

HEALTHY MOTHERS WORKPLACE COALITION: A Case Study on Local Coalition Building to Support Health & Gender Equity



ABOUT THIS CASE STUDY

In this case study, Legal Aid at Work ("LAAW"), a non-profit legal advocacy organization serving low-income working families, offers insights and strategies in local coalition building to support health and gender equity through workplace rights. Specifically, this case study provides information for advocates across the country who may be interested in creating their own local coalition to improve working conditions for low income families.



“I appreciate hearing what innovative ideas other companies are embarking on!”



INTRODUCTION

Workplace conditions play an important role in the health of new parents and their families. Disparate employment policies can lead to inequities in critical health outcomes for women and children, including postpartum depression, psychological stress, family violence, breastfeeding duration and childhood development. This case study outlines an innovative approach developed in San Francisco to address health disparities and gender inequities through the formation of the Healthy Mothers Workplace Coalition¹. The Coalition, founded in 2011, has implemented successful strategies for improving the health and wellbeing of working families by:

- incentivizing employers to adopt family friendly policies;
- creating a broad base of support for public policy change; and
- educating employers about workplace protections for parents.

The goal of this case study is to share lessons learned and provide resources for advocates in other communities who may want to adopt similar strategies.

BACKGROUND

The Healthy Mothers Workplace Coalition is a cross-sector collaboration of nonprofit organizations, government agencies, and employers working to promote workplace policies that improve the physical and emotional health of women, parents, and infants in San Francisco. The Coalition was initiated by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors Food Security Taskforce and the SF Breastfeeding Promotion Coalition. It coalesces the commitments of elected officials, county departments, universities, community based organizations, employers, and others to improve workplace practices and conditions through systems change, public education, public policy development, and a countywide award program for employers that recognizes “excellence in health and gender equity” in three areas: pregnancy and parental leave, lactation accommodation, and work-family balance.

¹ The Coalition considered changing its name for many years. Some members felt it was important to use a gender-neutral term to combat the stereotype that work and family issues affect only women/mothers and to promote gender equity. Some members, particularly in the health sector, felt it was important to name the disparity the Coalition was trying to address, i.e. negative health outcomes for mothers of new children. Recently, the Coalition voted to change the name to Healthy Families Workplace Coalition. The consensus was that sharing caregiving responsibilities was an important component of improving women’s health and shifting the cultural paradigm that caregiving is primarily a mother’s responsibility.

Key leaders of the collaboration include:

- physicians and experts in healthcare such as UCSF Center for Excellence in Women’s Health and Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital’s Women’s Health Center;
- human resources experts and businesses that are leading the way to a healthier and more equitable community through policies that support the wellbeing of their workers; and
- legal experts, advocates, and government agencies who inform public policy change, including

Legal Aid at Work, the San Francisco Department of Public Health, San Francisco Department on the Status of Women, San Francisco WIC, U.S. Office on Women’s Health and the U.S. Department of Labor Women’s Bureau. The Coalition’s inclusion of a broad array of partners, from grassroots community organizations to federal agencies, ensures that community health inequities are addressed at a systemic level.

DEVELOPMENT OF COUNTYWIDE AWARD PROGRAM FOR EMPLOYERS

In 2011, San Francisco’s Department of Public Health (DPH) and the local breastfeeding coalition organized a Lactation Accommodation Forum and hosted human resource professionals, health experts and advocates from across the city to educate the community about the then-recently enacted lactation accommodations provisions in the Affordable Care Act.² Feedback from the event showed that participants were eager for more information and resources regarding workplace lactation policies. This led to the creation of the Healthy Mothers Workplace Coalition. Initially funded by the San Francisco Department of Public Health, the Coalition formed with the goal of addressing social determinants of health through policy change and education regarding workplace rights for pregnant and new parents. Seeking to spur such change, the Coalition launched an award program to recognize employers that have adopted family supportive policies for their employees. The Coalition hoped that by highlighting employers voluntarily providing supportive policies, we could move the needle on both an institutional and public policy level.

The Coalition engaged in a careful and thorough needs-assessment process led by the Department of Public Health to develop the awards program and criteria, including surveying employers, advocates, and health professionals about what they considered important and feasible workplace policies for improving health and gender equity. In addition, the Coalition conducted a review of existing policies in San Francisco, other locations in the United States, and foreign countries. Based on this information, we decided to consider three categories of workplace policies: lactation accommodations, pregnancy and parental leave, and work life balance.

