

# PRAMS Fact Sheet

Oklahoma Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System

## Unpaid Maternity Leave Among Oklahoma Mothers: 2012-2015

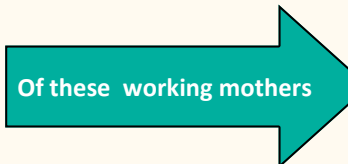
The Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) enacted in 1993 provides employees who meet specific eligibility requirements with up to 12 weeks of job-protected leave per year for certain family and medical reasons.<sup>1</sup> However, FMLA only guarantees unpaid leave. Currently, only four states (Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey, and California) provide paid family leave.<sup>2</sup> Oklahoma has no mandatory benefits law.



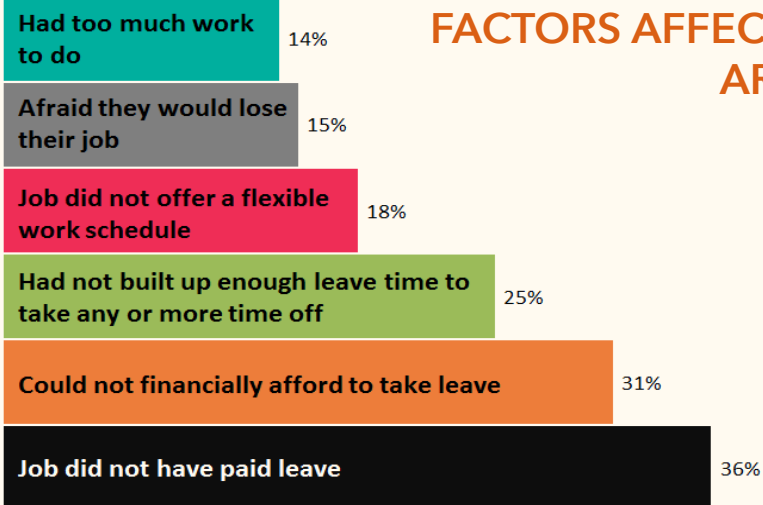
**67%**  
Mothers who worked during their most recent pregnancy



**56%**  
Mothers who had returned to work at the time of the survey



**61%**  
Used unpaid leave after their baby was born



### FACTORS AFFECTING MOTHERS' DECISIONS AROUND LEAVE



Among those who worked during pregnancy, Oklahoma mothers of ALL

- *Ages*
- *Races*
- *Ethnicities*
- *Marital Statuses*
- *Educational Levels*

were more likely to use unpaid leave than other leave types (such as paid leave or taking no leave at all) after their baby was born.

For more information about this topic or Oklahoma PRAMS (including methodology), visit [PRAMS.health.ok.gov](http://PRAMS.health.ok.gov) or email [PRAMS@health.ok.gov](mailto:PRAMS@health.ok.gov)

Funding was made possible by PRAMS, grant number 5U01DP006234, and by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau, Department of Health and Human Services, Maternal and Child Health Services Title V Block Grant, grant number is B04MC30635.

This publication was issued by the Oklahoma State Department of Health (OSDH), an equal opportunity employer and provider. A digital file has been deposited with the Publications Clearinghouse of the Oklahoma Department of Libraries in compliance with section 3-114 of Title 65 of the Oklahoma Statutes and is available for download at [www.documents.ok.gov](http://www.documents.ok.gov). | [www.health.ok.gov](http://www.health.ok.gov) | February 2019



As indicated by data from states with paid leave laws, benefits of paid leave include:<sup>3</sup>

- Higher rates & longer periods of breastfeeding
- Higher satisfaction with parents' ability to care for their children
- Reduction in occurrence & length of childhood illnesses
- Improvements in work productivity for employers
- Positive impacts on employee satisfaction & retention<sup>4</sup>

"Paid maternity leave would be great for moms!"  
-PRAMS mom

"I would like to see the state of Oklahoma push employers to offer paid leave for new mothers. I have to take unpaid leave to care for my child that was just released from the NICU. My family can't afford this." -PRAMS mom

1. U.S. Department of Labor. FMLA (Family & Medical Leave). Accessed 08/31/2018. Available at <https://www.dol.gov/general/topic/benefits-leave/fmla>  
 2. National Conference of State Legislators. Paid Family Leave Resources. Accessed 07/31/2018. Available at <http://www.ncsl.org/research/labor-and-employment/paid-family-leave-resources.aspx>  
 3. National Partnership for Women & Families. Accessed 08/29/2018. Available at <http://www.nationalpartnership.org/research-library/work-family/paid-leave/the-child-development-case-for-a-national-paid-family-and-medical-leave-insurance-program.pdf>  
 4. Appelbaum, E., Milkman, R. Leaves that Pay. 2011. Accessed 7/31/2018. Available at <http://cepr.net/documents/publications/paid-family-leave-1-2011.pdf>