



SSN Scholars Report Findings on Paid Family Leave from Research Supported by the U.S. Department of Labor

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The Women's Bureau of the U.S. Department of Labor supports research and analyses to inform the development and implementation of state-level programs for paid family and medical leave. Two out of four grants were won by teams of scholars with SSN members, and published reports detail their new findings.

In Massachusetts, Professors Randy Albelda and Alan Clayton-Matthews developed microsimulation models to analyze alternative approaches to providing paid leave. Full results are detailed in ["It's About Time: Costs and Coverage of Paid Family and Medical Leave in Massachusetts"](#) and summarized in a new SSN brief about ["Why Massachusetts Can Afford to Require Paid Family and Medical Leave for All Workers."](#) Other states and municipalities are using these microsimulations to develop their own paid leave programs. And the findings from Albelda and Clayton-Matthews have helped spur this policy forward in Massachusetts.

Jane Waldfogel and Christopher Ruhm have researched the impact of various state-level paid leave programs. In 2013 they examined the impact of California's program on lengths of leaves taken by new mothers, with the results summarized in Ruhm's new SSN brief, ["What Americans Can Learn from California About the Advantages of Paid Parental Leave."](#) Based on research spurred by the Department of Labor, Ruhm and Waldfogel authored a report on ["Assessing Rhode Island's Temporary Caregiver Insurance Act: Insights from a Survey of Employers."](#) They examined the views of Rhode Island employers about paid leave one year after a temporary measure came into effect and found that the majority of those interviewed supported the new law. This research also revealed that the economic bottom lines of Rhode Island employers saw little impact, based on comparative information about small and medium-sized businesses in the food services and manufacturing sectors in neighboring states.

Labor economist [Randy Albelda](#) of the University of Massachusetts Boston studies a broad range of economic policies affecting women and families. She is an expert on the economic situation of women in the United States and Massachusetts, with particular attention to single mothers and low-income families. Her work explores the uneasy tensions between mothering and low-wage work and the effects of government and employer benefits on low wage workers. Read more about Albelda's work in the *Boston Globe* article, ["Paid Leave Would Cost \\$159 per Worker, UMass Report Finds"](#)

[Alan Clayton-Matthews](#) of Northeastern University is an expert on labor market assessment, state and local finance, urban economic development, urban fiscal policy, and economic policy evaluation. He serves as the Director of the New England Economic Project, a group of economists and managers from academia, business, and government who study and forecast developments for the economy of New England.

The research of [Jane Waldfogel](#) from Columbia University focuses on the impact of public policy on child and family well-being. She studies a range of topics including the measurement of poverty, food insecurity, work-family policies, the effects of the Great Recession on parents and children, and inequality in school readiness and school achievement, both within the United States and across countries. See her recent report on "[The Effects of California's Paid Family Leave Program on Mothers' Leave-Taking and Subsequent Labor Market Outcomes](#)" (with Christopher J. Ruhm) in the *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*.

[Christopher Ruhm](#) of the University of Virginia looks at the role of government policies in helping parents with young children balance the competing needs of work and family life, and examines various health trends – including the growth and sources of drug poisoning deaths in the United States, the rise in obesity and relationship between macroeconomic conditions and health. See his recent article on "[Parental Leave and Child Health](#)" in the *Journal of Health Economics*.

More from SSN Members on Paid Family and Medical Leave:

[Marion Johnson](#), "[Paid Leave Would Pay Off for North Carolina](#)," *Raleigh News & Observer*, November 13, 2015.

[Heather Boushey](#), "[What National Family and Medical Leave Insurance Can Do for Families and the American Economy](#)," SSN Basic Facts Brief, March 2014.

[Eileen Appelbaum](#) and Sharon Learner, "[Business as Usual: New Jersey Employers' Experiences with Family Leave Insurance](#)," Center for Economic and Policy Research, June 2014.

[Ruth Milkman](#) and Eileen Appelbaum, "[Leaves That Pay: Employer and Worker Experiences with Paid Family Leave in California](#)," Center for Economic and Policy Research, January 2011.

Heather Boushey and Joan C. Williams, "[The Three Faces of Work-Family Conflict](#)," Center for American Progress, January 2010.

Ruth Milkman and Eileen Appelbaum, "[Achieving a Workable Balance: New Jersey Employer's Experiences Managing Employee Leaves and Turnover](#)," Center for Women and Work, Rutgers University, 2006.

