



NEWS RELEASE

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Wake County Commissioners Adopt Paid Parental Leave Policy, New Health and Well-Being Resolution

Wake County continues to implement policies and initiatives that support the health and well-being of its employees, while making it easier to recruit and retain top-notch talent.

At its Nov. 7 meeting, the Wake County Board of Commissioners unanimously approved a Paid Parental Leave Policy and a Health and Well-Being Resolution.

“Our actions tonight illustrate our commitment to continually invest in our employees,” said Board Chairman James West. “Our staff is what makes our organization successful, and through these measures, we demonstrate that we care about them both inside and outside the workplace.”

The Paid Parental Leave Policy allows an employee who has given birth, adopted a child, or become the guardian of a child through foster care or other means to take up to six weeks of paid leave time. For births that involve complications or a cesarean section, eight weeks of paid leave are allowed.

“Paid Parental Leave is associated with healthier outcomes for mothers and children,” said Commissioner Jessica Holmes. “The United States is one of the few industrialized countries that does not provide Paid Parental Leave, and today we are blazing the way in encouraging healthy living and lifestyles so we can continue to recruit and retain the best talent in the Triangle.”

The Health and Well-Being Resolution provides guidelines to:

- Improve the nutritional quality of food sold or provided by the county and on public property, including vending;
- Encourage a physically active environment, without competing with the private sector; and

- Authorize the county manager to implement policies, procedures and programs to support the health and well-being of employees, as well as have a positive impact on health care costs.

“This resolution represents the next step in our efforts to create a culture of health in Wake County,” said Vice Chair Sig Hutchinson. “We want to support our employees’ healthy lifestyles and give them every opportunity to achieve their goals through healthy eating, physical activity and educational programming.”

The Paid Parental Leave Policy and the Health and Wellbeing Ordinance are the latest examples of the board’s efforts to improve employee recruitment and retention. They follow actions taken in 2015 to institute a living wage for county employees and enact a fair hiring ordinance, which gives people with criminal backgrounds who apply for county jobs the opportunity to compete fairly in the hiring process.

Wake County is recognized locally and nationally for excellence in employee health and wellness. It was named the 55th Healthiest Workplace in America for 2016 in the Healthiest 100 Workplaces awards. The *Triangle Business Journal* named Wake County the second Healthiest Employer in the Triangle for 2016.

The county was recognized for its Living Great @ Wake program, which helps employees improve their physical, emotional, financial and social wellness.

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