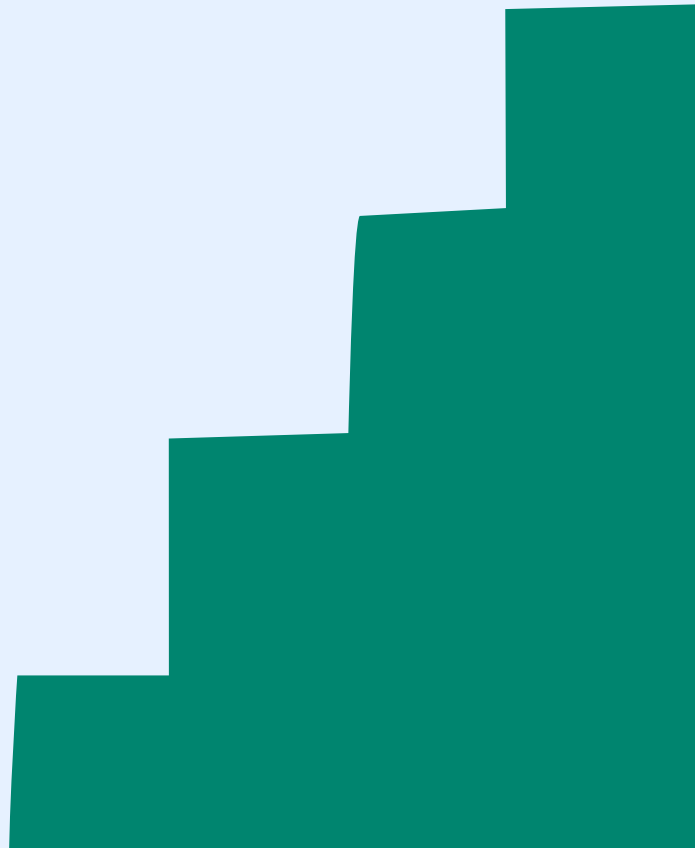


The HR Leader's Guide to Family-Friendly Benefits



Family-friendly benefits aren't just a nice-to-have: they're critical to attracting, retaining, and sustaining talent.

Amid rising employee expectations and a labor market that's more competitive than ever, companies are investing [more in benefits than ever before](#). Rampant burnout, especially among [working parents](#), is forcing companies to think about how they support employees with inclusive benefits that support them continuously along every step of their parenting journey. According to a Glassdoor survey, [four in five employees](#) would prefer better benefits to a higher salary, and nearly three in four millennials are willing to change jobs [for fertility coverage alone](#). Here's how to build a family-friendly benefits package your employees will love while boosting your bottom line.



4 in 5 workers prefer better benefits
to a higher salary

What are family-friendly benefits?

Family-friendly benefits help employees at all life stages—whether planning, building, or raising their families—get the support and care they need while balancing their family priorities with work. These benefits can include:

- Paid family leave
- Digital family health platforms
- Flexible work arrangements
- Lactation support
- Family building and preconception support
- Child care support
- Mental health support

In this guide, we'll walk through what family-friendly benefits entail, how they're being applied across different industries, and how you can find the right family benefits for your organization.

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Why employers are investing in family-friendly benefits

As [more companies](#) look to foster equitable, inclusive, and diverse workplaces, family-friendly benefits help them lower costs and compete for the best talent.

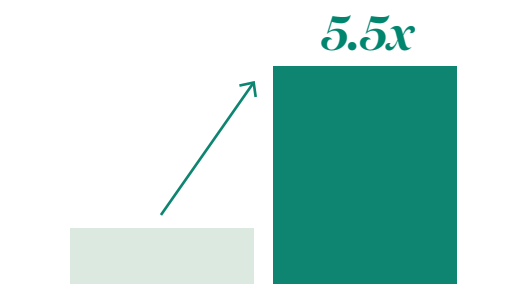
Family-friendly benefits attract top talent

[72% of employers](#) cite competitive pressure to attract and retain talent as their top reason to offer comprehensive benefits. The two most common family-friendly benefits are paid parental leave and fertility support, which [correlate highly with overall employee satisfaction](#). But as parental leave and fertility support become more and more common, companies must do more to stand out. Although [63% of employers](#) expect to cover some kind of fertility services in 2022, top-ranking workplaces are now twice as likely to offer fertility support and four times as likely to offer surrogacy coverage than the average company. Similarly, organizations that are perceived as offering “special and unique” benefits like egg freezing and adoption support are [twice as likely to retain parents](#).

