

## **What is in the current Family Care Act bills & how do you learn more?**

First, let's talk about researching a bill! To learn about any bill, start by figuring out if it is a federal or state level bill. In the case of the Family Care Act, it is a state bill in Pennsylvania. To learn about it including the bill language, co-sponsorship memo, who introduced the bill, and more, visit [www.palegis.us](http://www.palegis.us). You can enter the bill name or number in the search bar and find all that information and more.

The Family Care Act (HB200 / SB906) is summarized below but can change at any moment – knowing how and where to get up to date information for any piece of legislation is critical! You can look up any current or previous legislation on the state's website to learn more about it.

### **The Family Care Act – Summarized**

If passed, the Family Care Act would create a public program similar to unemployment. A small deduction would be taken from individuals employed in Pennsylvania and put into a “general fund” at the state level that would be overseen by the Department of Labor. This fund would be managed by the state, and when an individual needs to take paid leave, they will apply to the state. A determination will be made, and if the employee qualifies (see qualification reasons and requirements below), they will be able to receive payments while taking leave for the time approved.

#### **Who qualifies:**

Employee working in PA and paying state taxes must have worked at least 18 weeks during the past 12 month period, and earned at least \$2,718 in wages during that period

Employees working in PA and paying state taxes can be; full time, part time, contract / seasonal, self-employed

#### **What qualifies an employee for leave:**

- Birth, adoption, or placement through foster care
- Caring for a family member with a serious health condition
- Serious health condition, including pregnancy, that prevents ability to work
- Victim of qualifying act of violence (domestic violence, sexual violence, abuse of a vulnerable adult, additional acts (defined in the bill))
- Family member of an active-duty service member about to be deployed (this is just in the House bill)

#### **How long they qualify for:**

Eligible employees may receive up to 20 weeks of leave for their own serious health condition, for birth or placement of a child, or for leave related to being a victim of qualifying violence. They may receive up to 12 weeks of leave to care for a family member with a serious health condition or to address issues related to an active-duty service member's deployment.

#### **How much they qualify for:**

Employees taking paid leave receive wage replacement based on their earnings. Those earning below the state's average weekly wage receive 90% of their regular pay, while employees earning above the average weekly wage receive 60%. What does this look like in reality? For those who are either living at or below the poverty line or are living paycheck to paycheck with no safety net, the 90% rate will most likely apply (individual circumstances may have implications; this formula is based on current salary).

#### **Who pays:**

This is where the main difference between the House and Senate bills lies. In the House, the bill calls for the program to be funded through shared contributions: 50% paid by employees and 50% by employers, with total contributions capped at no more than 1% of an employee's annual salary. Employers with fewer than 15 employees receive a contribution carveout, and any employer may apply for a waiver if they offer an equivalent private plan. In the Senate, 100% of the contribution will be from the employee.

### **What does this look like in reality?**

If someone was making \$51,325 annually (this salary is that of the average worker in Sen. Comitta's district), they would earn \$987 weekly. Based on the proposed formula, they would contribute \$4.94 per weekly paycheck (it would work just like unemployment contributions) based on the House bill, and their employer would contribute an additional \$4.94. Based on the formula of the Senate bill, the contribution would entirely fall on the employee and would be \$9.88. If they took leave, they would receive \$660 a week during the approved duration of leave.