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POLICY LEADERSHIP SERIES

WORK-FAMILY INFORMATION FOR STATE LEGISLATORS

SUPPORTED BY: THE ALFRED P. SLOAN FOUNDATION



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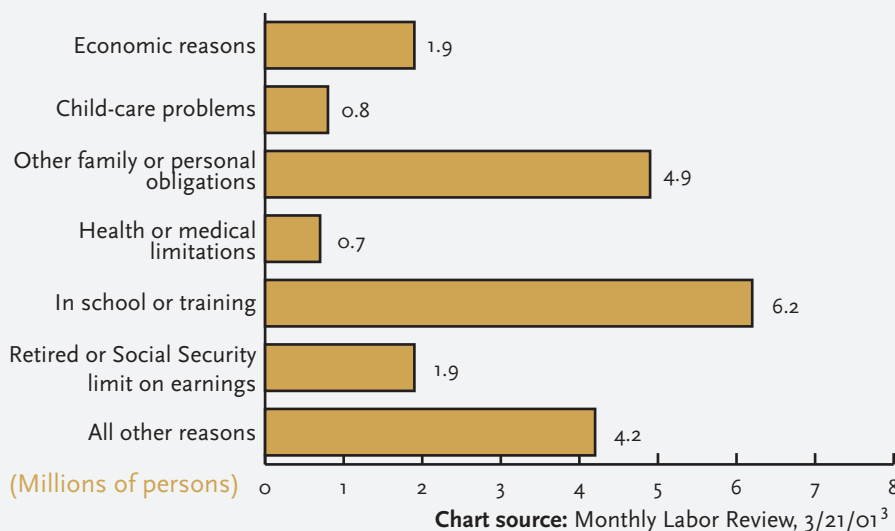
OPPORTUNITIES FOR POLICY LEADERSHIP ON PART-TIME WORK

When part-time work options are a good fit with employees' needs, they can offer flexibility and a better quality of life.

Part-time work is defined as working less than 35 hours per week.¹ Despite the growing interest in part-time work options, surveys indicate that a small percentage of professionals work part-time. For example, a Harvard Business Review article states that only 10% of the labor force works part-time.²

Some people want part-time work options to better balance their work and personal lives. Quality part-time jobs can be appealing to people in various occupations who work in exempt or non-exempt positions. Family members, early retirees, and businesses can all reap the benefits of part-time work options, which may include financial resources, schedule flexibility, and the ability to retain skilled workers. Additionally, disabled or physically challenged individuals may have limitations that require a reduced hours schedule.

Part-time workers: Reasons for working less than 35 hours per week.



Working parents may seek part-time work options; whether picking up children from school, caring for an elder relative, or doing household chores, it is not uncommon for working parents to have multiple priorities. One way to meet the demands of day-to-day obligations is to reduce their work hours.

Although individuals want part-time work hours for varying reasons, policies that encourage part-time options can benefit both employees and employers.

While part-time work options help some employees, they can have negative consequences for others. Sometimes, part-time jobs can be an individual's only option, even though they need and want to work full-time. They may be negatively affected by part-time work with lower pay, reduced or no benefits, and fleeting job security. Also, a recent research study found that part-time physicians in dual-earner couples

did not have better marital relationships than their full-time counterparts - due to the fact that the non-work time of the part-time physicians was spent on "low control" tasks such as housework.⁴

WHY IS PART-TIME WORK A POLICY MATTER?

State laws can either motivate or discourage employers from offering part-time work options.

- Employers might be more likely to adopt policies that promote quality part-time jobs if state laws rewarded them.
- State laws can protect employees who have a need (financial, physical, or other) for part-time work.
- State legislators can support bills that increase part-time work schedules for public sector employees.

"The bill that provides health insurance for part-time workers is important for several reasons: (1) it recognizes that people believe in the dignity of work and self sufficiency, even if they are only able to obtain or qualify for part-time employment, and (2) it recognizes that a person's health is important for a productive workforce that is motivated and capable of peak performance.

Here in Hawaii, although employers are mandated to provide or subsidize the cost of health insurance for each employee who works 20 hours or more a week, many work less than 20 or, very often, work two or more part-time jobs that are 20 hours or less per week and are not covered.

We (the legislature and the health committee) will continue to push for health benefits for part-time employees as we move towards a broader vision of health care for all Hawaii's citizens."

Hawaii State Representative Dennis Arakaki concerning HB 1066 and the need to support part-time workers.



HOW DOES THE AVAILABILITY OF PART-TIME WORK AFFECT YOUR CONSTITUENTS?

If it is a good fit for employees, having access to good quality (equitable pay, access to pro-rated benefits, etc.) part-time work schedules can make a difference in the well-being of employees and their families.

