leave#maternity>

<sup>13</sup> For the University of Virginia’s full policy, visit: [https://uvapolicy.virginia.edu/policy/HRM-038#Parental\\_Leave](https://uvapolicy.virginia.edu/policy/HRM-038#Parental_Leave)

- Florida International University, which currently offers its employees up to 26 weeks of paid parental leave<sup>14</sup>, and;
- Florida State, the University of South Florida, and the University of Central Florida, all of which offer a full semester of paid leave.<sup>15</sup>

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:**

- **The University of Florida should:**
  - Provide 12 / 15 / 19.5 weeks of paid parental leave;
  - Abandon its current requirement that employees reimburse parental leave through deductions from employees' sick leave, and;
  - Offer these benefits too all University of Florida employees, including faculty, staff (TEAMS, USPS, and OPS), and graduate students.

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<sup>14</sup> Although FIU's parental leave is paid from sick leave, it is not deducted from employees' balance until they leave the institution, allowing them to accrue and use sick leave for when they are actually sick.

<sup>15</sup> Parental leave at these institutions is also paid from sick leave, though, as at FIU, payment is not deducted from employees' balance until they leave the institution.