Coalition members wanted the award program to serve both as a way to encourage employers to improve internal policies as well as a data collection tool to identify what gaps remained to inform public policy initiatives. Thus, rather than create a single award level, we created three award levels

² California already had requirements for lactation accommodations, but the federal law provided renewed interest and awareness among employers to provide lactation spaces and time to pump. Signed in March 2010 the Affordable Care Act amended the Fair Labor Standards Act to require that employers offer:

A. a reasonable break time for an employee to express breast milk for her nursing child for 1 year after the child’s birth each time such employee has need to express the milk; and
B. a place, other than a bathroom, that is shielded from view and free from intrusion from coworkers and the public, which may be used by an employee to express breast milk.

Setting the baseline of the award program to the legal requirements of the area also lends itself particularly well to customization in different jurisdictions. Absent local or state laws, federal law could be the bronze level or baseline for entry, and more protective laws from other areas the silver or gold level.

– bronze, silver and gold. It was important to the Coalition that employers be able to participate even if they did not provide more than the current legal standard, which we set as the bronze level. Because a goal of the Coalition was to educate and incentivize change, it was crucial to include all employers that expressed interest in family supportive policies by recognizing their interest and providing an opportunity for them to improve their policies. To help provide employers with the tools they needed to move up an award level and implement stronger policies, the Coalition created an employer-facing toolkit that included sample policies and resources for successful implementation of the silver- and gold-level policies. Not only has this tiered approach allowed for greater employer participation, it also serves as a key education tool for existing protections, particularly as work-family laws continue to change.

Setting the baseline of the award program to the legal requirements of the region also lends itself particularly well to customization in different jurisdictions. Absent local or state laws, federal law could be the bronze level or baseline for entry, and more protective laws from other regions the silver or gold level.

THE APPLICATION

The Coalition sought to make the application for the award as simple as possible so as not to unnecessarily burden

busy employers that wanted to apply. We made a one-page grid with check boxes at the different award levels and across the three policy categories. The application or self-assessment includes 10 different legal standards that apply in San Francisco related to lactation, pregnancy and parental leave and work life balance. The Coalition sent the assessment to two academic experts in family leave policy at the University of California Berkeley and incorporated their feedback. Each year we edit the application to reflect new advances in public policy and we recently made an electronic version of the

SELF-ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET for the 2018 Healthy Mothers Workplace Award www.healthymothersworkplace.org

This worksheet summarizes the criteria for the 2018 Healthy Mothers Workplace Award, which may be useful for collecting information for a self-assessment and the online award application at www.healthymothersworkplace.org. A workplace must meet all the criteria in all three categories of a column to receive the award. Our workplace has policies providing: _____

