

SPOTLIGHT

How we're advancing justice for workers, so they can care for themselves and their loved ones.

ADVANCING WORKERS' LEGAL RIGHTS

REACHING 200,000+ PEOPLE
Through Our COVID-19 Resource Hub
•15 Know Your Rights Videos
•Dozens of FAQs and Fact Sheets

INFORMING & EMPOWERING WORKERS

A BETTER BALANCE'S COVID-19 RESPONSE

NEARLY 50 MILLION + WORKERS COVERED
by state & local paid sick time laws since 2006

CALLS TO OUR FREE LEGAL HELPLINE HAVE TRIPLED

EMERGENCY LEGISLATION IN 40+ STATES & CITIES

Securing MILLIONS OF WORKERS' RIGHTS TO FEDERAL EMERGENCY PAID LEAVE

Educating PREGNANT WORKERS & CAREGIVERS ABOUT THEIR RIGHTS

Paving the Way for Strong Federal Paid Leave Protections

Working closely with Congress, we helped pave the way for the passage of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, a law guaranteeing many workers 10 paid sick days when affected by the COVID-19 crisis, as well as 12 weeks of family leave—including those 10 paid sick days—when a child’s school or daycare has been closed. This law, although temporary, represents a historic step forward and marks the first time there has been a national law granting paid sick time or paid family leave, and we are proud to have played a key role. With businesses reopening nationwide and parents struggling to find childcare for the summer, these protections will continue to prove critical, as they have been for many essential workers.

However, there is still more work to be done. Unfortunately, too many workers are excluded from the scope of the law. Workers at large corporations and many healthcare workers and emergency responders are exempted from the law, and small employers are able to narrow coverage for their workers. Furthermore, the law’s protections only apply to the current public health crisis and expire at the end of this year. Day in and day out, we’re continuing to push for a permanent, comprehensive right to paid leave for all.





Co-President Sherry Leiwant & Senior Staff Attorney Molly Weston Williamson

Helping States and Cities Respond to the Pandemic

When the pandemic began, we immediately updated and shared our model paid sick time bills, helping to ensure that bills being introduced around the country are comprehensive and inclusive of all workers and families. In March, as New York State emerged as the epicenter of the crisis, we helped pass an emergency paid sick leave law. And, in a lasting victory for workers and families across the state, we secured the passage of a permanent paid sick time law in early April, making New York the 12th state to guarantee this right.

New York is one of more than 40 states and cities that we have assisted in responding to the crisis. In another victory, we worked closely with advocates and officials in San Francisco to pass an emergency ordinance requiring large private employers to provide public health emergency leave during the pandemic, protecting workers left uncovered by the federal law.

We are also providing legal and policy support to partners around the country to defend against preemption, or state interference, that blocks their ability to pass essential local public health and labor measures. With our support, Nashville and Memphis passed resolutions urging all employers in their cities to provide immediate paid sick leave to their workers and calling on the Governor and State Legislature to repeal the law that prohibits Tennessee's cities from guaranteeing this important labor standard.

A Better Balance continues to take steps to ensure that the laws we pass are successfully implemented and enforced.

SPOTLIGHT ON FUTURE OF WORK

Nonstandard workers, including gig economy workers, part-time workers, temp workers, and freelancers, too often lack the paid leave and other crucial workplace protections they need. Our new Future of Work project is dedicated to meeting the needs of a changing workforce by ensuring all workers have the protections they need, regardless of how they work or how they are labeled. To that end, we are working around the country to respond to the needs of nonstandard and precarious workers in this crisis. For example, in New York City, we are advocating for legislation to ensure workers won't be denied their right to sick time because their employers wrongfully misclassify them as independent contractors.

Advancing the Rights of Pregnant Workers and New Mothers

Amidst the pandemic, we are continuing to fight for justice and equality for pregnant workers, especially those who need accommodations such as protective equipment or the ability to telework in order to stay healthy and earn a paycheck. The effects of COVID-19 have been particularly harsh for women of color and single mothers, due to longstanding health, race, and economic inequalities, including a lack of fair and supportive workplace laws.

