



Commonwealth of Virginia
Office of Governor Ralph S. Northam

June 26, 2018

Dear State Employees:

In the approximately six months that I have served as your Governor, I have been impressed by your dedication as public servants of the Commonwealth. You are the backbone of state government and work hard to keep Virginia strong.

Earlier today, I issued two Executive Orders to provide support for state employees both at work and at home. These initiatives address paid parental leave, and early child care and education.

Our new paid parental leave policy ([Executive Order Number Twelve](#)) authorizes paid parental leave for employees of executive branch state agencies. The new benefit provides up to eight weeks of paid parental leave to enable employees to care for and bond with a newborn, or for a child under the age of eighteen (18) newly-placed for adoption, foster or custodial care. The paid leave may be used in combination with other leave benefits and will apply to both parents if both are eligible state employees.

Research shows that paid time-off to bond with our children provides benefits for the children, their parents, and the parents' employers. Introducing a new child into a family is a time of great joy, but can also be stressful. We are hoping to alleviate some of that stress.

You can find more details on this new policy on the Department of Human Resource Management's website at www.dhrm.virginia.gov.

[Executive Order Number Thirteen](#) sets up an Advisory Commission on Quality Child Care to study early child care and learning options for state employees. The advisory commission will study the feasibility of providing evidence-based early care and learning programs for young children of state employees working on or around Capitol Square in Richmond. It will also explore the creation of similar programs for state workers in other parts of the Commonwealth, will evaluate benefits offered related to supporting the early care and learning of employees' children, and will provide recommendations on policies that will help the Commonwealth attract and retain talented state employees with young children.

I believe these actions are the right thing to do, and they recognize the diverse make-up of today's families.

Thank you for all you do for this great Commonwealth.

Sincerely,
Governor Ralph Northam