



**150 YEARS**  
OF ADVANCING  
**PUBLIC**  
**HEALTH**

# Massachusetts Department of Public Health

## **MATERNITY LEAVE AMONG MASSACHUSETTS MOTHERS, PRAMS, 2012-2016**

Public Health Council

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# Objectives

1. Describe the importance of maternity leave
2. Present statistics on maternity leave from MA Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS) survey
3. Describe current national and states' policies related to maternity leave

# Background

- Maternity leave refers to the period of time that a mother takes off from work following delivery
- Paid maternity leave has been linked to increased rates of breastfeeding and decreased risks of postpartum depression and adverse birth outcomes such as low birth weight and premature birth
- It provides an important time for a mother to recover after delivery as well as to bond with her child
- According to Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 2016 only one in seven US private sector workers (14%) had access to paid family leave as an employee benefit

# Background

- Social and racial inequalities exist in accessing paid maternity leave
- Research has shown that low-wage and part-time workers, minority workers, and less-educated workers often lack access to paid leave
- In 2012, only 43% of African-American and 25% of Hispanic workers had access to paid parental leave
- In 2008, only 19% of first-time mothers with less than a high school education reported having paid maternity leave



# Massachusetts Department of Public Health

## **Findings from MA Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS)**

# What is PRAMS?

- Massachusetts began PRAMS in 2007
- Ongoing survey by most states in partnership with the CDC
- Asks about maternal attitudes, behaviors, and experiences before, during and shortly after pregnancy
- Collects state-specific data such as disability, prenatal care satisfaction, social connectedness, postpartum depression, as well as race and ethnicity
- Response rate averages around 66.0%

# PRAMS Survey Questions #71-72

**At any time during *your most recent* pregnancy, did you work at a job for pay?**

No → Go to Question 75

Yes

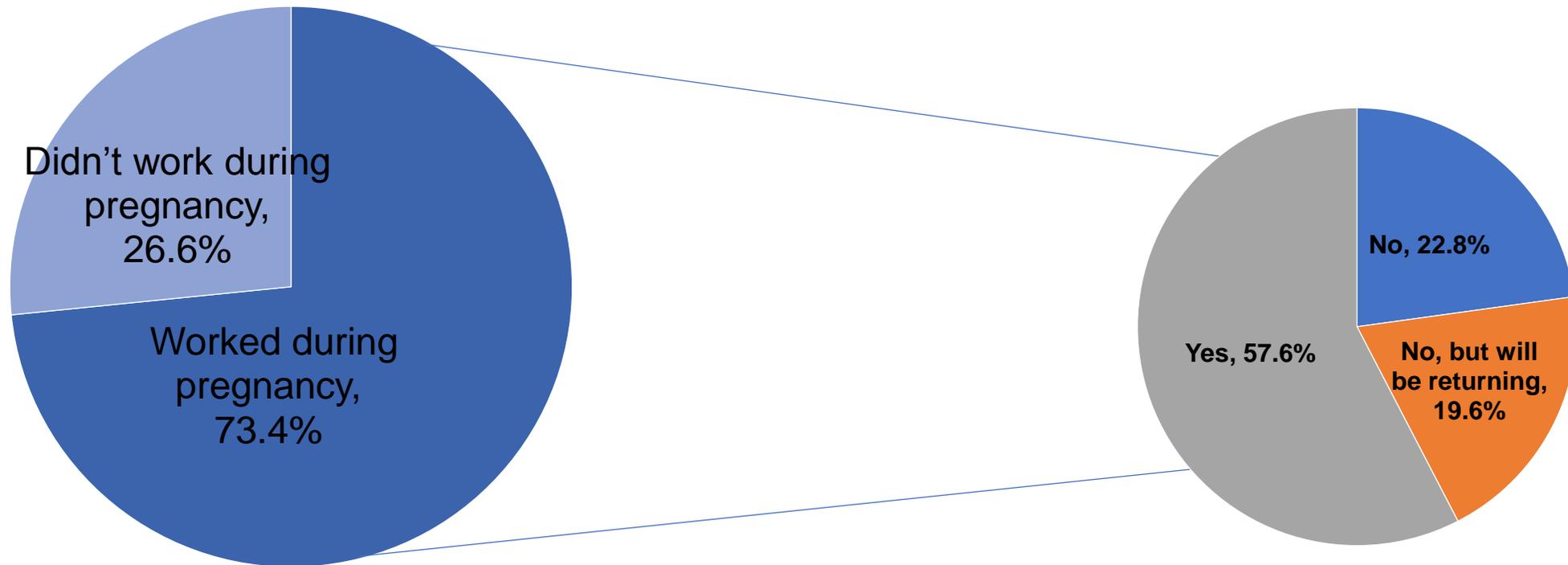
**Have you returned to the job you had *during your most recent pregnancy*?**

