



Kentucky Voices for Health received 74 completed surveys and responses to questions about the recently-proposed regulations regarding Paid Parental Leave policies. We would like to submit all of those responses as comments on proposed policies, as well.

- 98.6% of respondents and commenters indicated that they supported a paid parental leave policy.
- 1.4% of respondents were unsure about supporting a paid parental leave policy
- Additionally, 10.8% of respondents commented that they supported the policy, but were not in favor of restricting it to 6 weeks (suggesting 8 or 12 weeks as an alternative) or were not in favor of restricting the use of paid parental leave to once every 10 years.

With regard to the relationship of the responders to state employment, they indicated the following associations:

- 24.3% of commenters and responders were current state employees
- 17.6% were former state employees
- 29.7% of respondents indicated someone in their family was a current state employee
- 31.1% regularly work with state employees
- 10.8% regularly access benefits and their personal needs are met by speaking to state employees
- 41.9% of respondents indicated that state government employment was important to their community
- 20.3% of respondents and commenters indicated they had no personal connection to state employees, but they themselves, or someone in their family was a working parent.
- 1.4% of respondents indicated that they had worked with state employees, were a contractor for a state department, had a quasi government association, or had no association with state government and were not a parent themselves.

In response to the question: *“Would you support MORE than 6-weeks of paid parental leave for state employees? Please feel free to share your reasoning, whether your answer is yes, no, or if you are unsure at this time,”* 70 commenters responded in the following ways:

“Absolutely..” (McCracken Co)

“Yes - as long as the 10 year restriction is removed.” (Franklin Co)

“Yes.” (Jefferson Co)

“Yes.” (Bullitt Co)

“Yes, of course. Decades of paid parental leave studies from around the globe demonstrate time and again the importance of generous paid parental leave policies that support the health of infants and

mothers, promote retention and recruitment of better employees, and make people's lives better, healthier, and more resilient while improving our economy." **(Fayette Co)**

"Yes. Without the 10-year restriction." **(Jefferson Co)**

"Yes, I would support more time. 6 weeks is not enough time for a parent to recover after the birth of a child and return to work. In addition to the parent's recovery, most infants do not receive vaccinations until 2 months of age, and requiring parents to send them to daycare at 6 weeks could put their health in danger.." **(Jefferson Co)**

"six weeks is better than nothing, but it is not sufficient to meet postnatal needs of both children and parents" **(Hopkins Co)**

"Absolutely! I support more than six weeks. That's the bare minimum for the human body to become healthy enough to function properly without restriction and recovery from the trauma of parenthood. Whether birthing a child or adopting. New parents deserve time to bond. New babies and adopted children deserve time to bond. The whole family needs time to be together." **(Jefferson Co)**

"Yes for me and my family 6 weeks wasn't enough time off with an addition to our family. My mind and body both needed more time to return to somewhat normal function. While I was unable to work I only could use what was left of my paid time off. My paid time off only lasted a week between common everyday necessities for my baby and me.." **(Jefferson Co)**

"Yes. As a parent to two children, I deeply understand the vital "fourth trimester" lasting 3 months for new children, where attachment, healing, and new routines are established. I strongly believe that all Americans should have the option to receive at least 3 months of paid leave; I think that 3 months is a very conservative time period in relation to best practices established globally." **(Jefferson Co)**

"Yes." **(Jefferson Co)**

"Yes, longer terms across the board, 12 weeks is minimum. It takes a woman 2 years physically to heal from a full-term delivery. We had 3 kids in 6 years. I appreciate limits, but our leave policies in this country are woefully lacking." **(Jefferson Co)**

"12 weeks making sure their insurance is in place. It should be more that every 10 years as most people have their babies closer together than that.." **(Henry Co)**

"YES! If a mother has a c-section, they are supposed to be off for 8 weeks! Not only that, but babies NEED their parents close by at all times during the first few months of their life. It's crucial to their development and needs." **(Carroll Co)**

"Yes!" **(Anderson Co)**

"Federal employees currently receive twelve weeks of paid parental leave, and several Kentucky school districts have adopted paid parental leave. The need for such policies is evident, and current benefits are not restricted to once every ten years for obvious reasons." **(Madison Co)**

"Yes." **(LaRue Co)**

"Yes." **(Anderson Co)**

“Yes.” (Franklin Co)

“Yes, there can often be further complications or difficulties with giving birth and adoption. 6 weeks should be considered the bare minimum..” (Nelson Co)

“Absolutely. It should be 12 weeks at the least, though most thriving countries have paid for at least a year..” (Warren Co)

“YES as a mother and wife if a KY state employee I support 12 weeks guaranteed paid new parent leave for both women and men.” (Fayette Co)

“Yes, at minimum 12 weeks of paid parental leave to match Federal policy..” (Madison Co)

“Yes. It is crucial to the wellbeing of the child who becomes the future of the workforce.” (Jefferson Co)

“I agree wholeheartedly with a six week paid leave at a MINIMUM. I think this is related to our country and state's disrespect for young children and overall maternal health. The data speaks to our current neglect..” (Jefferson Co)

“Yes for Mothers - Maybe 8-12 for mothers, 3-6 for fathers is plenty.” (Hardin Co)

“I would support MORE than 6 weeks of paid parental leave for state employees and frankly, for ALL employees. Parents deserve to be able to care for their children without worrying that they won't have enough money to pay rent or buy food. Six weeks is the absolute bare minimum. 8-12 would be reasonable. 12-16 would be even better. Look at what other countries are doing. Wouldn't it be great if parents could bond with their children, recover from labor and delivery, breastfeed, and nurture the development of their children?” (Jefferson Co)

“I think 6 weeks is a reasonable amount of time to offer a new parent paid leave and then they could decide if they wanted to take more time unpaid.” (Nelson Co)

“6 weeks is not enough time. For single parents, this potentially means daycare for an infant who has not had many immunizations required to protect them from infection in a space like daycare where so many children are exposed especially to respiratory and gastrointestinal illnesses. 12 weeks should be the minimum.” (Oldham Co)

“Yes absolutely. It's beyond fathomable that women are expected to come back to work before they are recovered from childbirth. 6 weeks is not long enough to sufficiently recover from an act that is considered the most painful health event. Even more painful than chest pain. 6 weeks is not close enough to recover from this astounding human event, not to mention learning how to care for and feed this new human they have thrust upon them. At least 12 weeks is needed and that is the absolute earliest women should be expected to go back to work.” (Jefferson Co)

“All parents deserve paid leave when there is a birth or a child or adoption placement. I am in HR and I feel very strongly about this.” (Jefferson Co)

“Yes, I would support 12 weeks of paid parental leave for state employees since postpartum recovery can take 3 months or more.” (Oldham Co)

“Life events sometimes take longer and members of our state deserve time to recuperate while not

worrying about the risk of losing their job. We live in such advanced times that we should have guardrails in place to protect the employee.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“Yes, I would support more than 6 weeks of paid parental leave each time a worker welcomes a child into the family.” **(Fayette Co)**

“Yes, I would support it. We are the wealthiest country in the world, and it should be available to all workers, including state employees. At minimum, 3 months should be available. A child’s early days are so critical, and the lack of leave hurts kids and parents both.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“12 weeks minimum is a global standard. I’ve always held a lot of shame about the lack of leave policy for the state. I worked in California for my first birth 7 years ago and myself and my husband were given sufficient paid leave by both our employers and through short term disability. My 4yo son and my 2yo son were both born when I was a state employee (law enforcement) and if not for the kindness of my colleagues sick leave donations I would have been forced to return to work a few short weeks after theirs births and as a breastfeeding mother especially we needed that bonding time to allow us to continue to nurse through age 1 which was out family’s hope.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“10 year restriction is unreasonable. Leave should be available for all family member additions” **(Jefferson Co)**

“Yes, 12 weeks should be the minimum. That is how long it takes to recover from a C-section and bond with my children.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“Pertaining to parental leave, 8 weeks at minimum should be provided when considering c-section delivery recovery time.” **(Pulaski Co)**

“Implementing Paid Parental Leave for state employees in Kentucky is a significant step towards supporting families and creating a more inclusive workplace. It acknowledges the importance of balancing work and family responsibilities, promoting employee well-being, and fostering a supportive environment. This policy not only benefits employees but also reflects a commitment to progressive workplace practices that prioritize both productivity and compassion.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“Yes I would definitely support more than 6 weeks of paid parental leave! Strong families are what makes KY work!” **(Jefferson Co)**

“6 weeks is a good and familiar number for leave.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“Yes; I am grateful for the 6 weeks of leave, but support extending that to the full 12 weeks or 6 weeks every 5 years. I understand compromise and working within financial constraints is necessary .” **(Pulaski Co)**

“6 weeks paid would allow for a recovering mother to heal and bond with her baby. Currently, I received 2 weeks paid at my place of employment, and was expected to use my sick and vacation days with the help of FMLA. Luckily I had days saved, however if I did not, those two weeks would have covered one week of being in the hospital since my baby went to the NICU and one week at home. During those two weeks, my baby and I were actively recovering and learning how to feed and care for my baby. Families need more time. Why is it being restricted to once every 10 years? Most families do not have 10 year age gaps between their children.” **(Madison Co)**

“Yes” (Madison Co)

