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UNH Research Finds Strong Support for Job Protection and Sufficient Wage Replacement in Paid Family and Medical Leave Policy

Tuesday, April 9, 2019

(HTTPS://WWW.UNH.EDU/UNHTODAY/NEWS/2019/04/09/UNH-RESEARCH-FINDS-STRONG-SUPPORT-JOB-PROTECTION-AND-SUFFICIENT-WAGE-REPLACEMENT-IN-PAID-FAMILY-AND-MEDICAL-LEAVE-POLICY)

DURHAM, N.H.—Lower-wage workers have substantially less access to employer-provided paid family and medical leave than higher-earning workers, according to new research (https://carsey.unh.edu/publication/job-protection-wage-replacement) by the Carsey School of Public Policy at the University of New Hampshire. Job protection and sufficient wage replacement are key factors in any leave program in order to ensure participation of lower-wage workers.

“If state and federal policymakers intend to increase access to and decrease inequity in paid family and medical leave, they need to consider job protection and a scaled wage replacement scheme that allows lower-wage workers to maintain most of their wages,” said Kristin Smith, family demographer at the Carsey School and research associate professor of sociology. “Workers will be reluctant to take leave if it means a potential job loss and choosing between caring for themselves or a loved one and making ends meet. A worker’s financial stability should not be put in question when taking paid family and medical leave.”

Smith’s research also found that more than nine in 10 New Hampshire residents support guaranteed job protection for all workers taking paid family or medical leave, and that 88 percent of Granite State workers believe that a wage replacement of 60 percent or more for a worker taking leave is the right amount. In addition, about two-thirds of New Hampshire workers believe premium costs should be shared between employers and employees; almost one-quarter believe costs should be covered mostly or solely by employers.

The Carsey School of Public Policy conducts research, leadership development, and engaged scholarship relevant to public policy. They address pressing challenges, striving for innovative, responsive, and equitable solutions at all levels of government and in the for-profit and nonprofit sectors.

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receives more than \$110 million in competitive external funding every year to further explore and define the frontiers of land, sea and space.

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The stories are written by the staff of UNH Communications and Public Affairs. (https://www.unh.edu/cpa)

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