No

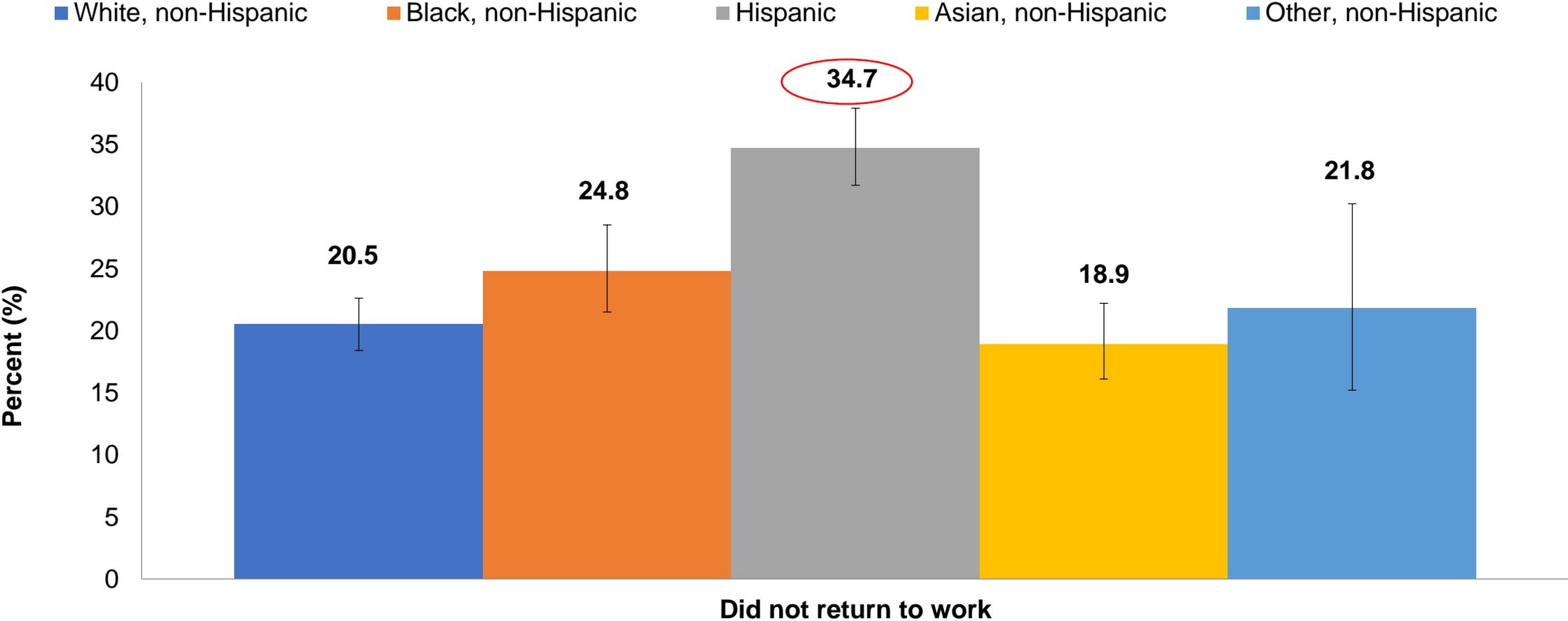
No, but I will be returning

Yes

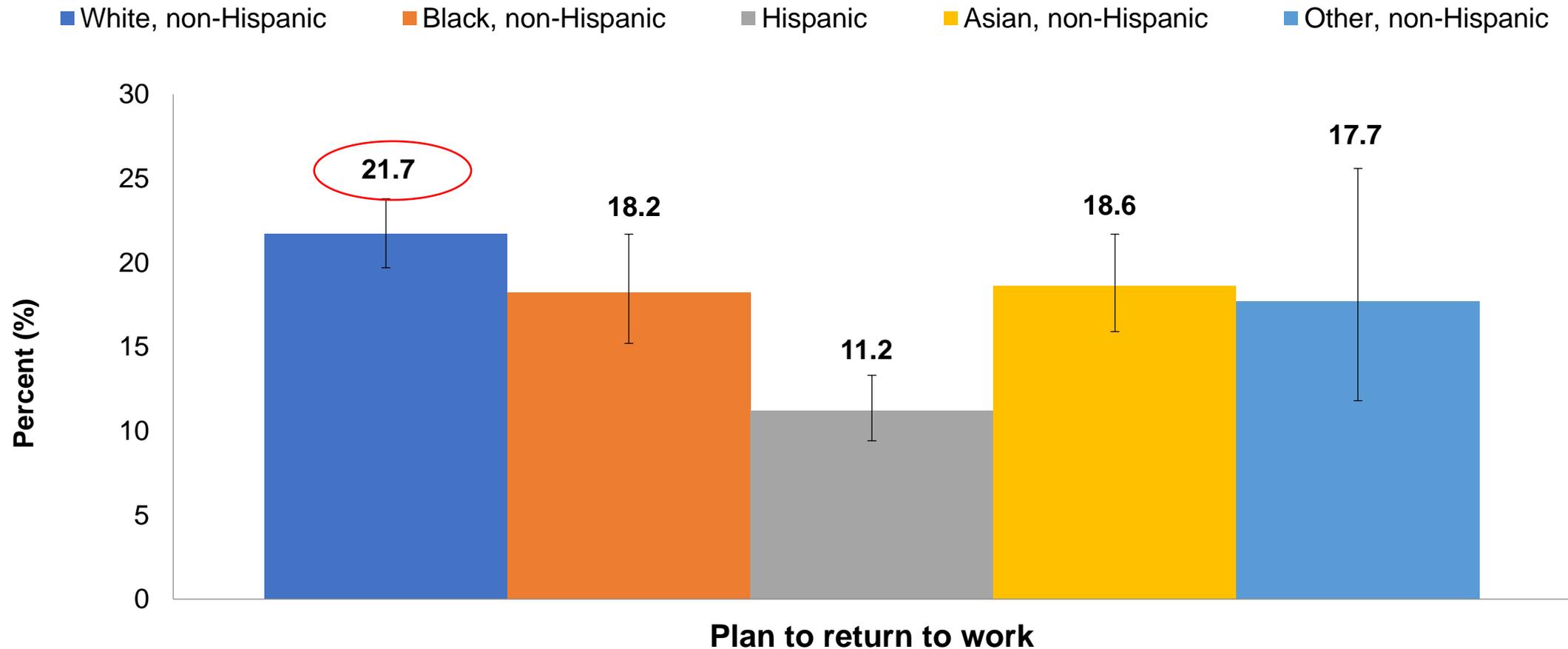
# Percent of Mothers who Returned to Work in the Postpartum Period, MA 2012-2016