“Yes- case by case as family presents. Meaning if medically fragile/caretakers of special needs, emotional grief support for loss etc.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“To support the health of children and families, I strongly support more than six weeks of paid leave, and NO restrictions on how often it can be taken. More support for parents and children would reduce Kentucky's high foster care rate. Care for infants is a 24-hour-a-day demand, both rewarding and exhausting, and it is in the best interests of the state, as well as families, to make it possible for parents to provide that care.” **(Warren Co)**

“I support more than 6 weeks of paid leave. 12 weeks would be better and 6 months would be best. Transitioning to the care of a newborn and then establishing support systems to allow for return to work is work! The more we can support others in this role, and enable them to still be part of our community and government, the more representative our government will be of the people!” **(Jefferson Co)**

“Yes, I support paid parental leave benefits without a limit on how often they are used, and I think 12 weeks is a reasonable amount of time.” **(Fayette Co)**

“A recovery from a c-section birth is typically 8 weeks, so it would help to have that extra two weeks available to employees.” **(Fayette Co)**

“YES; Extending FMLA leave from 6 weeks to 8 weeks provides employees with crucial additional time for recovery, bonding, and caregiving, leading to better health outcomes, reduced stress, and improved work-life balance. For new parents, those recovering from medical procedures, or caregivers, two extra weeks can significantly enhance physical and mental well-being, reducing the risk of complications and burnout. From an employer's perspective, a slightly longer leave can improve retention, job satisfaction, and overall productivity by allowing employees to return to work healthier and more prepared.” **(Bracken Co)**

“I would support 12 weeks. In the private sector, we have short-term disability to help cover the financial cost during those 12 weeks of FMLA. State employees should have an option to extend their parental leave past 6 weeks with pay.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“Yes - anyone that has had a newborn is aware that 6 weeks time off is a minimum time for physical recovery from childbirth. When I gave birth it took 6 weeks for me to stop bleeding every time I used the bathroom or to walk without pain. Performing my job, as a risk manager at an inpatient psychiatric hospital, for 40 hours a week plus on-call time, before 6 weeks would have been emotionally exhausting, physically painful and mentally unbearable. My son also had colic and did not sleep for more than an hour at a time for 11.5 weeks. These are not unusual circumstances. Giving birth to a child, and adding a child to a family, is a life-altering experience for the entire hospital requiring much more than an abysmal 6 weeks of paid time off.” **(Fayette Co)**

“Yes.” (McCracken Co)

“I would support.” (Jefferson Co)

“Yes, it takes a long time to adjust to a new baby. Moms who suffer postpartum depression depend on

their spouse to help them during this new transition. C-section moms or those with traumatic births need extra recovery time. Sleep deprivation is serious and impacts your safety with driving to and from work, and hinders your ability to think clearly at work.” **(Nelson Co)**

“Yes.” **(McCracken Co)**

“Yes.” **(Lawrence Co)**

“YES! Paid parental leave is good for families and employers. Parents may be more apt to just quit their job with no benefits to returning. More bonding time with mom & dad is good for every baby. When I had my first child, I had no leave and only took 2 weeks of work. It was devastating to my family. It could also result in more successful and longer breastfeeding rates.” **(Pike Co)**

“A woman's body is barely recovered at 6 weeks. Breastfeeding is best, and breastfeeding is much easier when not working as well. Daycares are costly and difficult to access. Daycare exposes illness to small babies that aren't able to get all vaccines. 6 weeks is a bare minimum necessary for parental leave. If Kentucky wants babies to be born, as we claim, we need to make that a financially sound decision for potential parents to make.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“I absolutely support more than 6 weeks of paid leave. As a woman whose daughter was born via C-section, and who experienced some complications from that, it took me longer than the 8 weeks that is normal to recover from that procedure. I would have needed longer than 6 weeks of paid leave. The parent-child relationship is one of the most vital in our society, and we should be treating it as such.” **(Warren Co)**

“Yes. 12 weeks should be the minimum.” **(Fayette Co)**

“Yes, 6 weeks is the minimum we should cover for paid parental leave. The physical toll a new child takes on both parents (particularly the mother) coupled with the essential bonding of those early weeks is vital to healthy Kentucky families. A plethora of research supports the benefits of paid leave for families and children.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“Yes, Research shows that having both parents in the home helps support breastfeeding, development of the child. This can help support the person who recently have given birth which can help decrease mental health issues including suicides. Many other developed countries have paid parental leave and it has show increased satisfaction for the workers.” **(Oldham Co)**

“Yes, I would support this wholeheartedly. Other countries have already come to the realization that not only is this bonding time important for the parents, but having a newborn at home is not a vacation. There is so much stress that comes along with this and expecting a new mother to come back to work based on not having enough time or that short amount of time is up, is absurd. This is what causes postpartum depression. I was so depressed having to come back to work after having my child. This is not supporting the health of state employees. Additional paid leave would be a step in the right direction in supporting both physical and mental needs of employees.” **(Fayette Co)**

“Yes, absolutely, parents deserve appropriate time to bond with their child and not have to worry about if the bills will be paid or having to return back to work before they are fully recovered.” **(Madison Co)**

“Yes, I think 12 weeks of parental leave is ideal, but I think 8 weeks would be acceptable as well.”

(Marshall Co)

“YES I support state employees (and let’s be honest, any employee in the USA) receiving more than 6 weeks of fully paid parental leave. Moms, dads, and babies are still bonding, recovering, and adjusting to their new lives during this time period. All families should have access to resources to comfortably take more than 6 months off work with full pay included.” **(Campbell Co)**

In response to the question, “*This regulation covers 6-weeks of paid leave once every ten (10) years of a state employee’s tenure for circumstances such as having a stroke or heart attack, being in a bad accident, or facing urgent caregiving demands possibly for a child, spouse or parent. Do you support 6-weeks of paid leave for these sorts of medical necessities?*”, 73 commenters responded in these ways:

- 94.5% of the respondents supported paid leave for medical necessities.
- 2.7% were unsure of their support
- 1.4% did not support paid leave for medical emergencies such as those listed.
- 1 respondent commented that the leave should be allowed every 5 years, rather than 10
- 5 other commenters supported paid leave for medical emergencies, but did not think there should be a restriction on how often it is used.
- Additionally, one commenter from Warren County wrote the following: “Medical Necessity comments: Since I don’t see a place to comment on the Medical Necessity clause for “facing urgent caregiving demands possibly for a child, spouse or parent,” I will add that over the past ten years, my elderly parents had multiple serious medical emergencies that required my presence, coordination of medical care and rehabilitation, and support that only a family member can provide. Besides the care and comfort of loved ones, family support can be absolutely essential: for instance, my father’s traumatic brain injury so disoriented him that he would have likely ended up in an institution had I not spent extensive time reorienting him, as a familiar person who understood him and could interpret his behavior and efforts to communicate; in my mother’s case, I had to cook and bring meals because her rehab facility could not accommodate her dietary restrictions. The personal and professional strain on me as I supported them while working full time was absolutely enormous. My employer recently adopted a paid FMLA policy; without it, I don’t know what I would have done, faced with either losing crucial income or abandoning my parents (well, I would have chosen my parents, but the costs would have been devastating to my husband and child).”
- Another Warren County commenter stated, “Yes, I see absolutely no need for a 10-year restriction. Perhaps families can plan to have their children 10 years apart--it seems unreasonable, but perhaps it could be done--but they cannot plan medical emergencies that might require paid leave. I was 39 when my child was born, and in the 10 years since, I have needed 2 major surgeries, and had a family member suffer a stroke and needed care. All of these life events should be eligible for paid leave, not just one of them.”
- A Fayette County resident said, “Yes, I support leave but not the ten year cap. I also believe that up to 12 weeks is doable for the state.”
- And the following comment from Oldham County: “I do not support the only use every 10 years because so much can happen with health in that span of time. We should give 6 weeks paid leave on an individual basis on what is going on with the person”

In response to the question, “Have you or someone you know welcomed child(ren) through birth, adoption or foster placement while also working? If known, please share whether at the time of need if you/they had access to paid parental leave, and how either having paid leave or NOT having paid leave impacted the overall experience,” 70 commenters answered in the following ways:

“Yes. Nearly everyone I know who is a parent also has a full time job with limited access to paid leave. The stress of having to navigate finances and work "obligations" negatively impacts the bonding and healing experience families should be enjoying.” **(McCracken Co)**

“No.” **(Franklin Co)**

“Yes, she got 12 weeks paid leave, she is salaried.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“Yes..” **(Bullitt Co)**

“Yes, I’ve known many parents who were working. There is a huge difference in the ability to care and bond with a new child, maintain economic security, and stay on-course in a career between those with paid leave and those struggling mightily without it..” **(Fayette Co)**

“I had two children without paid leave. I was only allowed FMLA to secure my job and PTO. We were constantly stressed about money while I was on leave. And then stressed about health when I returned to work because I had exhausted it. We cannot pretend to be for families, but not actually support them..” **(Jefferson Co)**

“I recently had a child while working and had access to paid parental leave and paid FMLA. I was able to spend as much time as I needed bonding with my new baby and adjusting to my new normal before returning to work, without concern about providing for my family, as I still had access to my salary.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“Yes. ” **(Hopkins Co)**

“Yes, I knew someone who adopted. And no they did not have paid leave. They did however have paid support and benefits for adoption which offset a huge amount of financial burden and stress. Either way, building a family is a great responsibility and requires a strong commitment from all involved..” **(Jefferson Co)**

“I have birthed 2 children and neither time did I have access to paid parental leave. I had the normal leave for 6 weeks and had to go right back to work to catch up on bills from missing work for 6 weeks. When I birthed my other child, I could only use what was left of my PTO but that barely lasted a week.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“I have birthed two children and did not have access to paid parental leave. I had to use up all of my sick and vacation time to have income while off with my children. The remainder of the year with each birth, I later had to take unpaid days off when my child was sick and when their daycare was unexpectedly closed due to weather events..” **(Jefferson Co)**

“Yes.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“I did have paid leave for about a month when our last child was born. I did not have it when other other children were born. Having paid time was greatly helpful as when I didn’t have it, we had to get on

government aid programs.” **(Calloway Co)**

“I was forced back into the workforce significantly sooner than I should have been. As the primary financial provider for our family at the time, I was asked to be in Chicago when our second son was 8 weeks old for a sales meeting to keep my job. The travel requirements following were also demanding and when I asked for a demotion and 40,000 pay cut, they were ready to fire me. It was ludicrous.”

