

Estimating Lack of Access to Paid Leave and Use of Paid Leave Among Private Sector Workers Employed in Missouri: Summary



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This summary is an excerpt from *Research on Paid Leave in Missouri (2022)*.

Click [here](#) to read the full report and see the full list of citations.

- Among private sector workers who work in Missouri, including those who live in the state and those who commute across state lines, 211,020 are estimated to lack access to paid leave (102,531 females and 108,489 males).
- The estimated lack of access for short-term paid leave among private sector workers employed in Missouri revealed differences by socio-demographic characteristics.
 - The lack of access to paid leave was approximately equal between private sector female and male workers.
 - The lack of access to paid leave was highest among other racial groups, Hispanic, and Black Missouri private sector workers and lowest among Asian and white private sector workers. Native American/Alaska Natives were in between.
 - The lack of access to paid leave increased as household income and educational attainment decreased for all private sector workers employed in Missouri.
- Utilization of a hypothetical state mandated paid leave program by private sector workers employed in Missouri showed differences by socio-demographic characteristics.
 - Estimated utilization rates for male and female private sector workers were approximately equal.
 - Estimated utilization rates are higher for Black, Hispanic, American Indian/Native American and other racial group Missouri workers compared to white and Asian Missouri private sector employees.
 - Estimated utilization varies slightly by household income and decreases as educational attainment increases.
- Estimates of lack of access to paid leave and utilization of a hypothetical paid leave program are both relatively high for Missouri private sector workers employed in: mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction; arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food Services; and, construction.

Background

Past research demonstrates favorable health and economic outcomes for workers with access to paid sick leave compared to workers without access. Access to paid sick leave in the United States, however, is highly uneven. This brief: 1) summarizes a study of private sector workers employed in Missouri and private sector, public-facing essential workers who lack access to paid sick leave; and, 2) estimates *new* instances of paid leave used by private sector workers employed in Missouri under a hypothetical statewide mandated paid leave program that gives three days of paid leave to workers employed by small employers (<15 employees) and five days of paid leave to workers employed by large employers (15+ employees). The [U.S. Department of Labor Microsimulation Model on Worker Leave \(Worker PLUS\)](#) was utilized to generate these estimates and incorporated a range of socio-demographic and employment characteristics to produce a fine-grained analysis of private sector workers employed in Missouri who lack access to paid leave and who would use new instances of paid leave under a 3/5 policy scenario.

Worker PLUS Model: Population of Interest and Hypothetical Mandated Paid Leave Program Scenario

For extensive methodological detail about our utilization of Worker PLUS for this study, see the full report (*Research on Paid Leave in Missouri (2022)*); click [here](#).

Part I

The Worker PLUS model utilized the 2018 American Community Survey (ACS) Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) and the U.S. Department of Labor 2018 Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) Employee Public Use File to produce estimates of formally employed workers employed in Missouri who lack access to paid leave. For this brief, the populations of interest included 1) private-sector workers employed in Missouri of all wage rates, part-time and full-time workers, and all employer sizes, including workers who commute across state lines to work. Those working for federal, state, and local government employers and self-employed workers are excluded, and 2) individuals employed in Missouri as public-facing essential workers in the private sector, including those who commute across state lines. Estimates were weighted accordingly to be representative of the population of interest.

Part I results focus on private sector workers employed in Missouri who lack access to short-term paid leave. This category of paid leave includes both short-term leave for one's own needs and short-term leave to care for a family member's needs. The full report presents estimates that address these subsets of short-term paid leave.

The full report also includes comparable estimates for workers employed in Missouri and classified as essential. According to CDC guidelines, 45% of workers employed in Missouri were classified as essential. Comparing the predicted lack of access to paid leave for all private sector workers employed in Missouri to that of private sector essential workers employed in Missouri shows that the predicted lack of access is approximately 0 to 3 percentage points higher and, in rare instances, lower for essential workers.

Part II

Worker PLUS was also used to estimate new instances of paid leave utilized by private sector workers employed in Missouri under a hypothetical 3/5 paid leave policy scenario (i.e., three days of paid sick leave for small employers and five days for large employers). For the 3/5 paid leave scenario, 6.4% of workers employed in Missouri worked for small employers (<15 employees) and 93.6% worked for large employers (15+ employees). The population of interest includes private-sector workers employed in Missouri of all wage rates, part-time and full-time workers, and all employer sizes, including workers who commute across state lines to work. Those working for federal, state, and local government employers and self-employed workers are excluded. Estimates were weighted accordingly to be representative of the population of interest.