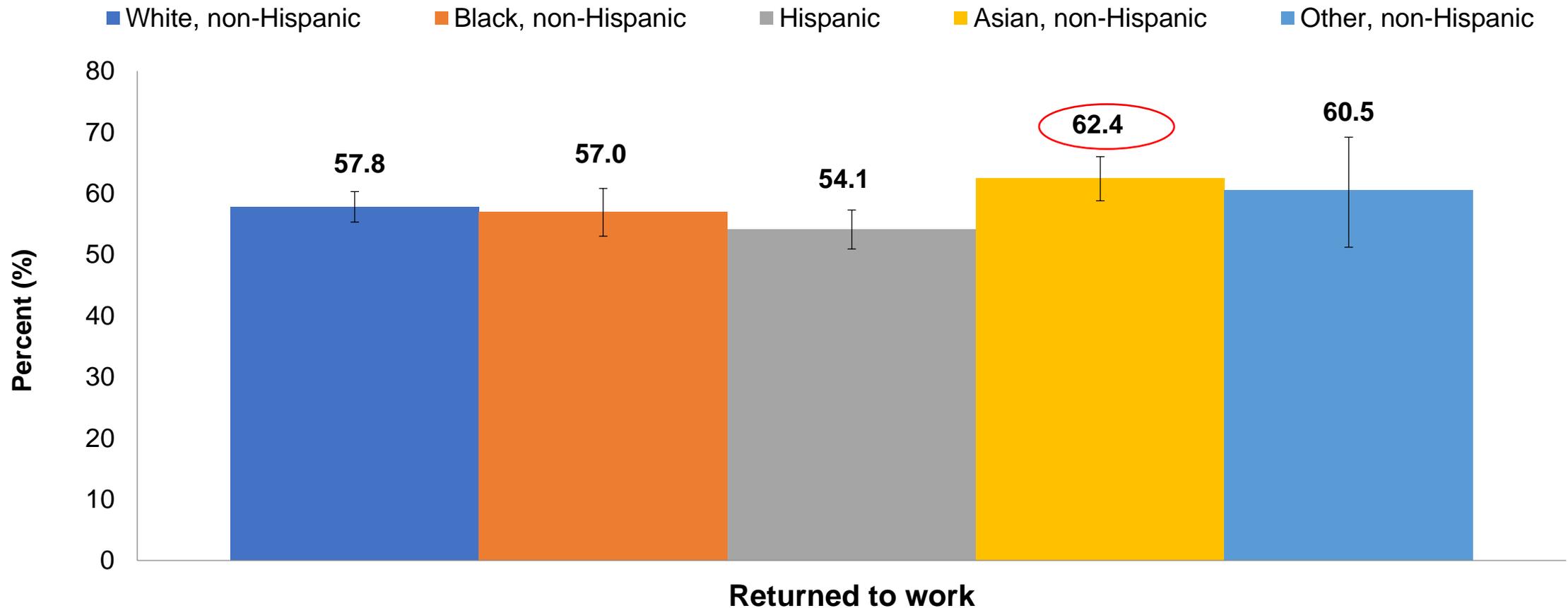
# Percent of Mothers who Reported that they did not Return to Work by Race/Ethnicity, MA 2012-2016



