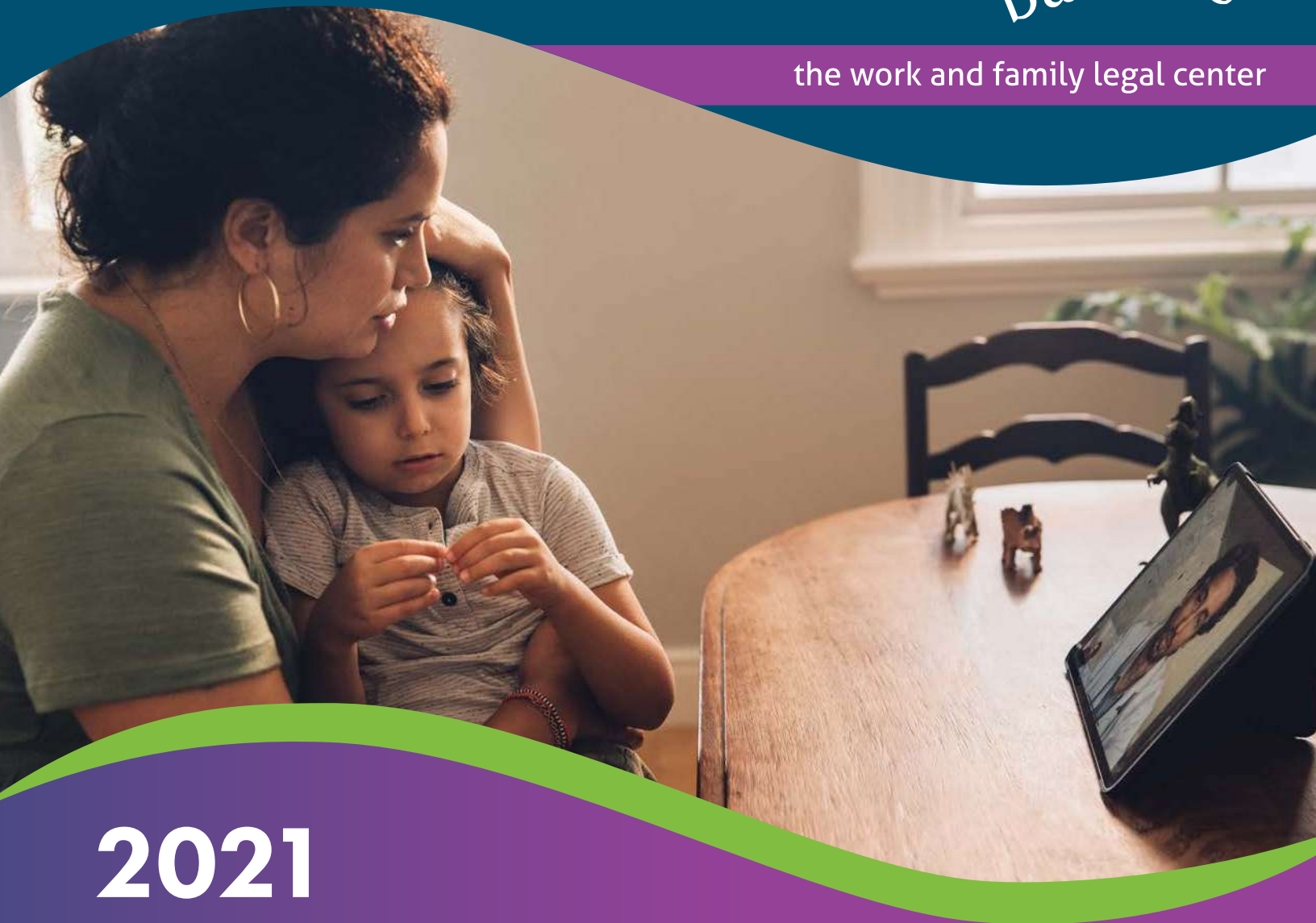


A Better Balance
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New York, NY 10019

a better
balance

the work and family legal center



2021

A Pivotal Moment for Work-Family Justice

As we entered our second year of weathering the COVID-19 pandemic, working families faced new and enduring challenges in balancing work and care while staying healthy and safe. However, we also saw momentous progress on many fronts, including new policies to protect pregnant workers and parents in the South, new state paid sick time laws passing and going into effect, and a continued surge of workers accessing and benefiting from our know-your-rights resources and trainings.