	Bronze	Silver	Gold
Pregnancy & Parental Leave	<input type="checkbox"/> Reasonable accommodations for pregnancy, such as allowing pregnant workers to sit on a stool or transfer to a less hazardous position? <input type="checkbox"/> Up to 4 months of job-protected unpaid leave, with continued benefits, to employees who are disabled by a pregnancy or childbirth-related condition? <input type="checkbox"/> For employees with 20 or more employees: 6 weeks of employer-provided Supplemental Compensation integrated with state Paid Family Leave for parents to bond with a new child. <input type="checkbox"/> For employees with 20 or more employees: 12 weeks of job-protected unpaid leave, with continued benefits for parents to bond with a new child.	<input type="checkbox"/> All Bronze level criteria AND 2 of the following: <input type="checkbox"/> 6 or more weeks of additional unpaid leave, beyond what is legally required, with continued benefits, for parents to bond with a new child. (# of weeks provided: _____) <input type="checkbox"/> Employer-provided pay** during pregnancy disability leave. (# of weeks provided: _____) <input type="checkbox"/> Employer-provided pay** during bonding leave, beyond what is required in San Francisco. (# of weeks provided: _____)	<input type="checkbox"/> All Bronze and Silver level criteria AND: <input type="checkbox"/> 12 or more weeks of additional unpaid leave, beyond what is legally required, with continued benefits, for parents to bond with a new child. (# of weeks provided: _____) <input type="checkbox"/> Employer-provided pay** during pregnancy disability leave, for more than 2 weeks. (# of weeks provided: _____) <input type="checkbox"/> Employer-provided pay** during bonding leave, beyond what is required in San Francisco, for more than 2 weeks. (# of weeks provided: _____)
Lactation Accommodations	<input type="checkbox"/> Reasonable unpaid break time for lactating employees to pump milk, in addition to regular paid breaks? <input type="checkbox"/> A private, non-bathroom space near the employee's workspace where she can pump milk, that is safe, clean, contains seating and a surface to place a pump, has access to electricity, and has a sink and refrigeration in proximity to the space. <input type="checkbox"/> A written lactation policy that is translated if necessary, posted and distributed to employees. <input type="checkbox"/> Allow caregiver to bring infant to the workplace so employee can directly breastfeed?	<input type="checkbox"/> All Bronze level criteria AND all of the following: <input type="checkbox"/> Reasonable paid break time for lactating employees to pump milk, beyond regular paid breaks. <input type="checkbox"/> At least 3 of the following: locking door, adjustable, wipeable, comfortable chair, signage designating the room as the "lactation room", employer-provided hospital-grade pump, a microwave for sanitizing pump parts, footstool, antiseptic/disinfectant board for photographs of children, lockers or other storage for pump and supplies, regular cleaning by janitorial staff.	<input type="checkbox"/> All Bronze and Silver level criteria AND: <input type="checkbox"/> Reasonable employer paid break time for lactating employees to pump milk, excluding an employee's earned sick and vacation pay. <input type="checkbox"/> At least 6 of the following: locking door, adjustable, wipeable, comfortable chair, signage designating the room as the "lactation room", employer-provided hospital-grade pump, a microwave for sanitizing pump parts, footstool, antiseptic/disinfectant board for photographs of children, lockers or other storage for pump and supplies, regular cleaning by janitorial staff.
Work – Family Balance	<input type="checkbox"/> Employees accrue paid sick days and may use them to care for ill family members? <input type="checkbox"/> Employees may take up to 40 hours of unpaid time off per year to participate in a child's school or childcare activities, enroll a child in school or childcare, and/or address a school or childcare emergency. <input type="checkbox"/> Employees with caregiving responsibilities may request and be granted flexible or predictable schedules, subject to bona fide business needs. ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> All Bronze level criteria AND: <input type="checkbox"/> Workplace flexibility/predictability (not subject to bona fide business needs) including at least 1 of the following: intermittent use of bonding leave, flex-time or place, part-time, telecommute program, job sharing, compressed workweek, phased-in workforce exit or re-entry or sabbaticals, predictable schedules with advanced notice/regular hours, return to work support programs that address professional challenges via coaching and structured transition, or parent wellness and skill-building support programs.	<input type="checkbox"/> All Bronze and Silver level criteria AND any of the following: <input type="checkbox"/> "Babies-at-Work" policy for infants up to 6 months. <input type="checkbox"/> Employer-provided childcare program or subsidy. <input type="checkbox"/> Other exceptional or innovative program to promote bonding or caregiving. Please explain: _____

1 Cal. Gov't Code § 12945.
 2 Cal. Gov't Code § 12945.2.
 3 Cal. Lab. Code § 1030.
 4 Cal. Lab. Code § 1031; SF Lactator Ordinance, 5 SFPA, Admin. Facets, 2008 WL 259487, (Cal. F.E.H.C., 2009).
 6 Cal. Lab. Code § 246.5(a)(1); S.F. Admin. Code § 12D.1.
 7 Cal. Lab. Code § 230.8(a).
 8 S.F. Admin. Code § 12Z.4(a), 12Z.5(c).
 **Excluding an employee's earned sick and vacation pay.

(00532620.DOCX 3)

application available in a survey style format. Based on feedback, we added citations to the laws we referenced on the grid to enhance employer education and clarify the bronze standard, although no legal knowledge is necessary to complete the application.

In order to receive an award at the bronze, silver, or gold level, an employer must meet the requirements at that level in each of the three categories. This was important because even if an employer had stellar lactation accommodations, they would not receive a gold level award unless their policies in the other categories also met gold-level standards. This helped us track where the biggest policy deficits were and allowed us to suggest to employers how they could move up a level. For example, we had one employer applicant that was very close to achieving a silver level award but lacked a written lactation policy. The Coalition provided this employer with a sample policy. The next year the employer simply adopted the policy and moved up a level.