# Percent of Mothers who Reported that they Plan to Return to Work by Race/Ethnicity, MA 2012-2016



# Percent of Mothers who Reported that they Have Returned to Work by Race/Ethnicity, MA 2012-2016



# PRAMS Survey Question #73

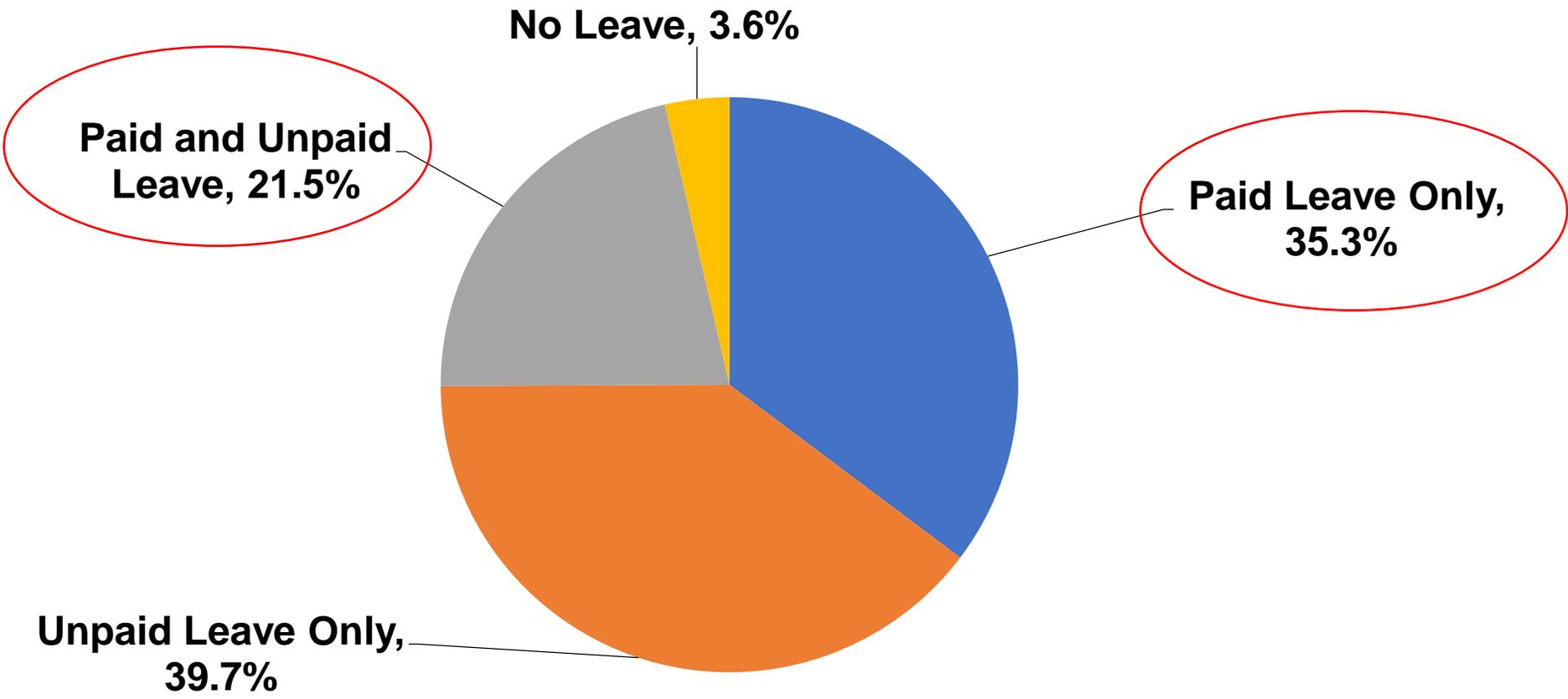
**Which of the following describes the leave or time you took off from work after your new baby was born? Check ALL that apply.**