(Jefferson Co)

“Yes and at that time one went without pay if no sick or vacation days were built up. I was on the lower end of wages and that caused me not to have a second baby.” **(Henry Co)**

“Yes. Several people I know have had children who work for the state and did not have access to paid parental leave. It definitely impacted their experience, and a lot of people I know did not return to work because of it.” **(Carroll Co)**

“Yes. I did not have paid leave. I used 6 weeks of accrued time off and went 6 weeks unpaid. My husband took 6 weeks off, using his own accrued time with state government.” **(Anderson Co)**

“I have known many people who had children while working. Those who had access to paid parental leave were much more likely to be able to keep and be successful in their employment.” **(Madison Co)**

“Yes.” **(LaRue Co)**

“Yes.” **(Anderson Co)**

“Yes, I would have benefitted from paid leave.” **(Franklin Co)**

“Yes.” **(Nelson Co)**

“I do, and they had unpaid leave, but I think the same amount of paid leave should work in this case. They are acclimating a new child in their family.” **(Warren Co)**

“I have given birth.” **(Fayette Co)**

“Yes, I have as well as my daughter is pregnant and is working as a counselor. She has zero paid parental leave and only unpaid FMLA which causes financial issues.” **(Madison Co)**

“I have three children. I received 12 weeks paid leave with my third child only, in 2023. I have had no leave for the other two children.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“Yes. I am a foster parent through the Home of the Innocents and adopted one of my foster children in November 2023. There was no paid leave available and it would've been nice to at least be able to take the day off for the adoption itself without my husband and I having to use our personal days.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“I have welcomed children to my family through both birth and adoption. In all four experiences I had to "charge" my parental leave, as in MasterCard! I did not have the benefit of paid leave. It was definitely a hardship for our family. Worth it? Yes! But given the chance for paid leave, I would have been able to extend my leave to a much more reasonable length for bonding and self-care.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“Yes. This person had no paid leave, and did not work at a job that allowed sick time. As a result, this person had to return to work after the 6-week period. Breastfeeding (or pumping to continue) is almost impossible in certain job sites so that was ceased. And at 6 weeks, a woman's body is barely healed from labor and delivery, definitely not ready to return to work full-time.” **(Hardin Co)**

“Yes. I have given birth to two children while working a demanding full time job. I had only 5 weeks of paid leave with my son. Returning to work when he was 5 weeks old was traumatic for both of us. I was not fully healed from a very difficult delivery (26 hour labor, 10+ lb baby, 3rd degree tears, infection during delivery with fever) and my son was not ready to be parted from me. I cried every day on the way to work. My son was not feeding well and I had to switch from breastfeeding to formula because I couldn't feed him, sleep, and work at the same time. It was pretty miserable. With my daughter, I had 10 weeks of paid leave. It was SO MUCH better for her, for me, and for our whole family. In fact, it was better for my job, as well. I could focus on working. I wasn't exhausted all the time. By the time I came back to work, my daughter was on a good sleeping and feeding schedule - I nursed her for 15 months and she slept for 5-6 hour stretches. I was fully healed and feeling good. The additional leave made a huge difference across the board..” **(Jefferson Co)**

“Yes. I did not have access to paid leave when my children were born, so I understand the hardship of trying to make ends meet without a paycheck during this period. It puts pressure on new parents to return to work sooner than they should have to instead of caring for and bonding with their child(ren). Not having paid leave also created a situation of having more debt when returning to work and feelings of never getting out of debt. New parents don't need that extra stress.” **(Nelson Co)**

“When my children were born, I had access to short term disability which covered less than 50% of my salary during my leave. It created a financial hardship that was complicated further by my having twins. It was additional stress that would have been unnecessary and would have given me more time to focus on healing from surgery and settling in with my newborns. Instead, a lot of time was spent providing the requisite paperwork and other healthcare documentation the insurance company needed because my initial claim was denied.” **(Oldham Co)**

“Yes. I had to fight tooth and nail to get 12 weeks in my job after the birth of my second child. The fear of that clouded the weeks leading up to my labor and birth leading to unnecessary stress and anxiety..” **(Jefferson Co)**

“Yes. I have worked for much larger corporations that I am at now, and there was equal paid leave, given by the employer, to ALL parents. My smaller org now does not. I am extremely against unpaid leave. We are the only first world country that does not offer this for all, and it is repulsive.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“Yes, many nurses I know have not had any paid parental leave when welcoming in new children to their families.” **(Oldham Co)**

“I had a child while not receiving paid leave. I worked part time in a necessary space for our neighbors. I was okay because my husband is paid well, but if I had been reliant on any person with a lower paid job, we would have struggled. Bonding with my baby was important, but we also had zero family and friends step in to help us during those crucial months. My son had colic and never slept for more than a couple hours at a time until we were able to get to the bottom of the cause. Babies and transitions take time. I would not have been a good employee in my first two months of motherhood, but I'm a

super employee now and investing in employees is always worth it. Employees who have roots in their community are more likely to stay employed. They're happier at work. They are mentally more healthy in the long run. Paid leave is a worthwhile investment.” **(Fayette Co)**

“Yes and it was a hardship on our relationship while trying to raise a new baby under the strain of working and parenting a newborn who needs around the clock care with no family support.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“My partner and I have no children. We have friends with children, and all of them are lucky enough to have the financial capacity to have one parent full time at home or have one of them take unpaid work leave. Not everyone is so lucky.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“We did not have leave but I was able to take 12 weeks with both children due to the generosity of coworkers. A coworker welcomed a newborn infant through foster care and did not have any allotted time to take off and was juggling working and adjusting to suddenly having your world turned upside down because he had no other choice.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“Most family/friends/citizens have experienced family member additions & importance of paid parental need. Neither I nor other close associates have had access to paid parental leave.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“Yes I have had 2 children and received 0 paid leave which caused immense stress with my family.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“No.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“When my daughter was born, there was no paid leave. As an educator, I had to use my sick days, which were depleted. After returning to work, any time I became ill or my child became ill and I needed to stay home, I went without pay and it was definitely a financial hardship, since I was the main breadwinner in our family.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“Yes!” **(Warren Co)**

“Yes; it was 10 years ago, we took unpaid fmla leave but were fortunate to be able to make it financially...however times are very different now. I just recently found out I was pregnant, a couple weeks before Gov Beshear announced the 6 weeks of paid leave and was very stressed trying to figure out how to make it through maternity leave, financially. With banked hours from now until parental leave, I can save 6 weeks and with the 6 weeks Gov Beshear authorized, I will be able to take the 12 weeks to spend with my new baby.” **(Pulaski Co)**

“I have recently had a baby in January of 2025 and have also adopted a teenager through foster care. During my time of adopting, I did not take any paid leave or unpaid leave. However, that would have been helpful to have in order to promote bonding with our new family. I am currently using sick and vacation time to cover my 12 weeks home with my newborn. I worry that if my baby gets sick or needs additional medical attention, I will not have days to get him the care he needs in the future.” **(Madison Co)**

“Yes. More paid leave was necessary” **(Kenton Co)**

“Yes with no parental leave and overall experience was trauma inducing” **(Jefferson Co)**

“As a parent myself, I found the early bonding time with my child (which was supported by paid leave in another state prior to my moving to Kentucky) to be absolutely essential to the health, wellbeing, and bonding of myself and my baby. I would not trade that time for anything. I continue to see its positive impacts on my child long after I went back to work. We are the only industrialized nation that does not provide extensive paid parental leave, and I strongly support Kentucky moving toward best practices in this area. I have also seen the anguish and family disruption that occur without paid leave, in a number of people I know who have been in that situation. Is Kentucky pro-family or not? Pro-child or not? This seems to me to be the central question here. Are we in favor of separating parents and children at the most vulnerable period of a child's life? Do we want to see more children end up in foster care because parents simply cannot afford to take unpaid time off work or lose jobs, but also cannot adequately care for children while working full time? We also have a childcare availability crisis here in Kentucky, making it difficult or impossible for new parents to find care if they have to work..”

(Warren Co)

“I had access to parental leave when both of my children were born, within 3 years of each other. Having paid leave helped me save enough money to pay for daycare to return to work.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“I did not have paid leave when I was a state employee and had a child. I was a high-risk pregnancy and used my sick time during my pregnancy. That left me with 8 weeks of time off with no source of income.”

