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# THE CUSTOM-FIT WORKPLACE

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[www.customfitworkplace.org](http://www.customfitworkplace.org)

## Everyone deserves a job that fits.

Workplace practices that honor workers' responsibilities both on the job and off create a win for employees and employers alike.



### PAID WORK AND NEW BABIES

*Everyone deserves work that fits.* New parents in particular need to be able to balance paid work responsibilities with parental responsibilities. At [CustomFitWorkplace.org](http://CustomFitWorkplace.org), and initiative of [MomsRising.org](http://MomsRising.org), we describe custom-fit work practices that are great for both parents and employers. Here are four considerations for employed parents who have a newborn:

### PARENTAL LEAVE OPTIONS

Ideally, new parents have the option to take paid time off to care for a new baby. Some employers, and two states (CA & NJ), do currently offer paid family leave. And a large number of new parents can take unpaid time off thanks to the Family Medical Leave Act.

That said, for many economic or personal reasons, many parents must, or choose to, return to work soon after a child's birth, so it is important for organizations to offer flexible, custom-fit work options to new parents.

### FINDING A CUSTOM FIT

At [CustomFitWorkplace.org](http://CustomFitWorkplace.org), you'll find information and resources for both employees and employers interested in flexible, virtual (sometimes described as remote work or telecommuting) and high commitment work practices (work environments that are based upon a high level of trust and respect between workers and employers coupled with shared responsibility for the success of the organization) as well as non-linear career tracks that better fit modern work lives. Employee productivity and retention improves when employees see management prioritizing work that fits their personal lives. Also, great workplaces attract the best workers as well as clients and customers

New parents who return to work will be able to pick up where they left off more easily when they come back to an employer that leverages the advantages of custom-fit work practices and be in a position to be a great long term asset to their employer. Custom-fit work options are a win-win for everyone, including employer's bottom line.

### RETURNING TO WORK—WITH A BABY!

A number of U.S. employers have voluntarily made great strides in supporting breastfeeding mothers and with the passage of health reform, all employers are now required to do so. There are also "babies at work" programs, in which new parents bring their young babies to work until the babies are six to eight months or crawling. These programs are receiving wide support according to the Parenting in the Workplace Institute, which certifies such programs. Over 140 U.S. organizations have "babies at work" programs, including law firms, software companies, and government agencies. For more information, visit [BabiesAtWork.org](http://BabiesAtWork.org) and [ParentingAtWork.org](http://ParentingAtWork.org). To read more about policies that encourage breastfeeding, visit [www.momsrising.org/blog/5-things-employers-should-know-about-breastfeeding/](http://www.momsrising.org/blog/5-things-employers-should-know-about-breastfeeding/).

### FINDING GREAT CHILDCARE

And for when parents need childcare for optimal work/life fit, visit [www.momsrising.org/page/resources](http://www.momsrising.org/page/resources) for help finding high-quality childcare.

The Custom-Fit Workplace: Choose When, Where, and How to Work and Boost Your Bottom Line, by Joan Blades and Nanette Fondas, published by Jossey Bass, is an indispensable handbook for transforming the way we work and breaking free from the old, inflexible, 40 and 40-plus-hour workweek. The authors show individuals creative ways to fit work requirements with life obligations, and persuade managers to adopt these custom-fit work strategies to improve their bottom line. For more information, visit [CustomFitWorkplace.org](http://CustomFitWorkplace.org)

[MomsRising.org](http://MomsRising.org) has been working to bring together millions of people who share a common concern about the need to build a more family-friendly America since 2006.