We also saw unprecedented momentum on the federal level in our movements for paid leave for all, the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act, and the PUMP Act.

None of our work to advance justice for workers caring for themselves and their loved ones would be possible without your help, and we are gearing up for a long, challenging road ahead. But with supporters like you by our side, we know a future is possible where all workers have the time, resources, and security to care for themselves and their loved ones when it matters most.

Progress for Working Families in 2021: By the Numbers

This year, we've seen numerous victories for workers caring for themselves and their loved ones. Thanks to your solidarity and support...

30

With the passage of the Louisiana Pregnant Workers Fairness Act, **30 states** have strengthened legal protections for pregnant workers.

3 million workers in Colorado have begun exercising their rights to paid sick time for COVID-19 and other general health needs.

3m

90+

Our legal experts and worker Community Advocates have been featured in **90+ stories** in national and local media outlets, reaching millions of individuals across the U.S.

Through strategic litigation support, we've helped to defend the paid sick time and paid leave rights of approximately **3.4 million workers** in several states and cities around the country.

3.4m

1.7k

In 2021 alone, we supported **1,700 workers** directly through our helpline with customized and actionable information about their legal rights, and **15,000 additional workers** used our new online "Workplace Rights Hub."

8.6 million workers in New York State gained the right to paid time off to receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

8.6m

250k

250,000 workers in Georgia at state agencies, universities and K-12 schools, including teachers, have gained a right to paid parental leave.

This year's work on implementation, public education, and regulations of existing state paid family and medical leave laws will affect the rights of approximately **16.5 million workers**.

16.5m

800k

New Mexico passed a paid sick time law covering nearly **800,000 workers**, meaning 15 states now guarantee workers paid sick time.

Driving Unprecedented Federal Momentum



ABB Co-President Sherry Leiwant speaks on the NYC leg of the Paid Leave for All bus tour before press and elected officials.

Paid Family and Medical Leave

This has truly been a pivotal year in our push for federal paid family and medical leave. As leaders in the federal Paid Leave for All campaign, A Better Balance has been at the forefront of legislative and policy advocacy to pass permanent, comprehensive paid leave nationwide.

We have spent 2021 helping to draft a comprehensive, meaningful national paid leave bill, meeting with key lawmakers to ensure any paid leave proposals meet the needs of working families, lifting up stories from workers, rallying on Capitol Hill and across the country, and taking part in a national bus tour in August to drive awareness about this critical campaign. As co-chairs of the Paid Leave for All policy committee and as experts on paid family and medical leave in the states, we have been the go-to advocates on all questions related to what makes a good and effective paid leave program.

As a result of our work, paid leave has proven to be one of the most popular components of proposed recovery packages. We have seen fierce, unrelenting championing of this issue from elected leaders, impassioned calls from advocates and families in every corner of the nation, and unprecedented attention to this issue from the media. And while the future of the federal paid leave program remains uncertain, we are so proud to have set the standard through our leadership in the states for what a strong program should look like, and to be joined by a growing chorus of voices across the country demanding paid leave for all.

We are redoubling our work on this critical issue. If paid leave is not passed at the federal level, in the year ahead, we will continue to draft, support, and pass paid leave proposals in states around the country, while keeping the pressure on elected officials in D.C. If it does pass, we will work to ensure that the program is implemented effectively to support all working families caring for themselves and their loved ones.



ABB Senior Policy Counsel Sarah Brafman speaks on Capitol Hill at a rally to keep paid leave in the Build Back Better package.



ABB Co-President Dina Bakst joins NY Governor Hochul for a bill signing and calls on Congress to follow New York's lead and pass paid leave and the PWFA.

"You've brought people together to make sure the voices of millions of New Yorkers are heard when it came to fighting for paid family leave."