(Fayette Co)

“Yes, several colleagues have had children while working without access to FMLA, forcing them to rely on donated leave just to reach the four-week mark. I have personally donated my own leave because I understand the importance of healing and adjusting to a new family member. This lack of support created unnecessary stress as they worried about income or faced unpaid leave—concerns no parent should have. I also experienced these struggles firsthand; as a part-time employee, I had to take unpaid leave, while my husband received only three days of paid leave. With no nearby support, I managed a household, recovered from childbirth, and cared for a newborn entirely on my own. All parents, whether birthing or supporting, deserve at least six weeks of paid leave to maintain financial stability, improve health outcomes, and enhance workplace productivity and loyalty in organizations that truly value their employees.” **(Bracken Co)**

“I am a working mother who had private insurance and short-term disability, which covered the first 12 weeks after giving birth. There were some complications during the birthing process and having 12 weeks paid time off provided the time & resources needed to manage those complications. Having 12 weeks of paid leave also offered the opportunity to breast-feed which is Influential to the nutritional and growth of a newborn. I fully support 12 weeks of paid leave for our state employees.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“Everyone I know that has added a child to their family has done so without having paid leave. For me, this meant using "banked" time to cover my time off where I spent the time physically recovering from a traumatic childbirth, taking my son to numerous early appointments due to breastfeeding difficulty and to check on his broken clavicle (sustained at birth), and trying to get more than an hour of sleep at a time. I was not a well-functioning human as anyone should understand given sleep and rest are essential requirements of life. My friend just recently gave birth and also does not have paid time off. Her child was born with an extremely rare and aggressive cancer requiring months of chemotherapy and multiple surgeries from his first days of life. She has been back to work, juggling work (managing legal matters at an inpatient psychiatric hospital serving over 50 counties in Kentucky) and getting her son to his life-saving medical appointments. Because she has no paid time off, she has to do both. These are but

two examples of several that I could list. All of which have the same theme; someone gives birth to a child and then immediately begins juggling work responsibility with responsibilities of keeping another human, and themselves alive, with great difficulty because we do not have paid parental leave in this state. This is of no surprise considering our country as a whole has no requirement for employers to offer paid maternity leave or parental leave; something that only SEVEN other countries in the world can say. The United States needs to do better and Kentucky can make a point by setting that example for the rest of our nation. Additionally, I have had six other pregnancies. Three ended before week 8 and two ended at 21 weeks. I did not receive paid time off for any of these losses. This meant that aside from the time I took unpaid time off to recover from my 2nd 2nd-trimester loss I was returning to work bleeding heavily or recovering from surgery. The toll this took on my mental health is indescribable.” **(Fayette Co)**

“Yes I’ve worked my entire first pregnancy, I didn’t have paid leave as a housekeeper for a hotel but it would’ve been very nice to have to support me and my child as a single mom.” **(McCracken Co)**

“Yes.” **(Laurel Co)**

“YES. no paid leave at all. got evicted. Was homeless and house hopping was desperate to come back to work but doctors didn’t approve due to the healing process.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“Yes, I had 10 weeks off and my husband had no time off. He took 2 weeks unpaid leave causing us to run up credit card debt. Both parents have a new baby, not just moms. Dads need time off as well to help their family.” **(Nelson Co)**

“They did not.” **(McCracken Co)**

“No.” **(Lawrence Co)**

“Yes. As an employee of Pike County Schools, I did not have access to paid leave with either of my children. Breastfeeding was so much easier with my second child as I had a self-paid short-term disability plan.” **(Pike Co)**

“I had paid parental leave for 6 weeks and took another 6 weeks unpaid through FMLA. This was difficult on my family but we needed time to recover. Additionally, we could not get into a daycare even though we were on waiting lists very early in the pregnancy. Paid parental leave is essential. We need to support our KY parents.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“I was a graduate student when my daughter was born. I had to go back to classes 3 weeks after her birth, or risk my degree. My husband did not have paid parental leave. Our lives would have been MUCH better had that been an option for him. Men deserve paid parental leave as well, as they are parents, just like mothers. Not having the option of paid parental leave had serious financial and emotional repercussions for our family. (As did a lack of access to affordable child care, but while these two things are related, child care is not the topic of discussion here.)” **(Warren Co)**

“Yes, of course. Other than FMLA, there was no help.” **(Fayette Co)**

“Yes. Paid parental leave was essential to the family at the time of birth. It gave the mother time to physically recover from a traumatic birth and allowed her and her husband to acclimate to their child. When they went back to work they were more focused and effective than they would have been had they not had that vital time.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“Yes, I have had paid leave but going through short term disability and only had 65% of my check supplemented which was not enough and I had to go back to work sooner than I would have liked. My partner only had 1 week of unpaid leave and I needed more support due to not being able to sleep, struggling with breastfeeding and a lot of mental health struggles trying to figure out my new normal without the support that I needed.” **(Oldham Co)**

“Yes, I welcomed a new child through birth. I did not have access to paid parental leave and had to use all my accrued time to take off. This left me with no time to take off when I came back due to sickness or any other issues. We need paid parental leave for situations like this.” **(Fayette Co)**

“yes and they left The Cabinet due to the limited benefits being offered to assist in their transition to parenthood.” **(Madison Co)**

“Yes, they did not have access to paid leave. They struggled to pay bills and live off of one income for the 12 weeks she took to care for their newborn child.” **(Marshall Co)**

“YES. Most family and friends in my circle who welcomed children through birth had access to paid parental leave. I do not know how long their leave was, or if the pay was 100% for the entirety of their leave. That being said, I know they were able to enjoy more time bonding with their baby and taking care of their baby around the clock, without having to stress about going back to a full days' work and/or putting their baby in daycare at only a few weeks old. In addition, it's so important for both partners to have access to paid time off – those who I know where both parents receive this were able to share duties, help around the house (especially for the families with additional kids), and bond with their new baby together.” **(Campbell Co)**

In response to the question, “Please tell us how having access to at least 6-weeks of paid parental leave improved or would have improved and changed your life, the lives of your children, or the lives of someone you know during the immediate postpartum period. This prompt is not contingent on you or someone you know being or having been a state employee,” 62 respondents offered the following comments:

“When my son was born I couldn't afford to take off more than a week to heal and bond with my new baby. With paid parental leave, Kentuckians will experience improved mental and physical health and be better equipped to take care of their families, contribute to their communities, and be safe and productive at work.” **(McCracken Co)**

“I would not have went back to work as early as I did, but also only held a server position.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“Everyone deserves to be with their babies in such a critical time in their lives. Honestly they need more than six weeks every ten years.” **(Bullitt Co)**

“Imagine giving birth and your child has complications. They are in the NICU and you don't know what's going to happen. But, you have to get back to work. Your family depends on your paycheck (not to mention the health insurance paying for the NICU) but you will be fired if you don't go back. What would you do? And why in God's name are you put in such a terrible position by an archaic policy developed when two-parent households with a single working parent bringing in enough money to create financial

stability was the norm?" **(Fayette Co)**

"After my second child I suffered from postpartum depression. The hormonal changes and money worries made it a very dark period. I became so stressed that my milk dried up and we had to switch to formula which was another added expense. Having paid leave would have alleviated that stress and allowed me to focus on motherhood." **(Jefferson Co)**

"The ability to take as much parental leave as I needed without concern about losing my salary during that time meant everything. I was able to focus on healing -- both physical and mental -- and bonding with my new baby so that I could be fully present for my family. This also allowed me to return to work with no regret or resentment, and structures already in place to be as effective an employee as possible. If I had to return sooner, I may not have been as prepared and my work efficacy (and work satisfaction) would have been negatively impacted." **(Jefferson Co)**

"I missed most of my child's early development, as I was at work. Fortunately, his mother was available to care for him. I could not have afforded child care, not to mention the potential impact of not having a nurturing environment might have had on my son." **(Hopkins Co)**

"I know people who chose to have abortion because they couldn't take time off of work to have a child, and knew they would not have health care insurance after their child was delivered. Having reliable healthcare coverage and providing a safe protection from loss of job and finances makes all the difference for that sort of decision." **(Jefferson Co)**

"Access to paid leave would've allowed me to not stress so much about the everyday things. I wouldn't have had to stretch my budget even thinner than it already was. It would have allowed me to get the things that me and my baby needed with a little more ease." **(Jefferson Co)**

"The significant life changes during the first weeks of a child's life in a family are essential and foundational. This is not a time when parents should need to also be concerned with lost income, FMLA and insurance paperwork, and additional stressors. Structural support would have made me feel more supported in my community and less invisible as a mother." **(Jefferson Co)**

"If I had to work during those six weeks of newborn care, my work would have been horrible and the attachment needs of my child would have been neglected. Why start a life with the trauma of unmet or partially met attachment needs?" **(Calloway Co)**

"I may not have abandoned the 10 year career I'd spent building and would have been a bigger contributor to city, federal, and state income tax collection. But I believe I'm exactly where I'm supposed to be. Kentucky lost, Louisville gained, and now you're receiving my invaluable perspective." **(Jefferson Co)**

"I did not get it that many years ago, but have seen how it has helped others and would think that we would make it easier for parents and others having medical issues. An employee who is well cared for in most situations will become a dedicated employee. Also, we should take care of those working part time. More than likely they are taking care of other children, parents, not well themselves, or trying to go to college. The compensation could be within the ratio of number of hours working verses full-time. However, do something for them!" **(Henry Co)**

"I am currently expecting my first child. I am very stressed about saving up my vacation and sick time so that I can take off without worry, however, that will leave me with zero hours upon my return --

what if I get sick, or my child gets sick (which is bound to happen)? It's extremely disappointing that I have to be stressed about this during the excitement and joy of bringing a new baby in this world. It really makes me feel unvalued as a state employee." **(Carroll Co)**