Part II findings predict utilization of new instances of paid leave under the 3/5 scenario for private sector workers employed in Missouri.

Part I: Private Sector Workers Employed in Missouri Who Lack Access to Paid Leave and to whom a State Mandated Paid Leave Program Would Apply

Demographic Characteristics

All Private Sector Workers Employed in Missouri

Table 1 presents Worker PLUS estimates of the percent of private sector workers employed in Missouri who lack access to paid leave by sex, race/ethnicity, age, children in the home, and citizenship status. Estimates of private sector workers lack of access to paid leave are mostly equal by sex (9.03% for females and 9.07% for males). White and Asian Missouri private sector employees have the lowest predicted lack of access (8.48%, 8.40%, respectively), and the highest predicted lack of access is for Black (10.70%), Hispanic (13.60%), and other (16.40%) private sector workers. About 12.5% of private sector workers employed in Missouri under 30-years-old, 8.24% of 30- to 59-year-olds, and 4.82% for those aged 60 years and older lack access to paid leave. Estimates of private sector workers employed in Missouri who lack access to paid leave also fluctuates by the number of children in the home. The highest rates are among those with one or two children (16.02%, 14.83% respectively) and lowest for those with no children (6.44%) and those with three or more children in the home (7.66%). Worker PLUS estimates also indicate differences on the basis of U.S. citizenship status with lack of access to paid leave higher for non-citizens (11.77%) than for U.S. citizens (9.55%).

Table 1: Percent of Private Sector Workers Employed in Missouri Estimated to Lack Access to Paid Leave: Demographic Characteristics	
	Lack Access to Paid Leave
Sex	
Female	9.03%
Male	9.07%
Race/Ethnicity	
Asian	8.40%
Black	10.70%
Hispanic	13.60%
Native American/Alaska Native	9.09%
Other	16.40%
White	8.48%
Age	
Under 30	12.53%
30-59	8.24%
60 and over	4.82%
Number of Children	
0	6.44%
1	16.02%
2	14.83%
3+	7.66%
Citizenship Status	
Citizen (all designations)	9.55%
Not a citizen	11.77%

Source: Worker PLUS Model, ACS 2018, FMLA 2018

Socioeconomic Characteristics

All Private Sector Workers Employed in Missouri

The Worker PLUS estimates of Missouri private sector workers lack of access to paid leave show clear trends by family income and worker education. As shown in Table 2, the estimated lack of access to paid leave decreases as family income and worker educational attainment increase. The differences are somewhat stark. For private sector workers employed in Missouri with less than \$50,000 family income, 15.84% are estimated to lack access to paid leave versus 5.25% of private sector workers with family incomes of \$150,000 or more. For workers with a high school diploma or less, between 14.40% and 16.60% are estimated to lack access to paid leave. Conversely, for private sector workers employed in Missouri with a bachelor's degree or more, Worker PLUS estimates indicate 4.31% lack access to paid leave. On the basis of workers' marital status, lack of access to paid leave is highest among never married and divorced or separated Missouri private sector workers (10.92% and 10.52%, respectively) and lowest for those workers who are widowed (3.77%).

Table 2: Percent of Private Sector Workers Employed in Missouri Estimated to Lack of Access to Paid Leave: Socioeconomic Characteristics

	Lack Access to Paid Leave
Family Income Categories	
Less than \$50,000	15.84%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	12.02%
\$75,000 - \$149,999	8.71%
\$150,000 or more	5.25%
Education	
Less than HS	16.60%
High school	14.40%
Some college	9.64%
Associate	7.98%
Bachelor's	3.82%
More than bachelor's	4.31%
Marital Status	
Married	8.73%
Widowed	3.77%
Divorced/separated	10.52%
Never married	10.92%

Source: Worker PLUS Model, ACS 2018, FMLA 2018

Employment Characteristics

All Private Sector Workers Employed in Missouri

Table 3 shows Worker PLUS estimates of Missouri private sector workers who lack access to paid leave by health insurance status and employer size. About 14% without health insurance are estimated to lack access to paid leave, compared to 9.09% with health insurance. On the basis of employer size, there is some variation in the lack of access to paid leave for private sector workers employed in Missouri (8.38% for the largest employers to 9.57% for the smallest).