– NY Governor Kathy Hochul on ABB's work on the ground in the state.

The Pregnant Workers Fairness Act & the PUMP for Nursing Mothers Act

As another wave of women were forced out of the workforce this year, we have worked tirelessly to advance critical protections for pregnant and postpartum workers. Our steadfast advocacy for the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act, buttressed by the powerful voices of our former clients who inspired the movement, has resonated in the halls of Congress all year long, as we testified for the second time as the leading legal expert before U.S. Representatives, provided lawmakers with rapid response legal research and analysis, hosted events with key leaders, drove media campaigns, and more.

Now that the PWFA has passed the House and advanced through Senate committee, we're pushing the Senate to bring this bill to a vote, and with the bill well-positioned to pass, we are closer than ever to ensuring no pregnant workers must choose between their health and their economic security.

In 2021, it is a travesty that pregnant women are still treated as second class citizens in this country, and we will not stop until the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act becomes law.

We also helped lead the way for extensive movement, including the October House passage, of the PUMP for Nursing Mothers Act—bringing us one step closer to providing millions more nursing parents with the right to adequate break time and space to pump breastmilk. And we are proud to have supported Black maternal health partners in the fight for the MOMNIBUS Act—a package of key investments to end the maternal health crisis.

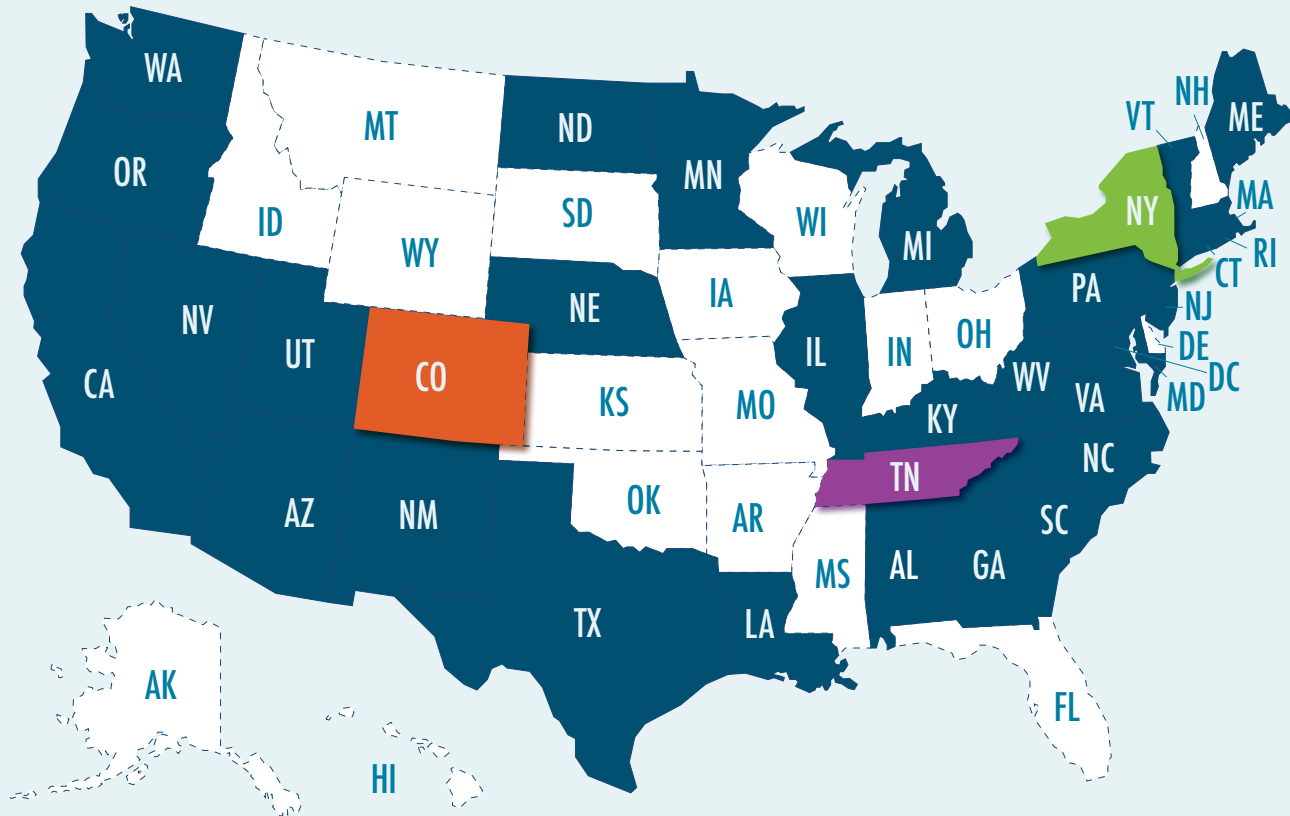
2022 will be a huge year as we build upon this major momentum in Congress. With your support, we know we can advance justice for workers across the country.