I took *paid* leave from my job

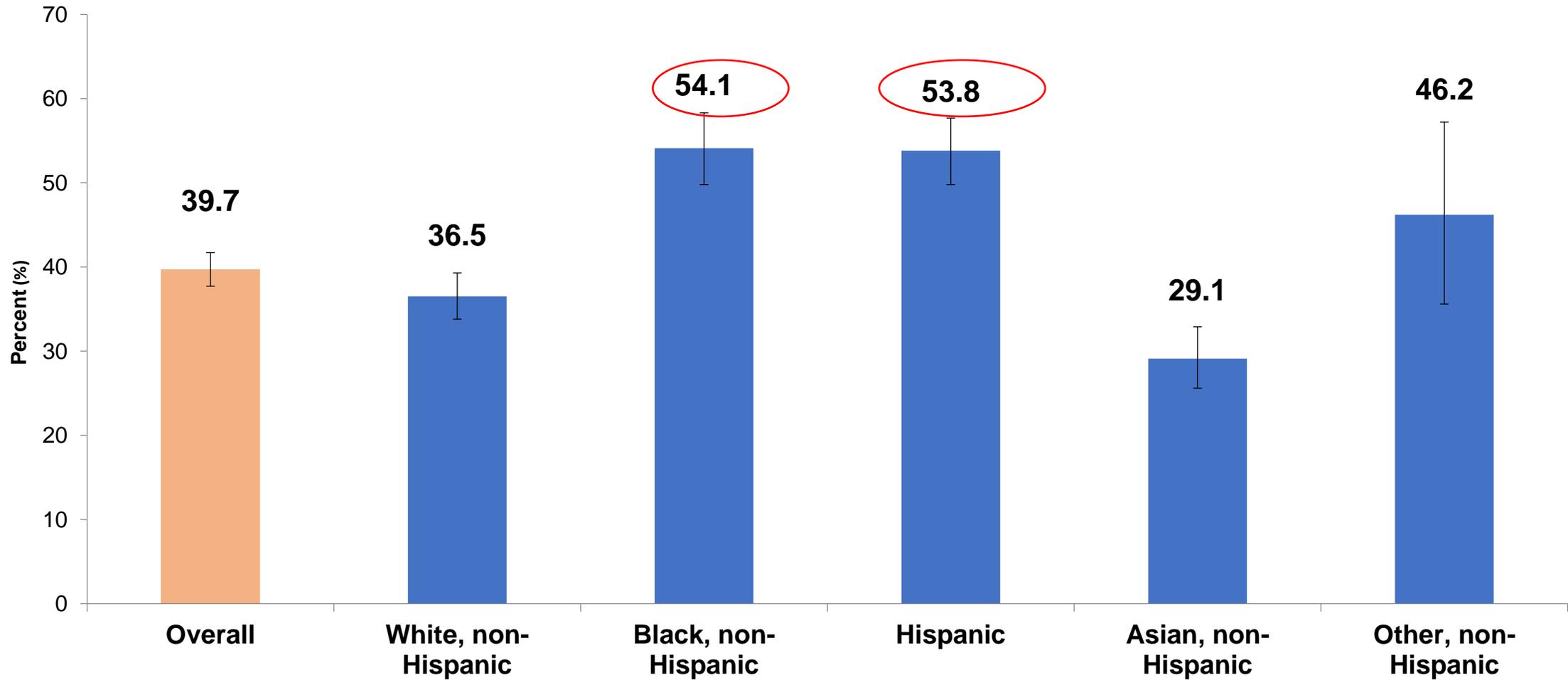
I took *unpaid* leave from my job

I did not take leave

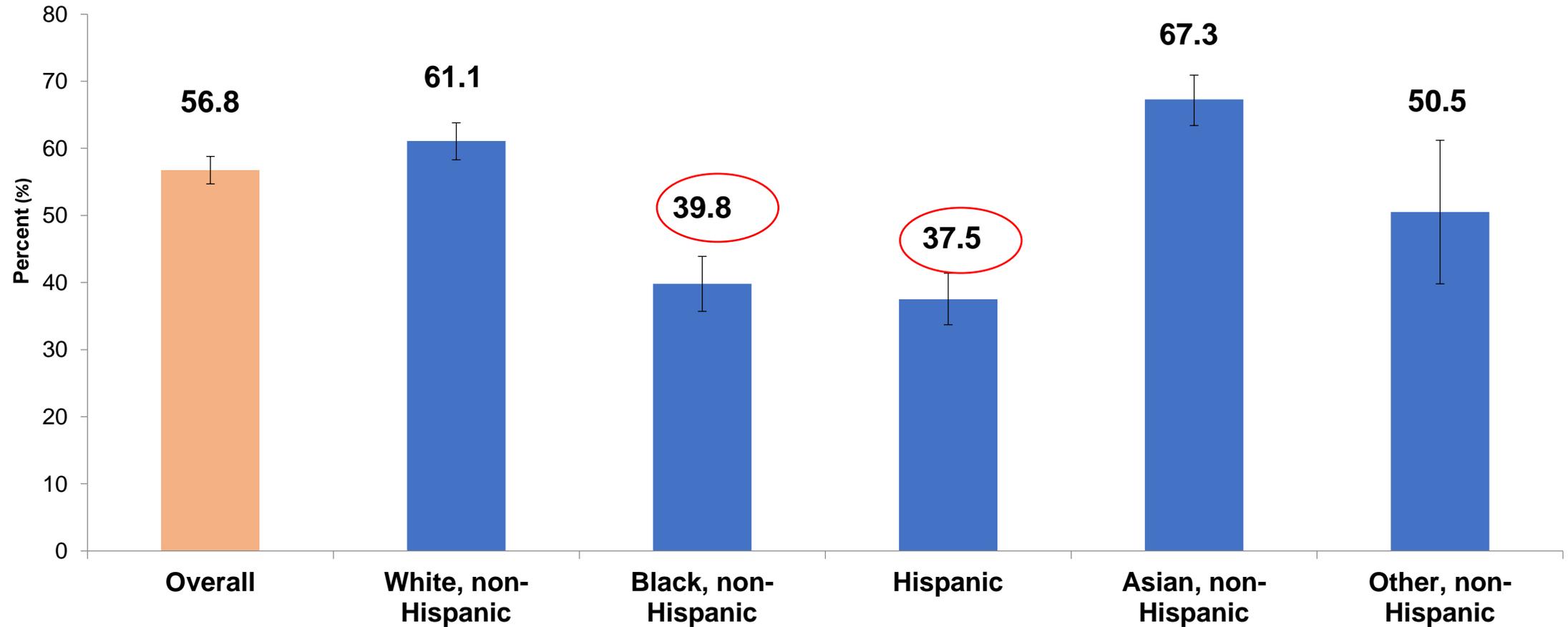