Table 3: Percent of Private Sector Workers Employed in Missouri Estimated to Lack Access to Paid Leave: Employment Characteristics

	Lack Access to Paid Leave
Health Insurance	
Yes	9.09%
No	13.71%
Employer Size	
1-49 employees	9.57%
50-999 employees	9.21%
1,000 or more employees	8.38%

Source: Worker PLUS Model, ACS 2018, FMLA 2018

By Industry

All Private Sector Workers Employed in Missouri

Table 4 shows estimates of lack of access to paid leave by employer industry as classified by the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS); the table is organized by highest to lowest for private sector workers employed in Missouri. The industries with workers that have the highest lack of access to paid leave are mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction (23.61%); arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services (16.13%); and, construction (13.47%). About 11.07% or less of Missouri workers employed in all remaining industry categories are estimated to lack access to paid leave with the lowest rates among Missouri private sector workers employed in transportation and warehousing (4.94%), finance and insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing (4.00%), and information (3.92%).

Table 4: Percent of Private Sector Workers Employed in Missouri Estimated to Lack Access to Paid Leave: By Industry	
	Lack Access to Paid Leave
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	23.61%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation, and Accommodation and Food Services	16.13%
Construction	13.47%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting	11.07%
Other Services, Except Public Administration	9.66%
Educational Services, and Health Care and Social Assistance	9.01%
Wholesale Trade	8.33%
Professional, Scientific, and Management, and Administrative, and Waste Management Services	8.28%
Manufacturing	7.92%
Transportation and Warehousing	4.94%
Finance and Insurance, and Real Estate, and Rental and Leasing	4.00%
Information	3.92%
Public Administration	0%

Source: Worker PLUS Model, ACS 2018, FMLA 2018

By Occupation

All Private Sector Workers Employed in Missouri

Worker PLUS estimates of the lack of access to paid leave by occupation are shown in Table 5; the table is organized by highest lack of access to lowest for private sector workers employed in Missouri. The three occupations with the highest lack of access to paid leave include farming, fishing, and forestry (17.59%), services (17.05%), and installation, maintenance, and repair (16.82%). The two occupations with the lowest lack of access to paid leave include arts and sciences (4.11%) and management, business, and financial (3.80%). Worker PLUS estimates of worker lack of access to paid leave for the remaining occupations range from 5.35% (production) to 15.09% (construction and extraction).

Table 5: Percent of Private Sector Workers Employed in Missouri Estimated to Lack Access to Paid Leave: By Occupation	
	Lack Access to Paid Leave
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	17.59%
Services	17.05%
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	16.82%
Construction and Extraction	15.09%
Transportation and Material Moving	12.00%
Sales	8.95%
Office and Administrative Support	6.29%
Production	5.35%
Arts and Sciences	4.11%
Management, Business, and Financial	3.80%

Source: Worker PLUS Model, ACS 2018, FMLA 2018

Public-Facing Private Sector Essential Workers Employed in Missouri

Table 6 presents Worker PLUS estimates of Missouri private sector, public-facing essential workers estimated to lack access to paid leave. Variation in these estimates appears within and among the different types of employment. For example, although private sector food service workers have the highest rates of lack of access to paid leave, there is a difference in lack of access between front-line workers (17.64%) and food service managers (13.33%). Similar differences between front-line workers and managers appear for education and child care; 13.82% of child care workers are estimated to lack access to paid leave versus 3.99% of education and child care managers. Retail exhibits the same trends in lack of access (10.64% for retail workers and 7.52% for retail managers). Similar differences also emerge for health care related jobs. In emergency medicine, 0% of private sector emergency management directors are estimated to lack access to paid leave compared to 12.58% of EMTs. Among medical professions, nurses have the highest estimated lack of access to paid leave (7.88%) followed by doctors (6.32%) and medical managers (3.25%).

