



Representing UW-Madison Faculty.
Strengthening Wisconsin.

Paid Family Leave a Top PROFS Priority

UW-Madison is well behind other universities when it comes to providing paid family leave. For example, nine of 10 of UW-Madison's Association of American Universities Data Exchange (AAUDE) peer universities do not require the use of sick leave for parental leave, as UW-Madison does. This lack of support is harmful to UW-Madison faculty and other employees, and it puts our university at competitive disadvantage when it comes to recruiting and retaining top talent.

The recent [UW-Madison Ad Hoc Working Group on Paid Leave](#) is an example of how shared governance effectively works to identify problems and propose solutions. The report's recommendations included:

- 1) UW-Madison should advocate at the federal and state levels for paid family leave for all employees in the nation and state, and the university should employ its expertise in this area as part of its advocacy;
- 2) UW-Madison should use the HR flexibility it was given by state government to create a paid parental leave benefit (i.e., allow employees to take parental leave without using sick leave) for six weeks of fully paid leave after a birth, adoption, or foster placement.

PROFS has been working to put these recommendations into action. Specifically, PROFS has been monitoring development of paid parental leave at UW-Madison and communicating with state policymakers on its support for paid leave.

Governor Tony Evers proposes strong paid family leave in his budget: When PROFS met with the Governor's staff to discuss the 2023-25 state budget, we made it clear that we support paid family leave for all employees, in both the public and private sectors. We also relayed that UW-Madison is proceeding with its own parental leave program, regardless of what happens in the budget. PROFS lobbyist Jack O'Meara recently discussed this with Governor Evers, who expressed support for UW-Madison creating its own paid parental leave.

PROFS was pleased to see that, in his 2023-25 budget proposal, Governor Evers proposed a plan that will provide both public and private sector employees (who work for employers with at least 50 employees), with 12 weeks of paid family leave. Unfortunately, Republican legislative leaders, who control the Legislature, have indicated that the proposal will not survive legislative review this year. Nevertheless, PROFS will continue to support efforts to provide paid family leave and will continue to use faculty expertise to make the case for such changes.

Income Continuation is also an important option: The state's Income Continuation Insurance (ICI) is another important way for faculty and other university employees to cover expenses in times of need. PROFS is closely monitoring proposals to modernize ICI and make it more attractive to employees, and is tapping into faculty expertise on the topic.

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