

# Can paid parental leave help prevent newborn deaths?

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A recent analysis published in *Contemporary Economic Policy* indicates that 6-week paid family leave in California saved 339 infants' lives from 2004–2008.

The analysis, which relied on birth and infant death data and used all states other than California as a comparison group, revealed that 6 weeks of paid family leave—which aims to help working parents balance their careers and [family responsibilities](#) while also improving the well-being of infants—led to fewer deaths from health-related causes and had larger impacts for infants with married mothers and for infant boys. It reduced the post-neonatal mortality rate by 0.135.

"Assuming a similar impact for a national 12-week paid [family leave](#) plan in effect in 2020, approximately 972 additional [infants](#) could survive to 1 year of age," said author Feng Chen, Ph.D., an assistant professor at Liaoning University, in China.

**More information:** Does paid family leave save infant lives? Evidence from California's paid family leave program, *Contemporary Economic Policy* (2022). [DOI: 10.1111/coep.12589](https://doi.org/10.1111/coep.12589)

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