- "Part-time professionals reported less work-to-family conflict in terms of interference and strain than full-time professionals (2.4, and 3.0 on a scale from 1-5)." ⁵
- However, "There are significantly less benefits provided to part-time workers as opposed to full-time workers. Part-time employees are covered for the following: Vacation (44%), Sick Leave (18%), Pension (34%), Health Insurance (21%), Life Insurance (18%), and Dental Insurance (16%). More full-time employees are covered for the same benefits: Vacation (95%), Sick Leave (56%), Pension (79%), Health Insurance (76%), Life Insurance (87%), and Dental Insurance (59%)." ⁶

Because part-time work can be a "mixed bag," it may appeal to some workers and not to others.

WHO HAS ACCESS TO PART-TIME WORK?

It is clear that only a minority of the workforce is using part-time work options (10%).²

- Among these part-time workers, "72% are women."⁷
- "According to the Business Work-Life Study (1998), companies with more locations, companies with more female employees, companies with fewer unionized employees, and companies that are finding it difficult to fill entry-level positions are more likely to offer schedules where full-time employees can become part-time employees and eventually return to full-time."⁸
- "In terms of local government, 1.6 million of the 10.4 million labor force (15.4%) works part-time."⁹

HOW DOES PART-TIME WORK AFFECT BUSINESSES?

Employers who offer part-time work schedules often find that there are business benefits.

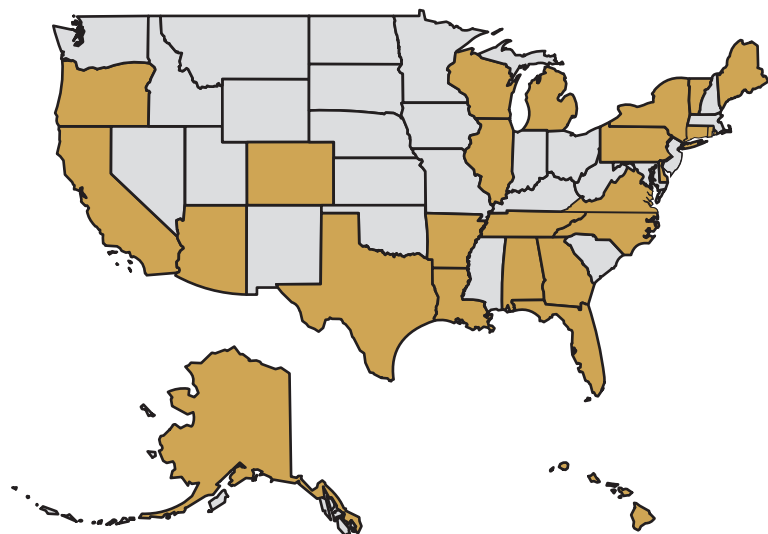
- Businesses often find that retaining quality employees in a part-time work arrangement is more beneficial than losing the employee (and hiring and retraining a replacement).
- Businesses can save office space and office costs by hiring multiple part-time employees who rotate hours in the office.

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

Innovative state policies that encourage employers to offer part-time work might increase the percentage of employers that offer part-time schedule options to their employees.

26 states have passed statutes that address the availability of part-time work schedules.

- 13 states (AL, CA, CO, CT, DC, FL, GA, IL, NC, RI, TX, VA, WI) created rules requiring organizations/state agencies to allow part-time work
- 12 states (AK, AZ, CA, FL, DE, LA, ME, NC, OR, PA, TN, VT) provide social services or other benefits to part-time employees
- 5 states (CA, CT, FL, HI, OR) provide policies for allowing employment credit for part-time work
- 3 states (AR, CA, NY) link part-time schedules to providing expanded employment opportunities to older workers
- 3 states (ME, RI, WI) link part-time employment to greater workplace efficiency
- 2 states (CA, MI) link part-time employment to educational opportunities for students
- 2 states (OR, RI) link part-time employment to employment of women
- 1 state (AZ) provides ethics guidelines for allowing part-time state employees to work in non-state employment



HAVE ANY BILLS ON PART-TIME WORK SCHEDULES BEEN INTRODUCED BY YOUR LEGISLATURE?

