Making [Company] an Adoption-Friendly Workplace
Proposal to add adoption benefits to [Company’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 companies 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 company’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 [Company] 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 – policies range from $7,500 to unlimited – the average is $9,300*] 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, [Company] 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 the benefit in any given year.

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 company.

*Averages referenced below are based on data supplied by companies recognized on the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption’s 100 Best Adoption-Friendly Workplaces list in 2019.
Adoption Leave of Absence
Recognizing that adoption is a time-intensive process, and that the parent will need time to bond with the child, [Company] 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 7*] 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 Companies Offering Adoption Benefits
Aon Hewitt's survey of 1,000 major United States employers revealed that companies offering financial adoption benefits rose from 12% in 1990 to 56% in 2015. For [Company] 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.

Resources
The Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption offers an Adoption-Friendly Workplace toolkit of free resources, 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 companies offering adoption benefits.

Thank you for your consideration.

[Add your contact information.]