Improved benefits lower healthcare costs

Research from the United Nations found that benefits like paid leave and breastfeeding support aren't just good for families, they're also good for business too, boosting [workforce productivity and lowering healthcare costs](#). Companies that invest in their working parents experience [5.5x](#) the revenue growth of peers thanks to reduced absenteeism, preventable medical costs, and better employee retention. Yet despite progress in benefits like paid leave, [42% of working women](#) still fear that starting a family will hurt their career. By adding more family-friendly benefits, companies can help keep women in the workplace, improving gender equality and the health of their business.

Companies that invest in their working parents experience **5.5x** the revenue growth of peers



Family-friendly benefits advance Diversity, Equity & Inclusion goals

Nearly half of employers say that addressing health equity and the [social determinants of health](#)—life context and factors that affect people's well-being—will be [an important priority over the next 3-5 years](#). These non-medical factors account for [60% of health outcomes](#). [Care matching](#), or pairing patients with medical providers from similar backgrounds, can help address these disparities.

A Stanford study found that [pairing Black patients with Black providers](#), for example, found more engaged patient-doctor conversations and better patient understanding of potential health risks. Gender-neutral benefits like adoption and surrogacy support also help foster inclusion, by assuring employees they'll be supported however they choose to build their family. In fact, [54% of millennials say they would feel more loyal to their employer](#) if they extended fertility benefits to LGBTQIA+ employees, even if they didn't use the benefit themselves.



How different industries are implementing family-friendly benefits

Companies in every industry are investing in family-friendly benefits, with strong results in employee retention and satisfaction.

Technology

Technology firms battling for talent have triggered a “[benefit arms race](#)” in Silicon Valley and beyond. In addition to high salaries, giants like Facebook, Apple, and Google all offer [at least 16 weeks of paid parental leave](#), far above the national employer average, while Adobe offers 26 weeks and Netflix a full year. Today, with paid family leave as the new standard, companies are using comprehensive, family-friendly coverage to gain an edge over their competitors. When Google expanded its maternity leave to 18 weeks, for example, it increased [retention of new mothers by 50%](#). For tech companies in particular, it’s important that these benefits match the mobile-first, seamless user experiences their employees expect. Popular tech startups like Snap, Bumble, and Zynga, who built their multi-billion-dollar businesses in mobile apps, give their [workforces 24/7 mobile parenting support with Maven](#). “We’ve seen lower costs and better health outcomes for employees and their families, so that they feel more healthy and productive,” says Bryan Ayccock, Zynga’s Director of Benefits. “That really helps us attract and retain talent.”

Healthcare

Healthcare service providers know first hand the value of healthy families, but their benefits don't always show it. In a study comparing parental benefits for employees of children's hospitals to benefits at Fortune 500 companies, the Fortune 500 companies typically offered better and more comprehensive benefits, [especially paid parental leave](#). As more healthcare workers leave their jobs due to pandemic-related burnout—with a quarter of remaining nurses planning to [quit their jobs within the next year](#)—future-focused healthcare companies are building better benefits to retain staff. Texas Health Resources (which [earned the top spot on Best Place to Work's 2021](#) list of best companies in healthcare) recently expanded its already industry-leading family benefits to include fully paid backup childcare and elder-care for employees.

Industrials

GE is one major industrial employer expanding their family-friendly benefits, with a new paternity leave policy of six weeks for secondary caregivers. “We want to help shift societal perceptions around men taking a greater role in family life,” says [GE's](#) compensation and benefits manager, Rebecca Good, of the change. Extended leave for secondary caregivers, who are more likely to be men, helps give primary caregivers, who are more likely to be women, more confidence in returning to work, knowing they'll receive ongoing support from their partner. Paternity benefits improve the health of the entire family. In a [long-term study](#), fathers who used paid paternity leave were less stressed and had more energy during the workday than fathers who didn't — improving their productivity and reducing the risk of injury in industrial environments. When fathers take flexible days of parental leave in the first months after the birth of their child, mothers visit health clinics less often and use less prescription medication, resulting in [lower overall healthcare costs](#) than families whose fathers do not take parental leave.