From coast to coast, the policies
you've helped us pass are
making a difference.

■ laws passed
□ progress still to be made

With offices in regions across the country, we've been able to work especially closely with partners, advocates and lawmakers on the ground to pass state legislation that is making a difference in the lives of workers and modeling the more equitable future that is possible.

As we continue to fight for comprehensive federal policies that meet the needs of all working families, these are just a few examples of how strong work-family policies we've helped to enact in the states are making a difference now.



Colorado



Case study: A future where getting sick doesn't mean taking a pay cut

Last year, in addition to approving paid family and medical leave by ballot, Colorado enacted one of the strongest paid sick time laws in the country, which we drafted and helped pass. We're now working to ensure workers in the state understand and can exercise their new rights.

[Paid family & medical leave](#) | [Paid sick time](#) | [Pregnant worker fairness law](#)

New York



Case study: A future where every worker can be there for their loved ones in times of need

This winter marks four years since New York's groundbreaking paid family leave program went into effect, guaranteeing workers the right to paid, job-protected leave to bond with a new child, care for a seriously ill or injured family member, and more. We remain proud of our leading role in passing this law, and to now see the full benefits of this robust program in action.

[Paid family leave](#) | [Paid sick time](#) | [Pregnant worker fairness law](#) | [Caregiver nondiscrimination law](#) | [Lactation accommodation law](#)

Tennessee:



Case study: A future where pregnant workers and new moms can stay healthy without being pushed off the job

This year, we celebrated the one year anniversary of Tennessee's Pregnant Workers Fairness Act. Thanks to this law, which our Southern Office team worked alongside a strong coalition of advocates to pass, pregnant and lactating workers in the state have had an explicit right to request accommodations on the job to stay safe and healthy for the last year.

Pregnant worker fairness law

Shaping Stories in the Media: 2021 at a Glance



JANUARY

Bloomberg Law

[Calls for Permanent Paid Leave Grow as Temporary Measures Fade](#)

TENNESSEE | **LOOKOUT**

[After a Law for Pregnant Workers Quietly Passed in 2020, Advocates Turn to Education](#)

THE Nation.

[The Pandemic Offers a Chance to Reimagine Caregiving](#)

MARCH

NY
DAILY NEWS

[COVID Pandemic Forced Over 50% of NYC Women Who Provide Care for Kids to Cut Back on Work: Report](#)

THE **19th**
INFORMING WOMEN.
TRANSFORMING NEWS.

[Pregnant Workers Have Fought for Years for Accommodations at Work. They May Finally Get Them](#)

Vox

[How Biden Could Expand Paid Family Leave to More Americans](#)

JULY

AUGUST

THE HILL

[OP-ED: A Historic Moment to Truly Honor Mothers](#)

The New York Times

[For Freelancers, Taking Time Off for a Baby Is Risky](#)

Forbes

[The Nonprofit Organization Secretly Advancing Public Policy For The Past 15 Years](#)

SEPTEMBER

OCTOBER

The New York Times

[How Parents Can Ask for Flexibility When Offices Reopen](#)

Tennessean.

[OP-ED: Southern Leaders Must Use Historic Federal Money to Invest in Working Families](#)

POLITICO

[Progressive Groups, Unions Launch Push to Get Pregnant Workers Bill a Vote](#)

NOVEMBER

Ms.