Table 6: Percent of Public-Facing Private Sector Essential Workers Employed in Missouri Estimated to Lack Access to Paid Leave	
	Lack Access to Paid Leave
Education and Child Care	
Education and Child Care Managers	3.99%
Education	3.11%
Child Care	13.82%
Medical Professions	
Medical Managers	3.25%
Doctors	6.32%
Nurses	7.88%
Emergency Medicine	
Emergency Management Directors	0%
EMTs and Paramedics	12.58%
Retail	
Retail Managers	7.52%
Retail Workers	10.64%
Food Service	
Food Service Managers	13.33%
Food Service	17.64%

Source: Worker PLUS Model, ACS 2018, FMLA 2018

Part II: Predicted Use of 3/5 Paid Leave Program Among Private Sector Workers Employed in Missouri

Demographic Characteristics

Table 7 presents the demographic characteristics of employees who would utilize a new instance of paid leave under the 3/5 policy scenario. **As per Worker PLUS, these individuals would not have used paid leave otherwise.**

Rates of utilizing new instances of paid leave under the 3/5 policy scenario vary by worker demographic characteristics. Results indicate that 27.01% of females are predicted to use new paid leave compared to 26.33% of men. White workers employed in Missouri’s private sector would use new instances of paid leave at the lowest rate (25.62%) and Black, Hispanic, and other races were all predicted to use new paid leave at rates above 30% (31.50%, 31.31%, and 35.15%, respectively). Workers employed in Missouri’s private sector and under 30 years of age are the most likely to use new instances of paid leave (32.23%), followed by workers ages 30-59 (25.53%) and workers 60 and older (19.34%). Worker PLUS predictions indicate that individuals with one or more children are the most likely to use new instances of paid leave (all above 36%) compared with Missouri private sector workers with no children (21.09%). Also shown in Table 7, 26.59% of workers who are U.S. citizens are predicted to use new paid leave compared with 30.06% of workers employed in Missouri’s private sector who are not U.S. citizens.

Table 7: Percent of Private Sector Workers Employed In Missouri Predicted to Use a 3/5 Paid Leave Program: Demographic Characteristics	
	Would Use Paid Leave
Sex	
Female	27.01%
Male	26.33%
Race/Ethnicity	
American Indian/ Alaska Native	29.46%
Asian	27.07%
Black	31.50%
Hispanic	31.31%
Other	35.15%
White	25.62%
Age	
Under 30	32.23%
30-59	25.53%
60 and over	19.34%
Number of Children	
0	21.09%
1	36.68%
2	35.98%
3+	36.80%
Citizenship	
Citizen (all designations)	26.59%
Not a citizen	30.06%

Source: Worker PLUS Model, ACS 2018, FMLA 2018

Socioeconomic Characteristics

As presented in Table 8, Worker PLUS predictions of using new paid leave under a 3/5 scenario indicate that 28.79% of new instances of paid leave would occur for those private sector Missouri workers in households earning less than \$50,000 annually whereas about 24.86% of instances would occur in households earning \$150,000 and above. In between these extremes of household income, 27.79% of households earning between \$50,000 and \$75,000 would use new instances of paid leave and about 24.89% of private sector workers employed in Missouri and earning between \$75,000 and \$150,000 would use new instances of leave.

Among private sector workers employed in Missouri, Worker PLUS estimates of using paid leave are highest for those with a high school diploma or less (between 33% and 34%). For workers with some college and an associate degree, the estimates for taking paid leave are somewhat lower at 27.56%, and 26.52%. For those with a bachelor’s degree and more than a bachelor’s, predicted use of paid leave is 17.26% and 18.62%, respectively. Private sector workers who have never married are predicted to use paid leave at the highest rates (28.53%) compared to other marital status categories and widowed workers are predicted to use new instances of paid leave at the lowest rates (19.26%).

Employment Characteristics

As shown in Table 9, among private sector workers employed in Missouri, Worker PLUS estimates of paid leave utilization under a 3/5 mandated program varied by health insurance status and employer size. The predicted use of paid leave for workers with health insurance coverage is lower than the predicted use of paid leave for workers without coverage (26.06, 31.64%, respectively). Missouri employees in the private sector who work for employers with 50 to 999 employees are the most likely to use new instances of paid leave (32.92%) compared to those working for employers with 1 to 49 employees (29.47%) and those with 1,000 or more employees (20.20%).

