

Part-Time Workers Need Paid Leave

Approximately 25 million people in the United States are employed part-time. Yet, part-time workers are often not covered by employer-provided workplace policies like paid family and medical leave and paid sick leave. Ensuring these protections extend to part-time, seasonal, and temporary workers, especially young workers concentrated in these jobs, will have wide reaching benefits not just for the workers, but for employers and the American economy.

Despite accounting for a significant segment of the workforce, part-time workers less frequently have access to protective workplace policies that can significantly improve their livelihoods.

- There are 25 million part-time workers in the United States.¹ Estimated tens of thousands of workers hold seasonal or other temporary positions.² Nearly 8 million people work multiple part-time jobs, many of whom end up working more than forty hours a week.³
- Despite these large numbers, part-time workers often lack access to protective workplace policies, like paid family and medical leave, which leaves them and their jobs vulnerable during personal and family caregiving emergencies.⁴
 - For example, in 2021, 82% of part-time workers in the private sector lacked access to short-term disability insurance to deal with their own serious health needs.⁵
 - Only 51% of part-time workers employed in private industry have access to paid sick leave, while only 48% of part-time workers employed by state and local governments are protected under paid sick leave policies.⁶

Extending protective workplace policies, like paid leave, to part-time, temporary, and seasonal workers can improve the livelihoods and health outcomes of workers, as well as positively influence employers and businesses.

- Protective workplace policies allow part-time workers to prevent severe health consequences for themselves and their families.⁷
 - For example, access to paid medical leave permits workers to seek treatment they need for serious conditions and focus on recovery, without having to worry about the affordability of missing work.⁸ Meanwhile, paid family leave allows workers to take care of their loved ones as emergent health needs arise, often leading to better health outcomes for that family member.⁹
- Protective workplace policies can boost productivity and decrease employer costs. Providing part-time workers with protective benefits helps not only the worker, but the employer too.
 - Studies show that businesses in states with paid family leave laws, which include protections for part-time workers, have higher firm-wide productivity rates as compared to similar businesses without paid family leave benefits.¹⁰
 - Protective policies like paid medical leave help keep an employer's employee costs low, by keeping workers healthy and safe on the job, and by allowing the workers to return to full productivity after injury or illness does occur.¹¹

Young adults are more likely to work part-time, temporary, or seasonal jobs. Protective workplace policies help young people engage meaningfully in the workforce and reduce disconnection rates.

- In 2022, the Bureau of Labor Statistics found that over one million young adults between ages 18 to 24 had part-time jobs.¹² Millions more in this age group work seasonal or temporary positions; for example, 2.6 million young adults had seasonal or temporary jobs in the summer of 2022.¹³
- Workplace policies like paid family and medical leave and paid sick leave can help more youth join and stay connected to the workforce. Young people are often caregivers, either to young children or other family members.¹⁴ Fair workplace policies that allow young workers to balance these familial responsibilities with employment make the workforce more accessible, advancing family economic security.¹⁵

¹ *Monthly Number of Part-Time Employees in the United States from June 2021 to June 2023*, STATISTA (July 10, 2023), <https://www.statista.com/statistics/192342/unadjusted-monthly-number-of-part-time-employees-in-the-us/#:~:text=U.S.%20number%20of%20part%20time%20employees%20June%202023&text=In%20June%202023%2C%20around%2025.7,than%2035%20hours%20per%20week>.

² *See Seasonal Associate Demographics and Statistics in the United States*, ZIPPIA, <https://www.zippia.com/seasonal-associate-jobs/demographics/> (last accessed July 26, 2023).

³ Alex Tanzi, *Side Hustle Nation: The Number of Americans Working Multiple Gigs to Just Pay the Bills is Nearly Double What We Thought*, FORTUNE (Feb. 6, 2023), <https://fortune.com/2023/02/06/side-hustle-americans-working-multiple-gigs-double-previous-estimates/>.

⁴ *See Kathleen Romig & Kathleen Bryant, A National Paid Leave Program Would Help Workers, Families*, CTR ON BUDGET AND POL'Y PRIORITIES (Apr. 27, 2021), <https://www.cbpp.org/research/economy/a-national-paid-leave-program-would-help-workers-families>.

⁵ *National Compensation Survey: Employee Benefits in the United States, Mar. 2021*, U.S. BUREAU OF LAB. STAT., Table 17 (2021), <https://www.bls.gov/ncs/ebs/benefits/2021/employee-benefits-in-the-united-states-march-2021>.

⁶ *National Compensation Survey: Employee Benefits in the United States, Mar. 2022*, U.S. BUREAU OF LAB. STAT., Table 6 (2022), <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/ebs2.pdf>.

⁷ *See The Health Case for Paid Family and Medical Leave*, A BETTER BALANCE (Nov. 30, 2021), <https://www.abetterbalance.org/resources/the-health-case-for-paid-family-and-medical-leave/>.

⁸ Elizabeth Harrington & Bill McInturff, *Key Findings – National Surveys of Cancer Patients, Survivors, and Caregivers*, AM. CANCER SOC'Y ACTION NETWORK (2017), <https://www.fightcancer.org/sites/default/files/ACS%20CAN%20Paid%20Leave%20Surveys%20Key%20Findings%20Press%20Memo%20FINAL.pdf>.

⁹ *See, e.g. Susan C. Reinhard, et. al., Valuing the Invaluable: The Economic Value of Family Caregiving*, AARP PUB. POL'Y INST. (Mar. 8, 2023), <https://www.aarp.org/ppi/info-2015/valuing-the-invaluable-2015-update.html>.

¹⁰ Benjamin Bennett et. al., *Paid Leave Pays Off: The Effects of Paid Family Leave on Firm Performance* (Nat'l Bureau of Econ. Rsch., Working Paper No. 27788, 2021), https://www.nber.org/system/files/working_papers/w27788/w27788.pdf.

¹¹ *See T.G. Hollo, Evaluating Family and Medical Leave Insurance for Washington state*, ECON. OPPORTUNITY INST. (May 2012), <https://www.opportunityinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/family-leave-insurance/EvaluatingFamilyandMedicalLeave-May12.pdf>.

¹² *Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey*, U.S. BUREAU OF LAB. STAT., (2023), <https://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat08.htm>.

¹³ *Employment and Unemployment Among Youth – Summer 2022*, U.S. BUREAU OF LAB. STAT., (2023), <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/youth.pdf>.

¹⁴ Kathleen Romig & Kathleen Bryant, *A National Paid Leave Program Would Help Workers, Families*, CTR. ON BUDGET AND POL'Y PRIORITIES (Apr. 27, 2021), [cbpp.org/research/economy/a-national-paid-leave-program-would-help-workers-families](https://www.cbpp.org/research/economy/a-national-paid-leave-program-would-help-workers-families).

¹⁵ *Id.*