That's why we're as committed as ever to pushing forward federal and state pregnant workers fairness legislation that would ensure pregnant workers across the country can get the accommodations they need — and we've made some huge strides this year.



Former ABB client Takirah Woods and her family with Co-President Dina Bakst and ABB staff on Capitol Hill

In January, the federal Pregnant Workers Fairness Act reached a crucial milestone, advancing with bipartisan support out of the House Congressional committee, with the next step being a full vote in the House of Representatives. And, after leading months of close negotiations, the PWFA earned the support of major business groups including the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the Society for Human Resources Management. That same month, we also worked with Congress to introduce the PUMP Act, a bill that would ensure millions of workers have a clear right to time and space to pump breastmilk at work. In recent months, after we helped lead and partner with state groups, New Mexico and Virginia became the 28th and 29th states to pass pregnant workers fairness laws!

In February—thanks to the deep partnerships we have built with state advocates across the country—we co-led a Day of Action on Capitol Hill to build Congressional support for the PWFA, convening more than 40 maternal and child health advocates and constituents from 10 states to share their expertise and personal stories with federal lawmakers. Our former client Takirah Woods from New Jersey—whom we assisted in getting her job back after facing discrimination—traveled down to D.C. with her mother and daughter and after sharing her story directly with one Congressman, he signed on to co-sponsor the bill on the spot.

During this crisis and beyond, we are committed to advocating for, and empowering, expecting and new mothers everywhere.

MUCH NEEDED RELIEF FOR OUR CLIENTS AT WALMART

In May, we secured a historic, \$14 million settlement for nearly 4,000 Walmart workers who were denied equal treatment on the job during pregnancy—providing much-needed relief for nearly 4,000 women and their families during these uncertain times. We represented the class of Walmart workers along with co-counsel Mehri & Skalet, PLLC and the NWLC. We are so grateful to the brave workers who came forward and made this outcome possible.

Stories from Our Helpline: Educating Workers About Their Legal Rights



We are educating and empowering workers to exercise their rights around paid sick time, paid family and medical leave, pregnancy, flexible scheduling, affordable childcare, and more. Our free legal helpline—which plays a key role in enforcing workplace protections across the country as we inform workers about their rights—has fielded over 1,000 calls since February as families navigate the pandemic, with hundreds of thousands of others visiting our COVID-19 online resource hub and tuning into our webinars and trainings to get the critical information they need. Here are some stories from our callers*:

**Names changed to protect anonymity*



Tamika

A nurse in her third trimester who called A Better Balance with some serious concerns.

Tamika's doctor recommended she take certain safety precautions at work due to COVID-19 and other underlying health conditions. Her boss refused to accommodate these recommendations and made her work experience difficult. We talked Tamika through all her options in light of state, local, and employer regulations that applied to her. Tamika didn't realize that her pregnancy-related health condition provided her a right to the workplace accommodation she needed to maintain a healthy pregnancy AND her job. Without speaking to us, she likely would have lost her job and her health insurance.



Crystal

A mother with a demanding job in sales, working out of Illinois.

When the pandemic hit, her young child's school immediately closed due to the coronavirus. When Crystal approached her employer with her childcare emergency, her employer told her they were not required to provide her with any paid leave. Luckily Crystal called us to learn about her workplace leave options. We informed her about options she was entitled to under the FFCRA, which we worked on passing. Crystal expressed what many callers do: "I appreciate you calling me back. I know it's a stressful time for everyone. I feel so much better knowing I might have another option and that I'm not up the creek without a paddle!"



TIME

A Better Balance Named Top Group
Fighting for Equality by
Time Magazine

"Implementing fair work-life standards—including pregnancy accommodations, paid sick days, paid family and medical leave, and quality affordable childcare—is more important than ever: "It's absolutely essential for gender equality and for our nation's economic security."

—Dina Bakst, Co-President

A Better Balance's COVID-19 Emergency Legal Fund



This fund will enable us to support even more workers with the critical legal services and protections they need now more than ever.

Thank you for your support!

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balance*

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