Table 8: Percent of Private Sector Workers Employed in Missouri Predicted to Use a 3/5 Paid Leave Program: Socioeconomic Characteristics	
	Would Use Paid Leave
Household Income	
Less than \$50,000	28.79%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	27.79%
\$75,000 - \$149,999	24.89%
\$150,000 and over	24.86%
Education	
Less than high school	33.90%
High school	33.37%
Some college	27.56%
Associate	26.52%
Bachelor’s	17.26%
More than bachelor’s	18.62%
Marital Status	
Married	25.94%
Widowed	19.26%
Divorced/separated	26.17%
Never married	28.53%

Source: Worker PLUS Model, ACS 2018, FMLA 2018

Table 9: Percent of Private Sector Workers Employed in Missouri Predicted to Use a 3/5 Paid Leave Program: Employment Characteristics	
	Would Use Paid Leave
Health Insurance	
Yes	26.06%
No	31.64%
Employer Size	
1-49 employees	29.47%
50-999 employees	32.92%
1,000 or more employees	20.20%

Source: Worker PLUS Model, ACS 2018, FMLA 2018

By Industry

Table 10 presents Worker PLUS predictions for new instances of paid leave under the 3/5 policy scenario by NAICS industry classifications. Private sector workers in the mining, quarrying, and oil and gas industries are the most likely to use new instances of paid leave (48.33%). The lowest levels of new instances of paid leave are employees in finance and insurance (19.68%).

Table 10: Percent of Private Sector Workers Employed in Missouri Predicted to Use a 3/5 Paid Leave Program: By Industry	
Industry	Would Use Paid Leave
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	48.33%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting	37.83%
Construction	33.31%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, and accommodation and food services	31.66%
Information	30.21%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	27.99%
Other services except public administration	27.60%
Wholesale trade	26.27%
Manufacturing	25.26%
Transportation and warehousing	24.75%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	20.54%
Finance and insurance, and real estate, and rental and leasing	19.68%
Public administration	0.0%

Source: Worker PLUS Model, ACS 2018, FMLA 2018

Table 11: Percent of Private Sector Workers Employed in Missouri Predicted to Use a 3/5 Paid Leave Program: By Occupation

Occupation	Would Use Paid Leave
Farming, fishing, and forestry	48.92%
Construction and extraction	33.76%
Services	33.32%
Installation, maintenance, and repair	33.26%
Production	30.09%
Transportation and material moving	29.83%
Sales	26.83%
Office and administrative support	24.70%
Arts and sciences	21.25%
Management, business, and financial	18.16%

Source: Worker PLUS Model, ACS 2018, FMLA 2018

By Occupation

Table 11 presents Worker PLUS estimates of new paid leave utilization by occupation. The occupation with the highest predicted use of paid leave is the farming, fishing, and forestry occupations (48.92%) followed by construction and extraction occupations (33.76%). The occupation least likely to use new instances of paid leave is management, business, and financial occupations (18.16%).

Equity Summary

Among private sector workers employed in Missouri, Worker PLUS estimates of lack of access to paid leave and utilization of new paid leave under a 3/5 policy scenario indicate disparities by socio-demographic and employment characteristics.

For instance, predicted lack of access and utilization are higher for private sector Black, Hispanic, American Indian/Native American and “other” Missouri workers compared to white and Asian Missouri private sector employees. Additionally, lack of access to paid leave increases among Missouri private sector workers as household income and educational attainment decrease. Interestingly, these trends did not map as well onto the estimates of who would use new instances of leave under a state mandated program. Keeping lack of access to paid leave in mind, which varied by household income, instances of new leave taking behavior fluctuated between 24.86% and 28.79% across the full range of household income. The trend associated with worker educational attainment, however, remained the same. As educational attainment increased, the percentage of private sector workers employed in Missouri and predicted to use new instances of paid leave under a 3/5 program decreased. Lastly, the sex-based differences in Worker PLUS estimates of lack of access to paid leave for all public and private sector Missouri workers (14.25% for females and 11.25% for males) are not quite as pronounced in the Worker PLUS estimates of lack of access to paid leave for private sector workers (9.03% for females and 9.07% for males) and utilization (27.01% for females and 26.33% for males).

When considering Worker PLUS predictions of lack of access to paid leave and new instances of paid leave together, estimates of lack of access to paid leave and utilization of a hypothetical paid leave program are both relatively high for Missouri private sector workers employed in: mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction (23.61% lack access, 48.33% utilization); arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services (16.13% lack access, 31.66% utilization), and construction (13.47% lack access, 33.31% utilization). In summary, the findings suggest that a state-mandated 3/5 paid sick leave program has the potential to reach those Missouri private sector employees who need it most.