Retail

In an industry already known for its high employee turnover, the Great Resignation is hitting companies' bottom line, with more than [two-thirds](#) of retailers struggling to meet sales targets due to labor problems. In this competitive market, retailers who add family-friendly benefits can better attract new team members and retain existing ones. Publix, a national grocery chain with more than 250,000 employees, is the latest retailer to [announce](#) the addition of paid parental leave to its 2022 benefits package in hopes of building employee loyalty. As most retailers—including giants like Walmart, Target, and Costco—raise their wages and offer hiring bonuses to shore up their [workforces](#), family-friendly benefits can offer retailers a cost-effective way to set themselves apart. [Starbucks](#), for instance, stands out by offering fertility benefits, including IVF coverage, to part-time and hourly employees. These benefits help Starbucks retain working families and build an image as a family-friendly employer, while also paying off in lower training and healthcare costs long-term.

Professional services

Busy professional services firms struggle to retain women compared to other industries. While more than [half of law school graduates](#) are women, less than a quarter of equity partners are—and the rates are even worse for women of color. In many ways, women have to pick between leadership roles and raising families, otherwise known as the [maternal wall](#). To retain these valued demographics, leading firms are prioritizing family-friendly benefits. “Family benefits are a place where firms can really differentiate themselves,” explains Lauren Cortina, Human Resources Generalist at prestigious law firm Cleary-Gottlieb. In the legal field, digital platforms with 24/7 support, like Maven, are key to working parents’ success. “Flexibility is extremely important for our very, very busy associates,” explains Todd McCafferty, Benefits Manager at leading global law firm White & Case. “[With Maven,] employees don’t have to take a half day off to go and meet with a lactation consultant in person or try to find a doula. They can use Maven’s services on their phone or on their computer and reach out directly to the [practitioners] that they need information from: from work, from home, in the evening, on the weekends.” With regular, flexible support, new parents are less likely to feel like they have to choose between their career and becoming a parent.

Finance

Leading financial firms know that investing in family-friendly benefits isn’t just the right thing to do: it boosts their bottom line. Every dollar that employers invest in developing lactation support programs, for example, sees a [\\$3 return in reduced medical costs](#). Women who know that their work environment is compatible with their parenting or breastfeeding goals are also substantially less likely to quit. Accounting giant Ernst & Young calculates that replacing a new mother costs them [150% of her annual salary](#), proving that benefits that retain working mothers are a sound investment. “Providing services to our new parents through Maven is a win-win for both the company and for our employees,” says Bart Trench, Head of Benefits and Wellness at Protective Life insurance company.

“Family benefits are a place where firms can really differentiate themselves from others.”

LAUREN CORTINA

Human Resources, Cleary-Gottlieb



Choosing a family-friendly benefits vendor

The best benefits continuously support parents throughout their entire journey from preconception to postpartum, cover both physical and mental health, and are inclusive of all paths to parenthood.

Family-friendly benefits attract top talent

Many companies' family-friendly benefits end with successful fertility treatment, or stop and start again as parents reach milestones, like the birth of a child, without quality care in between. This inconsistent approach leaves new parents vulnerable to complications and can increase healthcare costs. Instead, employers should find a benefits partner offering [continuity of care](#). As the online gaming leader Zynga and other employers have found, adopting a continuous family-building care model—one that spans preconception to pregnancy and postpartum—is a win for everyone. Partnering with Maven, Zynga saw a [significant reduction](#) in the rate of C-sections and a 6-day reduction in the average length of a NICU stay as pregnancies increased within their workforce.

Comprehensive care includes physical, mental, and emotional health

Fertility isn't just a one-time expense: it's part of a complex, profound journey that affects all dimensions of health. According to [research](#), the depression and anxiety levels of women experiencing infertility are similar to those of women diagnosed with cancer. Even if fertility treatments conclude with a healthy baby, a long struggle to conceive can leave parents with lasting trauma. Women who worry about being taken seriously in the workplace often delay seeking care for their symptoms, leading to reduced productivity and [more expensive medical interventions](#) down the line. To treat issues before they arise, the best benefits programs include preventative counseling and support programs for employees, as well as behavioral health care with licensed professionals. These benefits are impactful in the short term and cost-effective in the long term, [reducing parents' absenteeism](#) while improving both satisfaction and productivity.

