

Workplace policies family and work essay examples

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The twentieth century has introduced new and complex challenges for the working American. Today, businesses and organizations have placed so much value on the time that employees spend in the work place to the point that remuneration is pegged on such working hours. The American worker is continuously working with the hope of making more pay at the end of the year. However, amidst all the chaos in increased concerns of working hours is the American family. The American family is accustomed to working parents who are never there for a baseball game or even the first few days of the lives of their children. The result is discordant families that do not find time bond and enjoy family life. However, this problem has been blamed on several policies that do not allow parents to take some time off and be with their families. Instead these policies have left this as a prerogative of the employers to decide on how to find family leave within their employment packages. Formulation of such labor laws have also been left to the states and thus each state has taken time to develop their own policies. The weaknesses in these polices have been identified to be failure to guarantee pay during the leave . This paper evaluates a federal policy, the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993 and the goals that the act was intended to achieve. The research will further evaluate reasons why this policy has not been a success in the workplace. Finally, the paper will evaluate a more recent policy that intends to improve the family-work relation in the workplace.

Federal Policy

In 1993, the federal government sought to introduce a police that would help provide for family time for the American employee. This policy would allow

workers to spend time with their families during critical periods such as the birth of a new born or when a member of the family is seriously ill. The Act was referred to as the Family and Medical Leave Act. This act had two facets to it, the first part of the act stipulated that employers are to grant employees up to twelve weeks of leave to attend to a family obligation such as getting a new born to attending to a seriously ill family member. Secondly, the act allowed an employee up to twelve weeks to recover from own illness or to join the armed forces.

The leave however had some prerequisite requirements for someone to qualify for the benefit. Firstly, the employee must have served in the company for at least 1, 250 working hours or 12 months prior to the leave. Secondly, the grounds for such a medical leave must be backed by qualified medical reasons (Strecker, 24).

The biggest problem associated with the Act was that the leave was an unpaid leave. In essence, the employee would wind up going to 12 weeks without any remuneration according to the act. To most American workers, going for about three months without pay is not just plausible as there are several obligations that cannot be wished away. Additionally, there were other reasons that implied that not all workers qualified for the leave. For these reason, most of the workers opted not to take the leave and instead continue working for the employers.

New Policies

Several states, through their legislative arms have appreciated the problems of excessive working hours at the expense of family time. Additionally, in view of the federal policy on family leave, the weaknesses in this policy were reviewed in order to adopt new policy. For this reason, states such as New York, Washington, New Jersey and California have taken measures to introduce new policies that assure the employees of pay during family leave. It was the state of California that took bold measures towards implementing a paid leave policy. The policy, referred to as Paid Family Leave (PFL), was the country's first ever all-inclusive policy that allowed both spouses paid leaves (Appelbaum and Milkman, 2).

Provisions of the policy assure that eligible employees could take up to six weeks of paid family leave. The payment would be about 55% of weekly remunerations and not exceeding \$987 dollars per week . This policy was formulated after a long-time survey that was conducted by the state on the average pay and the impacts of such family leave for both parents. The PFL program has paved way for other states to review their labor laws and provide comprehensive family leaves.

Such a landmark program has been formulated in New Jersey and in referred to as the Family Leave Insurance. Here also, partial wage is assured for employees who are eligible for the leave. Other states are in the process of formulating similar laws and this has since taken center stage in labor laws reforms. These reforms have been applauded as they seek to allow workers have longer family time with adequate job security.

Works Cited

Appelbaum, Eileen and Ruth Milkman. Leaves That Pay: Employer and Worker Experiences with Paid Family Leave in California,. January 2011. 18 May 2012 .

Strecker, David E. Labor Law: A Basic Guide to the National Labor Relations Act. CRC Press, 2011.