"Not having to use time off would have been wonderful, as I eventually left the full time workforce because of needed childcare when my infant was unable to attend daycare. I resorted to part time WFH to be more flexible." **(Anderson Co)**

"Paid parental leave during the immediate postpartum period is crucial for the well-being of the whole family, not only financially, but physically and mentally. Healthy and financially secure employees are able to perform better in their jobs." **(Madison Co)**

"They didn't have it." **(LaRue Co)**

"Financially it would have made a huge difference to my entire family. Having a new baby is much more overwhelming when you know you will have no income until you are working again. I think if I had had that income I wouldn't have rushed back to work so soon which would have been better for both me and my newborn." **(Anderson Co)**

"I would have taken additional time with my 3 newborns." **(Franklin Co)**

"I have two children. I had to use all of my sick days staying home with them after I had a c-section for each. This means that I have ZERO sick days and each year, rejoice in the new ones I get. I try to only use my sick days on my children. I tend to go to school sick because I try to save what few days I have left for my kids. This HAS to change. It is also a very sexist law. My husband, who is in a leadership position and needs to miss less work, also only stayed home 2 weeks, so he didn't lose as many days as I did. This is a law against women who are bringing new brilliant lives into the world. Paid maternity leave and paternity leave has to happen." **(Warren Co)**

"My husband had 12 weeks of paid new parent leave in Massachusetts. Because I had lost my job in the pandemic, I had no paid leave. Now my husband is a KY state employee. Paid leave is essential to let the mother's body heal and enable the man to care for his child while she recovers and bonds with his child." **(Fayette Co)**

"There is an importance of a baby to be home with their parent(s) for bonding just as much for the parent(s). Research has shown that having this bonding time affects a child for the rest of their lives. Also, the paid leave will help with finances and lower stress." **(Madison Co)**

"The lack of sleep, pain from delivery, hormonal dysfunctions, body recovery after major surgery - is an absolute must for the workforce who is creating and birthing the future of this country. For the baby. adjustment to the life outside, eating, sleeping, bonding - is taken away when there is no leave - endangering the lives of the child and the family members, especially the mother." **(Jefferson Co)**

"When I had my first child, I took 9 weeks of unpaid leave. On top of medical bills, this created a financial hardship. It would've been nice to have 6 weeks of paid leave." **(Jefferson Co)**

"Having access to paid parental leave made a huge difference in my life. I work because I need the money. I am fortunate to have a mission-based job that I love but at the end of the day, the paycheck is the reason I come to work. I had to return to work after 5 weeks of paid leave with my first child because that is all the leave that I had. I had to come back to work to get paid. If I could have, I would

have taken more time - time that me and my son really needed. Having 10 weeks of paid leave with my daughter actually gave us time to bond, adjust to having two children, get on a good schedule, and prepare for returning to work. Without paid leave, I honestly do not know how I would have afforded to pay my mortgage, utilities, and other bills. And I was married! Paid parental leave is essential for children and families.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“This period of time is critical to support a parental and family bond. If I had had access to paid leave, it would have helped my spouse and I feel more relaxed and able to enjoy our children without worrying how much money we were putting on credit cards, etc. to meet the needs of our family.” **(Nelson Co)**

“It's difficult becoming a new parent, there are so many emotions, so much angst, and getting used to new schedules, it can be exhausting. All the while, the time spent with your children is always precious. I feel strongly that infants can feel the adult anxieties and this can negatively impact that very important first period of settling in. Having fewer financial anxieties and more uninterrupted (doing insurance paperwork was not what I expected to be doing while on maternity leave) time with my children would have created a less stressful environment.” **(Oldham Co)**

“12 weeks was a life changing experience for me. My child also was diagnosed with a life long disease within her first week of life and it took a long time for us to find a normal. I am so grateful I didn't have the additional stress of work looming over my head while dealing with that.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“If I had been paid for my postpartum time, I would have been able to afford assistance like a doula or even housekeeping. Those would have been great gifts for me and my little family. Paid leave would have meant access to latch and breastfeeding resources that I didn't have because of cost and lack of coverage by our insurance at the time. I know that the mental health foundation is laid in those first few months of a child's life - a stable very early childhood is crucial to lifelong mental wellness. The evidence is irrefutable” **(Fayette Co)**

“Every baby deserves a parent who is able to devote their full attention to their needs and not rely on the care of others. It's as simple as that. Having paid leave would allow the parent and baby to bond and nurture in a fundamental way.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“It would have reduced stress, fostered bonding with the child, reduced relationship conflicts over the burden of caregiving, and also helps discourage the traditional societal demand for women in most het relationships to be the one abandoning their career to be a caregiver - or face judgment and stress if they don't.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“Baseline the first two weeks you're physically recovering from the trauma of birth. I would say it takes closer to 6-8 to adjust to the sleep deprivation, eating challenges or growth delays for an infant with regular medical apps throughout as you navigate these early months. Knowing your income remains throughout this time and you can solely focus on learning this new little human is a huge help and support for not only physical but also mental health for all involved.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“Close, consistent contact between new family members is critical to immediate & long-term health & well-being” **(Jefferson Co)**

“6 weeks even, would give me time to bond with my baby and recover physically, though longer would be amazing.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“It would have provided increasing stability related to finances.” **(Pulaski Co)**

‘Having 6 weeks of paid parental leave would have helped me immensely. I would have been able to return to work, knowing that our family would not have to go without when I had to take days without pay.’ **(Jefferson Co)**

“A chance to get regimented to the newness of being a parent. Getting used to a new schedule and allowing time to secure adequate childcare care. Time to breathe!” **(Warren Co)**

“6 weeks of paid leave will be a blessing to us. It will allow me to breastfeed and be with my new child for the full 12 weeks while being financially secure during that time. I’ve never been so grateful, it was a blessing at the perfect time. My expected leave will begin 7/2025” **(Pulaski Co)**

“My husband is a teacher and took 3 weeks off for the birth of our son in January 2025. Today, as I am writing this, he has returned to work. Being a new mother to a newborn, his support and guidance during my recovery was necessary for our family. Fathers should also receive paid time off, because they are vital to a family unit. I am disappointed that all my sick days are being used in order to spend time with my baby. Luckily, I have the days, but I feel like 6 weeks paid would have eliminated worries I have for my baby's future. When we force families back to work so quickly after birth, children have to attend daycare which is a breeding ground for sicknesses causing children to visit the doctor more and causing parents to miss work. Babies under 12 weeks have no business in a day care facility. They need to be at home.” **(Madison Co)**

“Paid parental leave is important for the health of the mother and the bond with the child.” **(Kenton Co)**

“Would have lessened the chances of postpartum depression, given more support for emotional healing after delivery.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“When I had my baby, I was a state employee in a different state (Wisconsin) that offered paid FMLA. I was able to take six weeks of full leave, and then work part time for an additional period. That leave allowed me to recover from a difficult childbirth, nurse my baby around the clock, closely bond, and frankly survive those early weeks. Even with my husband's help with housework, cooking, and baby care, it was a 24-hour-a-day, exhausting, more-than-full time job caring for my baby (we used to joke that a baby required three adults: one to care directly for the baby, another to do everything else--cook, clean, pay bills, buy groceries, make and attend doctor's appointments, etc.--and a third to sleep, since the first two jobs did not leave time for sleep). It was also an absolute joy and privilege to witness this miraculous new human, to learn to interpret my baby's communications, to nurse and know I was providing the best possible nutrition, to figure out the rhythms of a new human and how to accommodate them, to provide constant physical closeness that is essential to baby wellbeing. I don't have words for how much that time meant to me and my family. I had no idea what it would feel like to be a new mother--it was transformative. It would have broken my heart, and changed my baby's future, not to have had the leave.” **(Warren Co)**

“Having access to paid parental leave meant that I could save for daycare expenses to return to work. It meant that I could afford to pay my medical bills. In a stressful and anxious time, it meant that I could have a small guarantee that things could go back to normal. It meant that my employer recognized that in order to retain talent, they needed to have this basic benefit. It meant that I was going to have more meaning to my identity than just someone who gives birth.” **(Jefferson Co)**

"It allows you to focus on your new baby during those first weeks instead of stressing over bills. A new baby already brings stressors into the home, like a significant lack of sleep, so having additional stressors definitely does not benefit the family." **(Fayette Co)**

"Having access to at least six weeks of paid parental leave would have significantly reduced the financial and emotional stress my family experienced during the postpartum period. When I had my child, I was a part-time employee and had to take unpaid leave, while my husband received only three days of paid leave. With no nearby support, I was left to recover from childbirth, care for a newborn, and manage the household entirely on my own, which took a serious toll on my physical and mental well-being. Paid leave would have allowed me more time to heal properly, bond with my baby without the constant worry of lost income, and ensure a smoother transition into parenthood. I've also seen colleagues struggle without FMLA, relying on donated leave just to make it to four weeks, creating unnecessary stress and financial strain during an already challenging time. Access to six weeks of paid leave would have given all of us the time and stability needed to prioritize our health and families, ultimately benefiting both employees and workplaces in the long run." **(Bracken Co)**

"Having access to paid leave allows for frequent doctors appointment visits, bonding with the new child/baby, and also supports introduction into child care since childcare centers cannot enroll babies who are less than six weeks old." **(Jefferson Co)**

