



## **FACTS ABOUT THE FMLA: WHAT DOES IT DO, WHO USES IT, & HOW<sup>i</sup>**

*The Family & Medical Leave Act (FMLA) is one of the most significant advances for families in our nation's history. More than 50 million employees have taken leave under the FMLA since it was enacted twelve years ago.*

### **The FMLA at a Glance...**

- ◆ The FMLA was signed into law on February 5, 1993.
- ◆ It went into effect on August 5, 1993.
- ◆ The FMLA allows workers to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to care for newborns, newly adopted and foster children and seriously ill family members, or to recover from their own illnesses.

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **How Many People have Benefited from the FMLA?**

- ③ Over 50 million Americans have taken job-protected leave under the FMLA since its passage twelve years ago in 1993.
- ③ The families of these 50 million Americans have also benefited from the Act.

### **Why Do People Take Family and Medical Leave?**

- ③ 52% of people take leave to care for their own serious illness.
- ③ 31% of people take leave to care for a seriously ill family member.
- ③ 18% of people take leave to care for a new child.

### **Who Takes Family and Medical Leave?**

- ③ 42% of leave-takers are men.
- ③ 58% are women.

### **For How Long Do People Take Family and Medical Leave?**

- ③ 50% of workers take family and medical leave for 10 days or less.
- ③ 50% of workers taking leave for a serious illness (their own or a family members) take leave for 10 days or less.

### **How Many Workers Are Protected by the FMLA?**

- ③ About 60% of workers are protected by the FMLA.

### **Does Not Receiving Compensation While on Leave Affect a Person's Ability to Take Leave?**

- ③ 78% of those who need leave but do not take it, do not take leave because they cannot afford it.

### **How Do Employees Feel About Family and Medical Leave?**

- ③ 4 in 5 employees say that every worker should be able to take FMLA leave.
- ③ More than 4 in 5 employees who have taken added duties when a co-worker has taken FMLA leave say that the impact on them was neutral or positive.
- ③ 9 in 10 FMLA-covered employers report that family and medical leave has a neutral or positive affect on their employees' morale.

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<sup>i</sup> All findings reported here were compiled from the U.S. Department of Labor report, *Balancing the Needs of Families and Employers: Family and Medical Leave Surveys 2000 Update*, conducted by Westat for the U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, DC, 2000. The findings are based on two nationally-representative, random-sample surveys: one representing all employees and one representing private-sector establishments.