Digital-first benefits drive engagement and cut costs

If family-friendly benefits aren't easy to find and access, employees won't use them. Three out of four millennials say they prefer telehealth to in-person visits, and [95% of companies](#) with 50 or more workers now offer at least one telehealth option to meet that demand. Virtual visit options meet employees where they already are: on their smartphones. As a generation, millennial moms spend [42% more time](#) on their smartphones than Gen X moms and expect their healthcare to be mobile as well.

Apps like Maven allow those parents to meet with specialists via video or private message, which is especially helpful for working parents and families in areas with limited access to care: [one in three](#) Buzzfeeds employees' virtual visits occur between 6pm and 8am, when many doctors' offices are closed. That kind of 24/7 care gives families peace of mind any time of day or night. "I can't even contact my [primary care] doctor without being put on a waiting list," says [Chelsea](#), a first-time mother and Maven member. "[But] I can meet with a Maven doctor and ask all of my questions within an hour."

Digital healthcare options aren't just convenient for employees: they also save employers money on costly urgent care and emergency room visits. According to a [Kaiser Permanente study](#), virtual visits offered similar health outcomes to in-person visits, with no difference in the rates of follow-up care. A [recent Harvard Business Review report](#) found that companies who embrace digital benefits strategies like mobile apps and telemedicine pay 4.6% less per employee than their competitors do. That's why [nearly half](#) of large and midsize employers are making their benefit offerings accessible to employees on a single, fully integrated digital platform, often via smartphone apps like Maven.

Care navigators build trust and improve health outcomes

In the [United States' fragmented healthcare system](#), offering quality health benefits doesn't guarantee quality care. Members need a friendly guide, like Maven's dedicated [Care Advocates](#), to keep them from falling through the cracks. That's why [more than half](#) of employers now offer some sort of health advocacy service to help employees understand their benefits. If a member's insurance company does not cover a certain procedure, for example, advocates can investigate financial assistance, connect members with specialists, and summarize treatment options in a scientifically sound, approachable way. [Three out of four](#) high-risk Maven members say their Care Advocate helped them learn medically accurate information that improved their health.

Care Advocates provide critical health education that many parents don't get elsewhere. In a [Maven survey of 500 pregnant people](#), 61% were unaware of the latest clinical guidance regarding vaccination against COVID-19, increasing their risk of infection. Professional care navigators help bridge those knowledge gaps by connecting pregnant people with clinically vetted resources. "It's good to have someone with a medical background to talk to," says Maven member Erica. "I'm not just talking to random moms on forums — I'm talking to people with medical training." When members have an advocate they can trust, they also spend less money on preventable issues. "When care is better coordinated, we see less wasteful healthcare spending," says Tracy Watts, [Mercer's](#) National Leader for US Health Policy.



Next steps: adding family-friendly benefits to your business

In today's tight labor market, innovative family-friendly benefits can help you stand out among the competition and boost your bottom line. Adding family-friendly benefits is a strategic investment in your workforce: one that pays off in lower turnover, better engagement and productivity, and increased employee satisfaction. The more robust your organization's family-friendly benefits are, the easier it will be to attract and retain top talent. You'll see healthier parents, healthier children, and lower healthcare costs.

While paid parental leave and fertility benefits are a great start, they're just the beginning when it comes to supporting families. The best benefits go beyond fertility to support all paths to parenthood, with continuous, personalized, culturally responsive care from preconception to postpartum and beyond. Virtual visits and convenient, user-friendly digital platforms improve engagement, but don't forget the human touch. Working families deserve a caring, consistent advocate to help them navigate the health system and feel their best.

Start designing family-friendly benefits with Maven

Maven is the world's largest 24/7 virtual clinic for women's and family health. Members can book appointments with providers across 30+ family health specialties worldwide, from lactation consultants and fertility awareness educators to genetic counselors, reproductive endocrinologists, doulas, adoption counselors, surrogacy consultants, physical therapists, pediatricians, mental health professionals, and more. Most importantly, Maven provides each prospective parent with a dedicated Care Advocate for personalized guidance at every step of the family-planning journey. With a turnaround time of an hour and an average appointment rating of 4.95/5, Maven helps every parent—whether expecting, aspiring, or raising a family—get the care they need, when they need it.



To find out how Maven can help modernize your company's benefits package, [**request a demo**](#) today.