"Having paid parental leave would have given me the energy and mental stamina to focus on the other issues I needed to right after giving birth which were 1. physically recovering from a traumatic birth leaving me with injuries. 2. caring for an infant with colic that cried nonstop and could not sleep for more than an hour at a time for 11.5 weeks. 3. allowing me to focus solely on providing nutrition to my child in the form of breastfeeding, something that, due to numerous nearly-insurmountable challenges, was of great difficulty. Having paid parental leave would have meant people I worked with not returning to work TWO weeks after giving birth to a child still bleeding and physically torn from being separated from a newborn infant. Not having to return to work for at least six weeks would mean NOT being exposed to numerous illnesses that abound in healthcare facilities and daycares (required by most families who have to return to work). Having access to at least 6 weeks of paid parental leave would mean better physical recovery, better mental health, and stronger immune systems upon returning to work thereby benefiting the workplace as a whole." **(Fayette Co)**

"6 weeks of paid parental leave would have made me feel secure after giving birth. I am a single mom and it was difficult relying on the government when I had been working through my whole pregnancy. It was hard to budget what I didn't have and it sent me on a downwards spiral financially until I returned to work." **(McCracken Co)**

"It is an important and delicate time in yours and your child's life and being home assist with the bonding and childcare aspects" **(Laurel Co)**

"PLEASE MAKE A SMART CHOICE. IT'S OBVIOUS." **(Jefferson Co)**

"It gives you time to connect with your baby, develop a new routine, adjust to new sleep schedules, and arrange child care." **(Nelson Co)**

"As an employee with a high risk pregnancy who delivered 2 months early the paid leave would have kept my family from being behind on bills. I had time but I was very sick and had numerous doctor appointments, testing, hospital monitoring so almost all of my time was gone when I had to deliver. My

son was in the NICU for a month. Since he was preterm he couldn't attend daycare until he was 12 weeks. I had saved part of my income tax return but I thought I would be off 6 weeks not 12. Plus then we had insane NICU bills for my son. As a DCBS employee who helps everyone else get their needs met, it would have been nice to have some of mine met for a temporary period of time." **(McCracken Co)**

"Paid parental leave would have been so beneficial for me giving birth to my first child. The leave was so stressful and returning in 2 weeks was physically demanding." **(Pike Co)**

"Leave after pregnancy allows time for all the doctor's visits for baby and mom, allows for breastfeeding, for bonding, and for physical recovery. Four weeks postpartum I was still light headed, low iron, and physically in pain even though I had an uncomplicated vaginal birth." **(Jefferson Co)**

"If my husband and I had had access to paid parental leave, he would have been able to bond with and care for our new daughter, while I finished my last few weeks of classes and received my degree. I would have felt much more secure knowing that my husband was caring for our daughter and bonding with her, rather than having to scramble to find child care or rely on family support to care for my daughter. I would have been able to take time to heal from my c-section, and would have avoided a major surgery that I needed 4 years later." **(Warren Co)**

"You can read the studies. It's important for the child's development and the mental well-being of the mother." **(Fayette Co)**

"I have not had children, so I cannot speak to this personally. Based on the experience of countless friends and family, this time was critical to the mother and baby's physical health." **(Jefferson Co)**

"I could have had better support and my partner and I could have figured out how to approach our new chapter of life together instead of us figuring it out by ourselves. I would have been able to sleep more and felt more stable and my partner would have felt more confident in his ability to take care of our child by himself sooner rather than later since he would have been there to learn with me. Having to do everything myself made me lose my footing and unable to process everything that was happening (Partner feeling insecure as a father, my mother going through breast cancer and surgery, my body changed drastically, again, and having to keep a new life alive) I ended up being diagnosed with Moderate Depressive disorder along with anxiety a year and a half after birth, when my mind finally told me enough was enough and I had to process it all at once." **(Oldham Co)**

"I would not have to stress about saving all of my time leading up to the birth of my child. I felt like I was unable to take any time off when I was sick or when my other children were sick because I had to save it for when my baby arrived. Having time already built in for this would be so stress relieving." **(Fayette Co)**

"This would lift the stress of having to take a certain amount of unpaid leave while caring for my newborn child." **(Madison Co)**

"Having at least 6 weeks paid for parental leave should be the bare minimum. Your body, as a woman, goes through a traumatic event such as a vaginal birth or a very invasive surgery. Birth and postpartum is also a time of sleep exhaustion and pain from having birth. If there was a paid leave time for parents who worked for the state, I think morale would be better. There would be more people return to work, and it would help keep a strong relationship in their family." **(Marshall Co)**

"Recently, a friend gave birth and both her and the baby encountered various medical issues that

required multiple doctor visits and follow-ups. She developed severe preeclampsia that did not immediately resolve after birth; the baby developed an infection which led to heart problems and seizures. This was an extremely frightening time for the family, not to mention the additional doctor visits that would be required during postpartum. If she did not have access to her paid parental leave, how would she have been able to continue going to the follow-up appointments? How many days would she have had to take off work, and potentially unpaid, which then could have spiraled into additional issues, as these doctor appointments are not always fully covered? Not to mention the added stress that she and her husband would have endured having to put her baby in daycare while he was still recovering, as well as potentially being exposed to additional illnesses. The list goes on, but this new little family absolutely benefitted from having at least 6 weeks of paid parental leave to care for their child while also continuing to take care of themselves.” **(Campbell Co)**

In response to the question, “How far apart were the births/adoptions of your first and second child (in months)? Exact dates of birth are not necessary,” 57 participants answered in the following ways:

“36 months.” **(McCracken Co)**

“5 years” **(Jefferson Co)**

“26 months” **(Jefferson Co)**

“I only have one child, but there is a half-sibling living in the house who is 6 years (74 months) older than the baby.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“Only had one, but I certainly would not and could not have spaced them out by ten years. The very idea of that is absurd.” **(Hopkins Co)**

“I had two miscarriages and no live births. I was not given any time off for either. I suffered grief and depression from both experiences. I still struggle with these losses years later.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“My kids are 21 months apart” **(Jefferson Co)**

“27 months.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“2006/2011/2014” **(Calloway Co)**

“2.5 years.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“I only had one child in 1970 and in another state. However, as mentioned above since I was working a low paying job and needed to work that helped make the decision not to have a second child. I had issues during my pregnancy and spent a lot of time in hospital and bed and since I had no compensation, it was difficult.” **(Henry Co)**

“I am currently expecting my first child.” **(Carroll Co)**

“2 years and 10 months” **(Anderson Co)**

“24 months.” **(Franklin Co)**

“5 years.” **(Warren Co)**

"24 months" **(Madison Co)**

"49 months" **(Jefferson Co)**

"21 months" **(Jefferson Co)**

"34 months" **(Jefferson Co)**

"46 months" **(Jefferson Co)**

"38 months" **(Nelson Co)**

"0-twins" **(Oldham Co)**

"30 months." **(Jefferson Co)**

"Not applicable, but most folks I know wait for two years between children" **(Fayette Co)**

"Each of our children were ~2 years apart. The 10 year time frame is bananas - I know very few mothers whose children were that spaced out." **(Jefferson Co)**

"30 MONTHS" **(Jefferson Co)**

"2 years.." **(Jefferson Co)**

"22 months." **(Pulaski Co)**

"11 years" **(Warren Co)**

"10 years" **(Pulaski Co)**

"Adoption of a teenage son was in August of 2022 and the birth of our newborn was January 2025." **(Madison Co)**

"25 months" **(Kenton Co)**

"13 months" **(Jefferson Co)**

"n/a only one child but I don't know how I could have managed a second one since no paid leave." **(Warren Co)**

"two years and three months." **(Fayette Co)**

"Single child household" **(Bracken Co)**

"Only child." **(Jefferson Co)**

"I have been pregnant 7 times but with only one successful birth of a live infant. However, giving folx ONE chance to use this benefit in a 10 year period is laughable and sounds like someone who knows nothing about human biology presented this, as a human being does not have reproductive time to spare to space out children 10 years apart. Anyone who has more than one child is going to almost certainly have them within a 10 year timespan." **(Fayette Co)**

“13 months” (McCracken Co)

“4 years” (Laurel Co)

“15 months.” (Nelson Co)

“72 months” (McCracken Co)

“24 months.” (Pike Co)

“One child but hope to have another within 24 months of the first birth.” (Jefferson Co)

“I have one daughter because I could not afford to have another child.” (Warren Co)

“27 months” (Fayette Co)

“Most people I deliver or know have babies, on average, have a 2-4 year gap. Not ten” (Oldham Co)

“8/20/2018, 1/29/24 and one due this October” (Fayette Co)

“We are planning for 18 months apart.” (Madison Co)

“N/A. I am currently pregnant with my first child.” (Marshall Co)

In response to the question: “*It is often the case that families expand and encounter medical emergencies multiple times within a ten-year threshold. Would you support making flexible the amount of times a state employee can access this new 6-weeks of paid leave?*”

- 100% of respondents supported making the amount of times a state employee could access the new benefit flexible
- 1 respondent suggested 5 years was more reasonable, while another suggested that they could split the time in order to use the benefit more often.