The application also asks the employer basic demographic information, including what kind of industry the employer is in and how many employees they have. This way, we could track gaps in our outreach strategy and measure how many employees were impacted by employer policy improvements. This year we are looking to expand the demographic information we collect to better understand the workforce of our award winners, including the gender breakdown of their employees. We also track which employers move up from bronze to silver or silver to gold each year – overall and in each category, how many unique employers have received awards, and how many employees are impacted by the award program. Moving to an online application has greatly improved the Coalition’s ability to track this information and quickly identify changes employers can make to move up an award level.

EMPLOYER OUTREACH

In the first year of the award program, the Coalition engaged in several levels of outreach to encourage employers to apply for the award. We launched the application several months before it was due to ensure we had time to follow up with and assist applicants. We also chose dates with potential hooks for employers or press, such as World Breastfeeding Week and Mother’s Day. We reached out to local organizations who already interacted with the employer community. For example, we partnered with the San Francisco Small Business Commission, presenting at one of their televised meetings and in their newspaper publication. Similarly, we reached out to local merchant, neighborhood and trade associations, many of which sent out information to their members. We held a joint webinar with the San Francisco Department on the Status of Women on how to apply for the award and posted the recording on our website. We held an in-person training for employers with questions. And we also reached out through other Coalition partners like breastfeeding groups and WIC.

Over the years, we have deepened our reach with the employer community by providing substantive training on the areas of law the award program covers. We created an employer focused training with Small Business Majority, a national small business advocacy organization, and offer free trainings to members of the local restaurant owner-association. We also partnered with San Francisco’s local labor law agency and the US Department of Labor Women’s Bureau to do a series of joint employer facing trainings and then invited participants to apply for an award.

2013 - 2017 San Francisco Healthy Mothers Workplace Award Winners

The honorees represent a diverse range of organizations in San Francisco, from technology companies to nonprofits, global law firms to small businesses.

Gold Award Winners

Facebook
 Invitae Corporation
 Legal Aid at Work
 Cleo (Vivla Lucy)
 Morrison & Foerster LLP
 Miller Law Group
 Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP
 Twitter

Silver Award Winners

Amplitude Inc.
 Bi-Blue Family of Businesses
 Changelog
 Child Care Law Center
 Children's Council of SF
 CUNA Insurance Group
 Folger Levin LLP
 Galileo
 Harrison Brissett
 La Cocina
 Landing Club
 Nixon Peabody LLP
 O'Malley & Myers LLP
 Pacific Gas & Electric Co.
 Pomeroy
 Port of San Francisco
 Prostate Fusion
 Premier
 Regis
 San Francisco Board of Supervisors
 San Francisco Department of Public Health, Maternal Child and Adolescent Health

San Francisco Department of the Environment
 San Francisco Adult Probation Department
 San Francisco Airport Commission
 San Francisco Department of Children, Youth, and Their Families
 San Francisco Department of Human Resources
 San Francisco Department on the Status of Women
 San Francisco Office of Labor Standards Enforcement
 San Francisco Public Utilities Commission
 San Francisco Rent Board
 SF DCA - Real Estate Division
 SRT Consultants
 Square, Inc.
 Swords to Plowshares
 University of California, San Francisco
 UCSF National Center of Excellence in Women's Health
 WOL
 Women's Foundation of California
 Zocalo
 Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital

Bronze Award Winners

A Better Way
 Arab Cultural and Community Center
 Asian Art Museum
 Bay Area Community Resources
 Boys & Girls Clubs of San Francisco
 California Child Care Resource & Referral
 NevoNet
 Catholic Charities SF
 Citi's Velocity
 Delta Laboratories Inc.
 Eleven Inc.
 FamilyLink
 Department of Labor, San Francisco Region
 Environmental Science Solutions
 Farelle Braun + Martel LLP
 Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP
 Hillcoch
 Hackensberry Youth Programs
 LP Capital Las Madres
 North Star Marketing
 Open Table
 Paycom Staff
 Payroll Resource Group
 Payscale Inc.
 PCAT
 Portola Family Connections

Public Library of Science (PLOS)
 Stanford Health LL
 San Francisco Juvenile Probation Department
 San Francisco Office of Labor Standards Enforcement
 San Francisco Public Utilities Commission
 San Francisco Real Estate Division
 San Francisco Rent Board
 San Francisco Sheriff's Office
 San Francisco Office of the District Attorney
 San Francisco Police Department
 S&P
 Spotify
 The Edwyn Hotel
 Vegetable LLP
 VLP Law Group LLP
 Youppi
 WOL of San Francisco & Marin
 YIP LLP
 Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital and Trauma Center

www.healthyworkplace.org

NerdWallet Receives 2018 Healthy Mothers Workplace Award



All intellectual property is the property of their respective owners. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

This post was written by Nicolette Lee, benefits lead at NerdWallet.