# Types of Postpartum Maternity Leave, 2012-2016



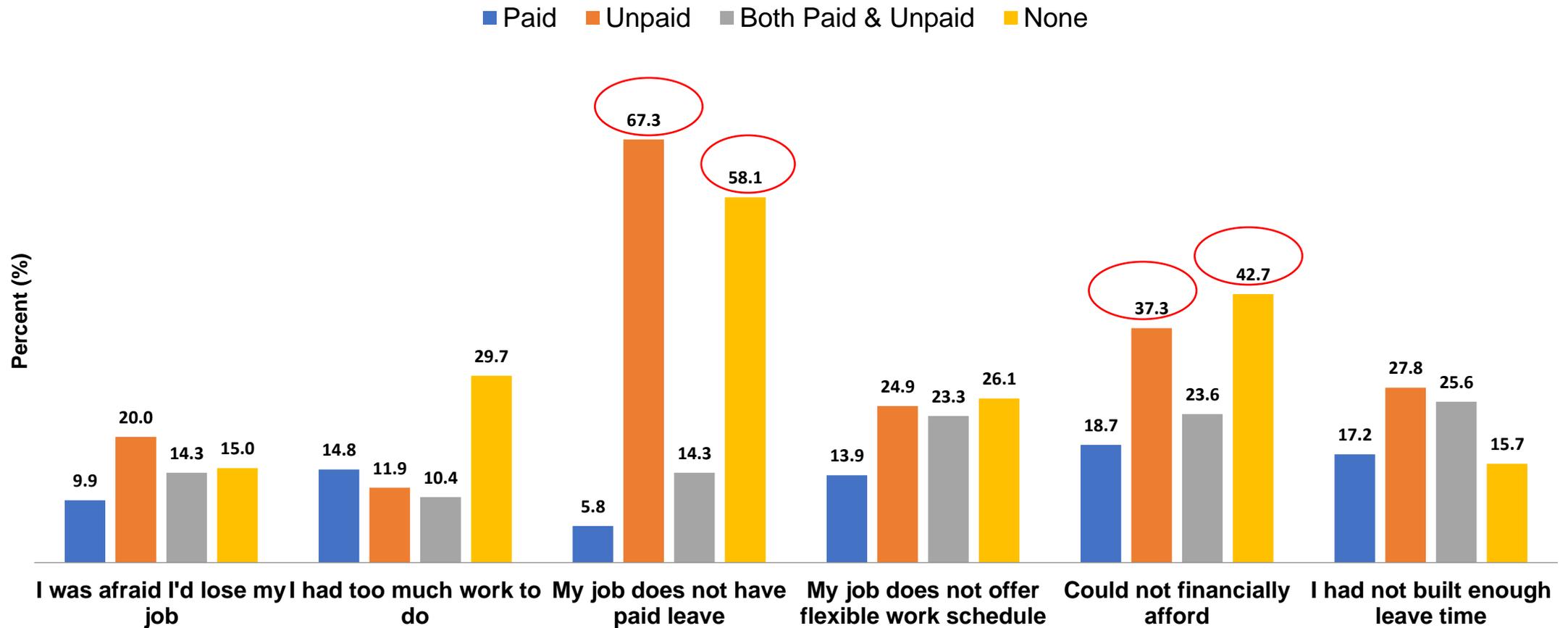
# Unpaid Leave by Race/Ethnicity, MA 2012-2016