Fifty-nine participants responded in the following ways to the question, “*Do you know anyone (including yourself) who left work after their family expanded? If you or they had had access to paid parental leave, would that have impacted yours or their decision and made a difference?*”:

“no.” (Franklin Co)

“I went back to work after 5 weeks with Charley, and worked less hours due to daycare being so expensive only being available when my husband was off” (Jefferson Co)

“Yes” (Bullitt Co)

“I know dozens of women who have made that choice. Our economy would be far better off if those women had been able to continue their careers while also raising their family.” (Fayette Co)

“Yes, I left that job one year after my second child was born. Having paid leave would have definitely

eased the burden and made a difference.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“I know many prime working-age parents who were forced out of the workforce after they had children. It's a career-killer for young women, particularly young professional women.” **(Hopkins Co)**

“Yes. I recently heard of women being terminated from their positions because of announcements about the upcoming delivery. It's any wonder women are either choosing to not have children, or hiding their pregnancy. This discrimination is absolutely disgusting and an unfair business practice that is outdated.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“Yes I had to quit my job.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“Yes. I know many friends who stepped away from work because they were not able to afford to be off as long as they needed to be to care for their new child. They also did not have the ability to afford childcare, and were concerned about how to pay medical bills from giving birth on top of everything else.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“I switched to part time employment after childbirth. I don't think six weeks completely off would have been sufficient to change that. Having the flexibility to work part time or flexible hours on return was most important to me and my sanity.” **(Calloway Co)**

“Yes, many women change course” **(Jefferson Co)**

“I did not leave my job, but as mentioned previously I made the difficult decision not to have another child.” **(Henry Co)**

“Yes I know several people who did not return to work after having their child. They expended all their vacation and sick time and weren't able to take off when their child was sick, etc. due to not having enough hours or not being able to be paid for that time off. They couldn't afford to take off with no pay with the cost of childcare.” **(Carroll Co)**

“I left the full time workforce because I lacked the flexibility needed with an infant in daycare, as I used all my time off for maternity leave and needed the flexibility afterwards.” **(Anderson Co)**

“I have known people who had to leave work after their family expanded. I believe paid parental leave would have made a difference in their decision, and helped them stay in their job.” **(Madison Co)**

“Yes, I left work to have my 4th child and decided to stay home permanently. Access to paid parental leave would have impacted the decision I made in the moment but probably not in the long term because balancing all the children and their appointments while working had become too overwhelming.” **(Anderson Co)**

“Yes” **(Franklin Co)**

“No, and no I still would have come back to work. Maternity leave didn't change my need to work.” **(Warren Co)**

“I left the workplace after having a child.” **(Fayette Co)**

“Yes, I left my work and my college career.” **(Madison Co)**

“No. Everyone returned to work..” **(Jefferson Co)**

“I left my job after the birth of my second child as the childcare costs would have taken nearly all of my salary. I stayed at home for three years, re-entering the workforce when my oldest child started kindergarten.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“I have family members who could afford to leave their jobs indefinitely in order to be home with their children. It makes a difference.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“I had paid parental leave and I stayed in my position. I have had the same job for 22 years now. I know several friends who did not have parental leave and left their jobs to have children.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“I did not leave my job but instead reduced my workdays to care for my children when they were young. It was more important to me emotionally to be there for them as much as possible than to make money. I feel like having paid parental leave probably wouldn't have changed my choice, but it would have certainly made the choice less stressful.” **(Nelson Co)**

“I do know someone who left their job for a few years when their family expanded. I also work primarily with child protective services (CPS) workers, many of whom are young women newly entering the profession. It takes, in my opinion, at least 3-5 years for a person to be proficient in this very complex and demanding field. There are so many decisions that CPS workers make that can significantly alter families in the long and short term. Skill development in this area takes dedication, focus, and lots of learning the nuances of both the developmental stages of children and families, the court system, and what services to put into place for families that work. Having a revolving door of ever-newly hired social workers denies families in need of these vital services of real expertise and the compassion and sound decision-making capacity that come from having more than a couple of years experience in the social work field. Even with excellent supervisory support, being a front-line CPS worker is so difficult, and I have witnessed families receive less support than they deserve because of workers leaving too soon.” **(Oldham Co)**

“Yes. I left my job after I had my first and got my second job because of the 12 weeks paid leave.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“I know of women that have had to drop out of the workforce after they had a child, as daycare is astronomically expensive. Then when they are ready to rejoin the workforce, they are left behind..” **(Jefferson Co)**

“Yes I know several women who had to leave the workforce because childcare was more than their salary. Some others had to leave because in-home care for disabled children or elderly family members was more expensive than their salary. It's not something these women wanted to do, but it did happen. I have known one man who also had to leave the workforce and become a stay at home father because the cost of childcare was too great.” **(Fayette Co)**

“Yes, my best friend paused their accounting career to be a stay at home parent. Their spouse was obligated to stay working almost immediately after the child's birth. That caused heartache on all sides.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“I have two close friends who left work after having their child and one did not have leave available and it would have made a difference if they did.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“YES. NUMEROUS” **(Jefferson Co)**

“Close, consistent contact between new family members is critical to immediate & long-term health & well-being” **(Jefferson Co)**

“I quit 2 jobs after having children due to postpartum depression and lack of childcare.” **(Jefferson Co)**

“Yes. I myself left the workforce for nine months after the birth of my second child..” **(Pulaski Co)**

“no” **(Jefferson Co)**

“Yes. Not in this particular case.” **(Warren Co)**

“I’m not surprised” **(Pulaski Co)**

“My husband is a teacher and took 3 weeks off for the birth of our son in January 2025. Today, as I am writing this, he has returned to work. Being a new mother to a newborn, his support and guidance during my recovery was necessary for our family. Fathers should also receive paid time off, because they are vital to a family unit.

If I had access to more leave, I would not leave my job with the expansion of my family.” **(Madison Co)**

“Yes, it would have helped the transition of support and assistance needed after adjusting to the navigation of the new roles” **(Jefferson Co)**

“I do know people who left work after their family expanded, because they were faced with impossible choices; their families struggle financially, and sometimes family dynamics are not good.” **(Warren Co)**

“I have multiple friends who have left their jobs after child birth due to an inflexible employer..” **(Fayette Co)**

“Yes, I have known individuals who left the workforce after expanding their families, and in many cases, the absence of paid parental leave was a significant factor in their decision. Several colleagues and acquaintances, particularly those in roles without strong benefits, found themselves with limited options—unable to afford unpaid leave or the high cost of childcare after a brief period away from work. If they had access to comprehensive paid parental leave, it likely would have influenced their decision, allowing them to remain in the workforce while balancing their new family responsibilities, rather than feeling compelled to choose between career and caregiving..” **(Bracken Co)**

“I know one person who left their job after expanding their family. I don’t believe it would have impacted their experience because their family plan involved cessation of work after growing a family..” **(Jefferson Co)**

“Yes, I know someone that left the workforce after having a child because in the state of Kentucky the cost of daycare is greater than what the median average wage provides. So, for many families, they are forced to choose between returning to work or staying home simply because they cannot afford daycare. I’m sure that having access to paid parental leave would have influenced their decision to return to the workforce and made it much more likely.” **(Fayette Co)**

“No” **(McCracken Co)**

“yes” **(Laurel Co)**

"My mother left her job after having me. She had no choice due to lack of resources for supporting breastfeeding." **(Nelson Co)**

"Yes" **(McCracken Co)**

"No" **(Pike Co)**

"Yes, I know several women who left the workforce because they had no parental leave and haven't returned.." **(Jefferson Co)**

"Of course it would have impacted our decisions! My husband did not have paid parental leave, and I finished my degree 2 weeks after our daughter was born. I did not go to work immediately after graduation because I stayed home to care for my daughter. That decision quite possibly set my career back several years, and affects our financial position even now, 10 years later." **(Warren Co)**

"Yes" **(Fayette Co)**

"No, however, my network primarily is highly educated and upper middle class. So they have access to caregiving resources that make it easier to go back to work." **(Jefferson Co)**

"Absolutely, A client of mine is debating coming back to work because of not feeling like she will have enough time with her daughter" **(Oldham Co)**

"I do not know anyone." **(Fayette Co)**

"yes, as stated above. Access to paid parental leave would have kept them employed." **(Madison Co)**

"Yes, if my coworker would have had access to maternal leave for the 10-12 weeks she took off for post-partum, she would still be working today. She not only didn't get paid, but she had to drain her sick and vacation time when she more than likely would have needed it after the baby was born." **(Marshall Co)**

When respondents were asked, "Is there anything else you would like to share related to paid parental leave for state employees?", 47 responded with the following remarks:

"I hope to see Kentucky leading the way with healthy initiatives and "incentives" to live and work here such as expanding Physical Therapy access." **(McCracken Co)**

"No." **(Fayette Co)**

"It is shameful to expect state employees to care for others around the state without providing them the basic support necessary to care for themselves and their families." **(Jefferson Co)**

"Why does Kentucky always have to be bringing up the rear on policies like this, particularly where kids are concerned? It's almost as if we want to handicap our kids and make sure they aren't ready to succeed in school or in life." **(Hopkins Co)**

"Paternal leave should also exist." **(Jefferson Co)**

"It needs to happen, for all parents each time they have a child. Children and birthing are what keeps the

world going. We all start as a baby/child, how do you think your parent(s) would've benefited from paid leave when they had you?" **(Jefferson Co)**

"I have never felt less supported in society than as a young parent. I had a tremendous community of support around me, but the structural systems we have created in our society tell young parents that they are not important or valued. Families are the most essential systems in our society, and we need policies that support families." **(Jefferson Co)**

"Returning with some flexible accommodation is most important for quality of life for lost people and families." **(Calloway Co)**

"I hope you take my experience into consideration and am happy to be a voice if needed to share this experience." **(Jefferson Co)**