We're honored to receive a Silver Award from San Francisco's Healthy Mothers Workplace Coalition. This organization unites Bay Area groups from government, business, academia and community outreach to encourage policies and practices that support and improve the health of infants and new parents.

NerdWallet has taken the well-being of our employees seriously since day one, striving to be a leader when it comes to taking care of our Nerds and their growing families. We have a generous parental leave policy for both new moms and dads and contribute 100% for employee and dependent health insurance premiums, so no one needs to worry about paying for health-care. We also prioritize work-life balance both in and out of the office, including with a flexible time off policy, encouraging parents to take time off to be with their families or attend a child's school event.

Our employee-run NerdParents group provides a supportive community for parents (and soon-to-be parents) and their allies in the startup world. It's one of our most active employee groups, helping ensure that all our Nerdwallet parents have a reliable support system right here in the office. We also host an annual "Little Nerds Day" to welcome the kids in our employees' lives with games, crafts, magic shows, books, movies and more. Every year has a different theme - this year, it was pirates (above!).



We also held in-person trainings for employers where they could come learn about current laws and receive help completing the application.

After the first year, we also emailed past award winners and attendees of the event directly. We sent past winners copies of the previous year's application to ease the re-application process, and to offer resources and identify ways they could advance a level.

AWARD AS MARKETING TOOL FOR EMPLOYERS

Employers participating in the award program told us they wanted to adopt policies that promoted health and equity, and wanted to use those policies to recruit and retain employees, and demonstrate their commitment to the community. The Coalition facilitates promotion of participating employers in several ways. Each year we publish the list of award winners on our website and, in connection with the annual awards ceremony, we put out a press release that includes the list of awardees and quotes from them and their employees. The awards have been amplified through earned media, as well as blogs and pieces written for the Coalition website. In addition, winners publicize their award in internal newsletters and blogs. We created a digital and physical decal for winners to display on their websites and/or in their workplaces to identify themselves as a Healthy Mothers Workplace Awardee.

For the first several years, we invested time planning what the award would look like. We wanted it to be something that winners would actually display at their workplaces. One of the Coalition partners, a human resources representative from the Boys and Girls Club, obtained children's artwork from their summer camp, which we framed, with plaques indicating the award level. Because the award was not a typical printed certificate, winners shared that they felt especially proud and motivated to display the award publicly.

In addition, elected officials were thrilled to honor award winners and we have provided certificates signed by the Mayor, state and federal representatives, health officials.

ANNUAL AWARDS CEREMONY

Each year the Coalition hosts an awards ceremony to honor the past year's awardees and build support for public policy change. The awards ceremony attracts over 100 attendees a year and is an informative and dynamic community event. Each year, the ceremony features health leader, local and state policymakers, as well as employer and employee perspectives on the importance of these policies and the nuts and bolts of making it work. We hire a photographer to document recipients receiving their awards with city and government officials, and provide photos to winners to use in their publicity. We evaluate the program each year and adjust the event based on feedback solicited through a survey distributed to all attendees. For instance, we learned that people wanted to hear directly from employers about their ideas for implementing the policies in different workplaces and now feature an employer and employee panel representing various sectors that discusses best practices in a range of settings. As a part of the panel, employees share how the policies have impacted their lives and careers.

Press, including local ethnic media, has attended the event and interviewed participating employers and officials. Past speakers have included: Ann O'Leary, now Chief of Staff to Governor Newsom, Naomi Kelly, San Francisco City Administrator, Janet Van Huysse, Vice President of Diversity and Inclusion at Twitter, State Senator Scott Wiener, former San Francisco Supervisor, and Dr. Betsy Thompson, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Acting Regional Health Administrator.

The event grounds the award program in the broader context of public policy change. Motivated employers learn how to improve their practices from other employers and healthcare leaders. Policy makers hear from employees about the impact the policies have on their ability to work and provide for their families, and from employers about how different policies can be feasible to implement. Policy makers share their vision for future family supportive policies and connect with stakeholders in their communities.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE AWARDS PROGRAM

Since 2013, the Coalition has given **250 Healthy Mothers Workplace Awards of Excellence to 117 unique employers**, positively impacting over 61,000 employees — 10% of

INCENTIVIZING EMPLOYER PARTICIPATION

Beyond being able to use the award as a marketing tool, the Coalition also partners with companies to offer giveaways to applicants. Past participants have had an opportunity to win prizes such as a Mamava portable lactation space, a hospital-grade breast pump, and back to work workshops for new and expecting parents.

