

# Governor Carney Signs 12-Week Paid Parental Leave Into Law

## Policy to begin April 1, 2019

**DOVER, Del.** – Governor John Carney on Saturday signed [House Bill 3](#) into law surrounded by members of the General Assembly, educators and advocates. This legislation offers state workers 12 weeks of paid parental leave after the birth or adoption of a child under the age of six. With this legislation, Delaware becomes the sixth state in the nation to offer paid parental leave to public workers.

*“Today I was proud to stand beside state workers, members of the General Assembly and advocates to make this a reality for Delaware families,” said **Governor John Carney**. “Our state employees deserve to spend time with their families when their children are born. It builds strong bonds, and has great health advantages. This benefit will help us maintain and strengthen our workforce, attracting new employees. Thank you to everyone who helped Delaware lead on leave.”*

Full-time state workers, including educators, would be  eligible for 12 weeks of paid maternity or paternity leave after one year of employment. Paid parental leave will go into effect for Delaware workers on April 1, 2019.

“I have been committed to this issue for the past three years, and I am so excited to see this become a reality. Paid parental leave is going to be a game-changer for our state employees and our workforce,” said **Representative Debra Heffernan**. “The research continues to show that paid parental leave is an essential support system. It’s good for parents, good for kids and good for workplaces, promoting morale and

job security. I firmly believe that the earliest early childhood education is when children are babies – and they learn from their parents – so I am so happy to see Governor Carney sign House Bill 3 into law.”

“This bill is a big, big deal,” said **Senator Nicole Poore**. “As a mom of three, I know how important it is to have time at home with a newborn child. Besides the mountain of scientific evidence pointing to the importance of those first few months, I know first-hand that the emotional and physical benefits of having time to recover and be with family are immeasurable. Delaware families deserve that time, and it makes me incredibly proud to be part of the team of lawmakers that delivered that to state employees today.”

“The addition of a new child is a very special time in an employee’s life, and our state recognizes the great benefits for the child and parents resulting from paid parental leave,” said **Sandra Ross Johnson, Secretary of the Delaware Department of Human Resources**. “Paid parental leave also delivers a competitive edge for attracting, recruiting and retaining talented employees as they recognize that Delaware cares and values families.”

“We are thankful that the General Assembly passed House Bill 3 and that the Governor made it a priority and is signing it into law today,” said **Mike Matthews, President, Delaware State Education Association**. “This paid parental leave gives our educators and state workers the time at home needed to recover from child birth and to care for and bond with their newborns or newly adopted children. State employees will no longer need to choose between taking care of a new child and being able to put food on the table or paying the bills. And, while this legislation supports new parents it also helps in the recruitment and retention of educators and state workers.”

“House Bill 3 will give state employees the freedom to have families on their own schedule. It gives families the time to

bond with their newest member without the worry of financial stress that often comes with not having enough sick or annual leave,” said **Michael Begatto, Executive Director of Council 81 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees**. “House Bill 3 will help retain good employees and it is a win for the state and for state employees both.”

[Click here](#) for photos from the bill signing.

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