[OP-ED: Families Depend on Congress to Pass Paid Family and Medical Leave—Mine Included](#)

InStyle

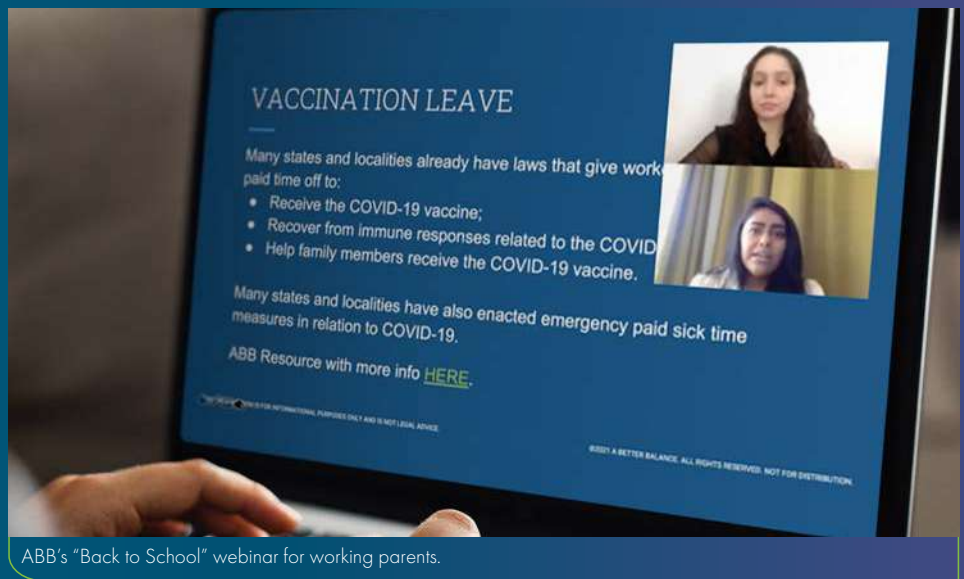
[Pumping at Work Is Still Awful, but It Might Be Getting Better](#)

The Atlantic

[The American Workplace Isn't Prepared for This Much Grief](#)

Educating Workers On Their Rights

Policy victories and momentum are cause for celebration, but our work doesn't end there. We work everyday to enforce laws and educate workers about their rights. This year, we launched a comprehensive, state-by-state [Workplace Rights Hub](#), provided regularly updated resources on pandemic-related rights, and hosted trainings and webinars on topics like Back to School, protections for expecting and new moms in NYC, new laws in the South, and much more.



Empowering Our Helpline Callers to Drive Change

The pandemic has led to more workers than ever contacting our free legal helpline. Not only does our helpline allow us to directly support and empower workers to exercise their rights—the workers we hear from play a pivotal role in shaping the policies we advocate for, with many becoming powerful Community Advocates themselves.

Amir, a dad and an early childhood professional in New York, wrote an op-ed sharing his story of taking paid family leave to care for his son's health and medical needs, to highlight how every worker deserves the same protection:

"We were relieved: We would not have to choose between our paychecks and our responsibilities as parents. Having paid leave saved our family."



Kim, a New Mexico government worker who was unable to take sufficient leave after giving birth, now speaks out so no other workers must endure what she did:

"I was forced to go back to work far sooner than I was ready to because my growing family needed the income to survive — a choice no working parent should face,"
she wrote.

Our Community Advocates are truly making a difference, and we are so proud to continue to expand the program and fight for change by their side.

It's your support that creates these gratifying opportunities to educate and empower workers with knowledge about their rights!

"Although my doctor had medically advised that I be allowed to continue to work from home due to a high risk pregnancy, my employer would not allow it. I am so grateful to have connected with the team at A Better Balance. They gave me the tools, guidance and confidence I needed to self-advocate for a safer work environment [and] obtain accommodations to allow me to feel safer at work."

– Alejandra*
a local government employee in Florida (*pseudonym)

a better balance

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