"I always am inspired by this event, and always learn something new."
— 2017 Awardee

the San Francisco workforce. Participation in the program has grown steadily each year, from 19 awardees in 2013 to 67 in 2018. At least 10 employers improved their policies to move up an award level since participating in the Healthy Mothers Workplace Award Program. For example, one retail employer instituted paid parental leave before any public policy was passed in order to obtain a silver level award. The Mayor selected the Coalition as a top 10 innovation at the 2015 US Conference of Mayors and the Coalition received an award from the National Commission on the Status of Women in 2018.

Several neighboring counties have expressed interest in modeling programs after the Healthy Mothers Workplace Coalition. For example, Santa Clara County has already begun an award program, San Luis Obispo sought assistance for a program.

PUBLIC POLICY CHANGE

The Coalition has been instrumental in informing groundbreaking public policy changes in San Francisco. For example, the Coalition provided support, testimony, research, and technical assistance at every stage of the following landmark laws:

- 1) **Family Friendly Workplace Ordinance (2013)**, which prohibits discrimination against family caregivers and parents, and allows them to request flexible work arrangements;
- 2) **Retail Workers Bill of Rights (2014)**, which provides greater access to hours for involuntary part time workers and requires advanced notice of schedules;
- 3) **Paid Parental Leave Ordinance (2016)**, which provides fully paid parental leave by requiring employers to supplement state benefits so that employees receive full pay during parental leave; and
- 4) **Lactation in the Workplace Ordinance (2017)**, which is the most comprehensive lactation ordinance in the country.



Each ordinance was the first of its kind and set an important precedent for other jurisdictions. Indeed, Berkeley and Los Angeles have sought technical assistance drafting their own paid leave ordinances. These policies were a direct outgrowth of the key criteria established in the Healthy Mothers Workplace award application.

The Coalition helps elevate local policies to a state and national level. Many Coalition members also work for public policy change on the state level and have been deeply involved in several parental leave bills over the years, including the passage of the California New Parent Leave Act, which provides job protected parental leave to up to 2.7 million people in California who were previously not eligible for parental leave. One of the employer award winners wrote an Op Ed in support of the bill, healthcare partners testified in support, and organizations sent in letters. In addition, the Coalition provides expertise on implementation and its impacts. For example, the Coalition helped facilitate employer focus groups regarding San Francisco's Paid Parental Leave Ordinance to inform research and further policy development. The Coalition also developed health-focused infographics to support both the paid leave and lactation bills.

POLICY CLOSE UP – LACTATION ACCOMMODATIONS

When San Francisco Supervisor Katy Tang wanted to improve lactation accommodations for workers in San Francisco, she reached out to the Coalition for technical assistance and support. The Coalition helped organize stakeholder meetings, including employer groups, and shared ideas from Coalition members for improvements including building planning requirements for lactation space. At the stakeholder meetings, the Coalition shared the experiences of employees and employers requesting and providing accommodations. Because of the extensive stakeholder engagement process, the Ordinance received no opposition from the business community and in fact earned the support of the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber explained, "Lactation accommodation is good for business, because it brings women back into the workplace after having a child, reduces absenteeism for both parents because breastfed babies are healthier, and helps attract a talented, skilled and stable workforce that appreciates the benefit. It's good for working women and their families, because it normalizes the need to request and discuss lactation accommodation between employees and employers."

When the Ordinance was introduced, Coalition members spoke at the press conference and helped organize a

"My work, as rewarding as it is, is very hectic and fast paced. Being a new mom and knowing that I have to choose the right time to pump would have been extremely stressful if we didn't have a lactation room. The lactation accommodations were clean, well-stocked with cleaning supplies, lactation reading materials and a quiet, relaxing atmosphere which gives me a total piece of mind."



“The Healthy Mothers Workplace award gave us a goal with specific recommendations to make our work environment better for working mothers.”