AK	SB 141	Creates defined contribution and health reimbursement plans for part-time members of the teachers' and the public employees' retirement systems.
CA	SB 1732	Provides a taxpayer credit of \$750 for wages paid for part-time employment.
	SB 3474	Requires employers to provide part-time employees with health insurance on a pro rata basis for percentage of hours worked.
CO	HB 1022	Requires recipients of economic development incentives to file an annual report that states the number of new jobs, categorized by full and part-time, that the person or entity proposed to create before receiving the grant or loan.
GA	HB 5908	Provides that certain public agencies cannot award state assistance to businesses unless the recipient offers compensation and benefits to part-time employees that are comparable to that offered to full-time employees performing comparable work, prorated as to the amount of time worked.
	HB 6929	Allows a part-time member of the teachers' retirement system to purchase up to one year of full-time credit.
HI	HB 1066	Offers a tax credit as an incentive to employers to provide health care coverage for their part-time employees.
	HB 1637	Amends the definition of employee under the Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund to include part-time employees working twenty or more hours per week.
	HR 198	Recognizing the problem of having a population of part-time working citizens without health insurance, requests a report on the number of less than full-time public employees that are ineligible for health benefits.
ID	HB 273	Create an annual reporting process to the Department of Commerce and Labor that includes information on the number and type of jobs created, including part-time jobs, as well as health care and other benefits offered.
IL	HB 3875	Provides that a teacher who has been receiving a disability benefit for at least one year and remains unable to resume regular full-time teaching due to disability, but is able to engage in part-time employment as a teacher, may work part-time as a teacher without loss of the disability.
IN	HB 1005	Establishes a life long learning tax credit program for employees, including those working part-time.
IA	HB 265	Allows full time or part time status of county supervisors to be decided by the electorate.
LA	HB 311	For retirement benefits, provides that average compensation for part-time employees who use 60 months of full time employment shall be based on the base pay the part-time employee would have received had he been employed on a full time basis.
ME	HB 233	Removes the sunset on the expansion of unemployment benefit eligibility to workers who have a primary history of part-time work, who are laid off and are only able and available for comparable part-time work.
	HB 1053	For purposes of reducing health insurance rates and expanding consumer choice, an employer may elect to treat part-time employees as eligible.
MA	SB 1118	Promotes fairness in unemployment insurance for workers seeking part-time work.
	SB 1130	Provides that part-time employees are entitled to a pro rata number of days of paid leave.
MN	HB 1326	Establishes a loan forgiveness program account and program for teachers, including those working part-time.
MS	SB 2237	Include certain homeland security personnel, including part-time employees, as beneficiaries of the death benefits trust fund.
MO	SB 459	Creates a tax deduction for small businesses and farmers that provide health insurance for employees, including part-time employees.
NE	LB 366	Allows permanent part-time employees who have attained the age of twenty to participate in the retirement system.
NH	HB 170	Allows unemployment payments to laid-off part-timers.
NJ	AB 3239	Provides that a retail operator that hires part-time employees from the ranks of the unemployed or public assistance recipients to work at that location is allowed a rebate of that employer's unemployment insurance payments.
NM	HB 289	Requires insurers to offer coverage for certain part-time employees by group health insurers and health maintenance organizations, upon an employer's request.
NC	SB 148	Extends the law enforcement officers', firemen's, rescue squad workers' and civil air patrol members' death benefit to permanent part-time and temporary law enforcement officers and detention officers.
TN	HB 99	Assist employers in providing part-time employment for disabled persons who are receiving state services.
TX	HB 481	Relates to eligibility for unemployment benefits of persons with permanent disabilities who have been discharged from partial employment.
	SB 562	Relates to the creation of health savings accounts for state employees, including those working part-time, and retirees and their dependents.
VT	HB 102	Establishes a health insurance tax credit to enable small businesses to offer health insurance to their part-time employees.

For additional bills related to part-time work or other work-family related bills, visit our website at <http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/bills.php>.

WOULD YOU LIKE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT PART-TIME WORK?

The following resources about part-time work might also be of interest to you.

- Employment Policy Foundation. (2003). Working caregivers show need for workplace flexibility. *The Balancing Act Newsletter*. Washington, DC: The Employment Policy Foundation.
 - To download this issue of the Employment Policy Foundation's Balancing Act Newsletter, go to: <http://www.workandfamily.org/newsletters/index.asp?page=6>
 - To read more about the Employment Policy Foundation, go to: <http://www.epf.org/default.asp>
- Galinsky, E.; Bond, J.T.; & Hill, E.J. (2004). *When work works: A status report on workplace flexibility: Who has it? Who wants it? What difference does it make?* New York, NY: Families and Work Institute.
 - To download the full status report, go to: <http://familiesandwork.org/3w/research/status.html>
 - To read more about *When Work Works*, go to: <http://familiesandwork.org/3w/about/index.html>
- Beers, T.M. (2000). Part-time schedules and shift work: Replacing the '9-5' workday? *Monthly Labor Review*, 123(6), 33-40.
- Ezra, M. & Deckman, M. (1996). Balancing work and family responsibilities: Flextime and child care in the Federal government. *Public Administration Review*, 56(2), 174-179.

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9. McManamin, T.M. (2000). U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. *Personal communication, as cited in Roberts, G.E.* (2003, Fall). Municipal Government Part-time Employee Benefits Practices. *Public Personnel Management* 32(3).

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The Sloan Work and Family Research Network can provide you with additional research-based information about working families.

PLEASE VISIT WWW.BC.EDU/WFNETWORK, EMAIL WFNETWORK@BC.EDU, OR CALL 617.552.1708.