"It's truly disheartening to have to worry about not having paid parental leave. Parents (men and women alike) deserve to be able to have an enjoyable experience when bringing a bundle of joy into the world, and not have to stress about if they are going to get paid, or how much they can afford to take off." **(Carroll Co)**

"Outcomes for children are much more positive when parents and caregivers are given time to bond at the beginning. This would be a huge driver for me to come back to state government, after swearing I wouldn't once I left." **(Anderson Co)**

"Paid parental leave during the immediate postpartum period is crucial for the well-being of the whole family, not only financially, but physically and mentally. Healthy and financially secure employees are able to perform better in their jobs." **(Madison Co)**

"I think ones with final and medical conditions should be included." **(LaRue Co)**

"With the lack of a good retirement, this is vital to ensuring that good workers are incentivized to work for state government." **(Franklin Co)**

"Every other developed country is provided with this leave or BETTER! Bring Kentucky into the developed world." **(Franklin Co)**

"Please consider longer than 6 weeks. A 6 week old baby going to daycare or a sitter so mom can go back to work is traumatizing for the mother and probably the baby. Our mothers are the ones who build this nation and they should be treated like they are WORTH IT." **(Warren Co)**

"I'm a Kentucky resident, mother, and wife of a state employee, and I support paid new parent leave for men and women with all possible force. I'm glad to show up at the Capitol holding my child and a sign to this effect." **(Fayette Co)**

"The health implications are clear." **(Jefferson Co)**

"All employees (workers, in any company or position) deserve paid leave. Just straight paid leave - to stay home when they are sick, to welcome a new child, to care for sick family members, to take care of personal business, and to take vacations. Life is about more than work. If we want to raise productive members of society and support a healthy working class, we must adopt more employee-friendly policies. I say this as a person running a business and employing over 50 FTE employees. Paid leave is a human right." **(Jefferson Co)**

"If we want children to have the best start in life and allow families to adjust well to significant life changes, paid leave has to be part of the equation. The mental stress of not having a paycheck during this period can be overwhelming." **(Nelson Co)**

"If Kentucky is as serious about being family first as the abortion ban has thrust upon its constituency, then Kentucky must support families with children. Children are vital to Kentucky's future prosperity, and it is much easier and cost effective to raise happy, healthy children who received brief but very valuable support from family-friendly work policies than it is to heal broken adults whose parents were unnecessarily and unfairly over-burdened with the logistics of providing financially and physically for their children without support." **(Oldham Co)**

"No." **(Jefferson Co)**

"State employees and ALL employees deserve paid leave. Again, all other first world nations provide this. We pay extreme taxes already (and the 1% does not at ALL)." **(Jefferson Co)**

"The ten year gap is arbitrary and feels like it's disconnected from the real needs of others. If we can't support the leave regularly, making it supervisor specific or creating a committee to review makes more sense." **(Fayette Co)**

"This is such a fundamental need, and if Kentucky govt valued every member in our state, we wouldn't be wondering about whether it's right or not. It would be a virtue fulfilled." **(Jefferson Co)**

"Setting aside the moral imperative for establishing these policies, it's also beneficial to state government in attracting higher-caliber employees who appreciate the benefit and might otherwise be looking at more lucrative private sector jobs." **(Jefferson Co)**

"We have a long way to go. For me personally, in a male dominated field — if we are truly going to support women following their passion and balancing the makeup of probation and parole officers throughout the state, the least we can do is support them and their families by having sufficient leave available." **(Jefferson Co)**

"Very much needed, cost-effective benefit" **(Jefferson Co)**

"Much needed!" **(Warren Co)**

"Promoting family values only works when you prioritize family." **(Madison Co)**

"If this was offered in the current world where children have to be birthed more individuals would adopt or foster children that are well established rather than remaining single or opting to never parent/mentor" **(Jefferson Co)**

"I urge you to pass a paid parental leave policy that covers at least six weeks and is not limited to every ten years. Why every ten years? Does Kentucky not want families to have more than one child? I don't understand that part of the policy. Most nations that want their citizens to have children support them with extensive paid leave and none limit it to once a decade! Please support Kentucky families and Kentucky children." **(Warren Co)**

"People are working and also trying to grow their families and/or keep their own health maintained. Why on Earth would we want to discourage any of those things? The only other choice, since children

will come and health can't be predicted, is to quit work and begin to receive public financial aid. How is this better?" **(Fayette Co)**

"One key consideration regarding paid parental leave for state employees is its potential impact on workforce retention and employee well-being. Providing paid leave can enhance job satisfaction, reduce turnover, and support a more inclusive work environment. It also ensures that employees can recover from childbirth or adjust to new caregiving responsibilities without the financial strain of unpaid leave. Additionally, paid parental leave can contribute to economic stability, as employees are less likely to leave the workforce entirely, which can be particularly beneficial in sectors facing talent shortages. From a broader perspective, implementing or expanding paid parental leave policies for state employees could set a standard for other employers, reinforcing the importance of work-life balance and family support." **(Bracken Co)**

"I fully support this and believe our state employees deserve the same benefits as those who work in the private sector." **(Jefferson Co)**

"The year is 2025. The United States is second only to Papua New Guinea in its paid parental leave policies. This is laughable. Offering paid parental leave is an investment with a guaranteed return rate and it's unclear to me why our legislators continue to deny us, as a state and as a country, this known benefit to all constituents. While I'm glad that Kentucky is discussing this, to put a stipulation of only using it once in ten years is absurd. Ten years is 1/7 of the average person's lifetime and more than half of their adult working-lifetime. People will have more than one child in 10 years and/or have a health emergency requiring paid time off. Offering this once in a 10 year period is barely better than offering nothing at all. Do better, Kentucky." **(Fayette Co)**

"Dads get neglected so much in regards to parental leave. My husband truly held our family together when we had our children and I needed him home with me. It was worth it to our family for him to lose pay and cause minor financial struggles just to have him there to support us mentally and physically." **(Nelson Co)**

"My son is now 5, almost 6. I just paid off his hospital bills from the NICU. The money I missed during maternity leave could have been used for that or the extremely high cost of daycare. My family including 2 state employees really could have used that help. Daycare took one whole check in our town." **(McCracken Co)**

"It should be accessible by both state and non-state employees." **(Pike Co)**

"I am shocked state employees do not already have access to this most basic human healthcare need." **(Jefferson Co)**

"Is Kentucky a pro-life state, or isn't it? We are debating about basic policies that support children and families from their earliest stages. Why don't we already have policies and programs in place to support families more holistically? Why aren't we already showing care and concern for mothers and their babies with paid parental leave policies? We cannot say that we are pro-life in Kentucky if we cannot support basic policies--paid leave, healthcare coverage, affordable child care--that support these babies after they are born. Our maternal mortality rate is abysmal. Childcare is unaffordable and unavailable. Paid leave is non-existent. WHY WOULD ANYONE WANT TO HAVE CHILDREN IN THIS CLIMATE OF NEGLECT BY OUR LEADERSHIP?" **(Warren Co)**

"This is a good start but the 10 year wait is just silly." **(Fayette Co)**

"I know it is hard to look forward into the future and our society is based on instant gratification, but these are policies that can help in the immediate for families but also have lasting effects for the family. We can look at many other countries to see how it has benefit. If we really want to help support families we need better maternal leave but also paternal leave. Father figures in the home makes a difference. I speak not just through research but also through experience of growing up with my younger years with my father on the road. When we lost our business while I was in middle school my dad lost his identity. It took a while but after getting out of his depression, some of the best memories I have is my dad being with me on Saturday going to breakfast at our small diner in our town. This is part of the reason why I am close to my family. Not because he was the "Bread Winner". It is because he was able to be there. I want that for the children in our communities. I want that for the pregnant people in our communities. I want that for the fathers."

(Oldham Co)

"Paid parental leave should have already been written into legislation. America is far behind in the benefits new parents receive to bond and care for their new child." **(Madison Co)**

"It should be an 8- week minimum paid leave. Doctors do not release you to even pick up more than 5-10 lbs after 6 weeks. Most people have stitches after, and they are not even healed at 6 weeks."

(Marshall Co)

"It is unconscionable that Kentucky does not already offer this. It's not only bad for families, it's bad for business. The state government often sets the standard for local businesses. By not having paid parental leave, the state as a whole has a more difficult time attracting talent and economic development." **(Jefferson Co)**

All respondents for the comment collector were asked to identify their county. Counties for respondents broke down as follows:

Jefferson	28
Kenton	1
LaRue	1
Laurel	1
Lawrence	1
Madison	4
Marshall	1
McCracken	3
Nelson	3
Oldham	3

Pike	1
Pulaski	2
Warren	4
Anderson	2
Bracken	1
Bullitt	1
Calloway	1
Campbell	1
Carroll	1
Fayette	9
Franklin	2
Hardin	1
Henry	1
Hopkins	1
Total	74

Additionally, all respondents were asked to identify their zip code. The following zip codes were identified from the commenters:

42001	40204	42104	40014	42104	40515	42101
40601	42071	40509	40511	42501	42003	40503
40214	40299	40475	40223	40475	40744	40217
40165	40057	40245	40502	41017	40219	40014
40503	40075	40208	40204	40211	40013	40515
40218	40342	40205	40241	42104	42003	40475
40219	40403	42701	40204	40205	41230	42025
42436	42748	40222	40229	40515	41522	41071
40204	40046	40004	42503	40502	40291	40205
40212	40601	40031	40272	41043	40217	40220
40206	40008	40299	40217			