“nurse-in” on the steps of City Hall. The Ordinance generated significant local press coverage, and the Coalition was able to direct press to employers with excellent lactation accommodations from the awards program. One award-winning employer’s lactation space was featured on the TV news about the Ordinance. In addition, Legal Aid at Work, as the Coalition’s director, was featured on public radio’s Forum to discuss the Ordinance with Supervisor Tang.

Members of the Coalition also testified in support of the Ordinance during Board of Supervisor hearings.

Demonstrating the influence of local initiatives on statewide policy, State Senator Scott Wiener (representing the San Francisco area), who authored the San Francisco Paid Parental Leave Ordinance when he was a Supervisor, soon brought a version of the lactation ordinance at the state level. It passed in 2018 but was vetoed by Governor Brown. Senator Wiener has reintroduced the bill in 2019.

IMPLEMENTATION OF PUBLIC POLICY

The Coalition is acutely aware that even when family supportive laws exist, those most vulnerable are most likely to encounter barriers or lack access to their protections. To address this, the Coalition has prioritized implementation of work-family policies and partners with government agencies to improve outreach and education. When new local laws are passed, Coalition members advocate for the inclusion of outreach and education funds to the local agency enforcing the law. For example, when the Paid Parental Leave Ordinance passed it was followed by a budget allocation to the local Office of Labor Standards Enforcement. The Office collaborated with Coalition members to design and implement outreach and education efforts. Legal Aid at Work designed infographics, created online tools and a benefits calculator, and presented webinars with the Office during the roll out and phase in of the Ordinance.

LESSONS LEARNED

• MULTI-SECTOR COLLABORATION

The Coalition’s strength has been its breadth. Government, nonprofit, healthcare and employers all participate in the Coalition and can engage in policy development, including the voluntary award program. This multi sector collaboration

allows the coalition to call on experts in various fields as needed. In essence, the Coalition has made the health case, the business case, the gender equity case, and the case for the greater public good for each policy it promoted.

- **ACCESSIBLE TO ALL EMPLOYERS**

The Coalition has endeavored to engage with every kind of business, particularly those that employ lower wage workers. The Coalition has incentivized change and encouraged participation by starting at a currently attainable level. Small businesses may not offer the same policies as large tech companies, but they can all make voluntary improvements and learn from each other. We have used the award as an opportunity to educate employers about possibilities and identify champions. Additionally, the Coalition has ensured that the application process remains simple and accessible for smaller employers that may not have a dedicated HR department.

- **CULTIVATE POLICY CHAMPIONS**

The Coalition has provided a platform for employees and employers to share first hand experiences and build solutions. At the same time, these conversations have had a broader impact by generating ideas and support together for public policy change.

CONCLUSION

Since 2011, the Healthy Mothers Workplace Coalition has sought to improve working conditions and address social determinants of health for families in San Francisco by focusing on three categories of policies: lactation accommodations, pregnancy and parental leave, and work life balance. In a few short years, San Francisco, with the Coalition's support, has passed groundbreaking legislation in each of the three categories, changing the lives of thousands of new parents and families. The Coalition informed, guided, and supported these policy initiatives from inception by engaging stakeholders from a variety of sectors, identifying policy solutions and best practices, and lifting up employer and employee champions. The Coalition model is replicable with local public health and other organizations across the country and can be readily tailored to address local needs.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Legal Aid at Work is a member of the Aspen Family Prosperity Innovation Community, an initiative that develops and shares bold strategies that strengthen families' employment, economic security, health and well-being. This case study was developed with support from Ascend at the Aspen Institute. Legal Aid at Work is grateful to the Healthy Mothers Workplace Coalition members without whom this case study could not have been possible. We are also grateful to Den Legaspi at ARC & TYPE design for her graphic design of these materials.

“By using family friendly policies such as work from home days and sick leave to fulfill responsibilities to my children like taking them to doctors' appointments, I can support my family while minimizing disruption to my work.”

LEGAL AID AT WORK

legalaidatwork.org

ABOUT LEGAL AID AT WORK

Legal Aid at Work is a public interest legal organization that advocates to improve the working lives of disadvantaged people. We represent clients in cases covering a broad range of employment-related issues including discrimination on the bases of race, gender, age, disability, pregnancy, sexual orientation, and national origin. Through community education, direct services, policy advocacy, and litigation, our Work and Family program protects the rights of pregnant individuals, new parents, and caregivers to take time off work, paid leave, and workplace accommodations without risking their jobs and income. For more information, see legalaidatwork.org/wf.

