



Dave Thomas
Foundation
for Adoption®

**Adoption-Friendly
Workplace™**

Sample Adoption Benefits Proposal for Employees

Note: Items in red should be replaced by your own text as you prepare to present an adoption benefits proposal to your organization.

*Averages referenced below are based on information provided by organizations that participated in the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption's 2022 Best Adoption-Friendly Workplace survey.

Making [Organization] an Adoption-Friendly Workplace **Proposal to add adoption benefits to [Organization's] employee benefits policy**

Introduction

Recognizing the needs of adoptive parents, and for equity among all employees forming families, many employers establish adoption benefits. These include financial reimbursement and/or paid leave. Some organizations also include unpaid leave beyond the requirements of the Family Medical Leave Act.

Employers are increasingly offering adoption benefits to:

- Strengthen employee loyalty, retention, goodwill and productivity.
- Gain a competitive edge in recruiting new employees.
- Enhance the organization's family-friendly image.
- Recognize the need to support adoptive and biological parents.
- Give employees time to bond with their children.
- Make adoption more affordable.
- Help move children from foster care to loving, adoptive homes.

It's the right thing to do.

Request for Adding Adoption Benefits

I am requesting that [Organization] establish an adoption benefits policy starting [date]. I suggest that we use the outline below as a guide and consider the following:

Financial Reimbursement

Eligible adoption-related expenses will be reimbursed up to a maximum of [\$x; specify amount – the average* is \$12,000] per child or per adoption. Expenses directly related to the adoption are reimbursable, including but not limited to:

- Application fees
- Home studies
- Agency and placement fees
- Legal fees and court costs
- Immigration, immunization and translation fees
- Transportation, meals and lodging

Timing

Because the adoption process can take a substantial period of time to complete and is sometimes unsuccessful, [Organization] should consider reimbursing employees as costs are incurred, and regardless of the outcome.

Utilization Rates

Please note for budgeting purposes that according to the Society for Human Resource Management, less than 1% of eligible employees generally use adoption benefits in any given year.

Adoption Leave of Absence

Recognizing that adoption is a time-intensive process, and that a parent needs time to bond with their child, [Organization] could offer paid and unpaid leave.

- **Paid leave**

An employee who adopts, whether male or female, would be eligible for up to [x; specify time – most policies range from two to 26 weeks – the average* is 8.3] weeks of paid leave. This time may be utilized pre- or post-adoption, and will be applied to leave allowed under the Family Medical Leave Act.

- **Unpaid leave**

Additionally, the employee would be eligible for up to [x; specify time – most policies range from one week to one year] additional weeks of unpaid leave. During this time, employees will continue to receive regular benefits, which are related to date of hire.

Other Organizations Offering Adoption Benefits

According to the Society for Human Resource Management's (SHRM) 2022 Employee Benefits Survey, 28% of employers provide paid adoption leave and 22% provide paid foster child leave. For [Organization] to keep pace with its competitors, we must maintain a competitive benefits package that is on par with industry standards. Each year, the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption recognizes the 100 Best Adoption-Friendly Workplaces as well as adoption advocates across the United States. The Foundation also partners with an independent, nonprofit research institute to compile benchmark and breakout lists by impact, industry, size, paid leave and foster care benefits.

Resources

The Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption offers an Adoption-Friendly Workplace employer toolkit with free resources for employers, including frequently asked questions, applicable tax laws, a sample policy, a sample reimbursement form and a sample news release.

Visit www.davethomasfoundation.org/AFW to access these resources and read stories of impact from other organizations offering adoption benefits.

Thank you for your consideration.

[Add your contact information.]



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for Adoption®

Forever Families for Children in Foster Care

The Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption is a national, nonprofit public charity dedicated exclusively to finding permanent homes for the more than 140,000 children waiting in North America's foster care systems. Created by Wendy's® founder Dave Thomas, who was adopted, the Foundation implements evidence-based, results-driven national service programs, foster care adoption awareness campaigns and innovative grantmaking.

Learn more and access free resources to support the adoption journey at davethomasfoundation.org.