# At Least Some Paid Leave by Race/Ethnicity, MA 2012-2016



# Reasons Impacting All Leave Decisions by Leave Type, MA 2012-2016





# Massachusetts Department of Public Health

## **National and State Family and Medical Leave Programs**

# National and State Family and Medical Leave Programs

- **USA is the only** high-income country without paid maternity leave
- **Current national unpaid leave policy:**
  - Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), 1993
  - Unpaid leave for 12 weeks
  - Guarantees job protection and employer contribution to health insurance
- **Current paid leave programs:**
  - State: 6 states & Washington DC; first passed in CA in 2002
  - Local: Multiple cities and counties
  - Employer: covers 14% of U.S. workers

# State Paid FML Programs

	CA	NJ	RI	NY	DC*	WA*	MA*
Wages replaced	60 - 70%	66%	60%	50 - 67%	50 - 90%	50 - 90%	50 - 80%
Cap (per week)	\$1,252	\$650	\$852	\$746	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$850
Length (weeks)	6-52	6-26	4-30	8-26	2-8	12-14	12-26
TDI state	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No

\*Leave taking not yet in effect

TDI = Temporary Disability Insurance

# MA Family and Medical Leave Program

- The MA Family and Medical Leave program will be created and administered by the new Department of Family and Medical Leave, as established by Chapter 121 of the Acts of 2018.
- Beginning in 2021, employees may use up to 12 weeks of family leave to, among other things, **bond with a child within one year of the child's birth or placement from foster care or adoption.**

# MA Family and Medical Leave Program: Timeline

- Jan. 29, 2019--Draft regulations available informally for review from Department of Family and Medical Leave
- March 31, 2019—Draft regulations will be officially published for public comment and hearing
- July 1, 2019--Final regulations must be promulgated
- **Jan. 1, 2021**—Most new benefits available, including time for parent/child bonding
- June 30, 2021—All new benefits available

# Summary

- About 57% of MA mothers reported to have taken at least some paid leave during 2012-2016.
- Compared to White, Non-Hispanic mothers, Black, Non-Hispanic and Hispanic mothers reported lower prevalence of taking at least some paid leave during 2012-2016.
- The main reasons impacting leave decisions include “I had not built enough leave time”, “I could not financially afford to take leave,” “My job does not offer flexible work schedule” and “My job does not have paid leave”.
- Among MA mothers who took unpaid leave, 67.3% said that *their job did not offer paid leave* and 37.3% said that they *could not financially afford taking leave*.
- Among MA mothers who did not take any leave, 58.1 % said that *their job did not offer paid leave* and 42.7% said that they *could not financially afford taking leave*.
- MA Family and Medical Leave program will offer paid leave to eligible individuals in 2021.



# Massachusetts Department of Public Health

**THANK YOU**  
**QUESTIONS?**

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