KEEPING WOMEN IN THE WORKFORCE
During a Pandemic and Beyond

A DIGITAL EVENT
SEPT 23-26, 2020
MEET THE TEAM

• Megan Williams – Continuous Improvement Specialist, Denver Peak Academy at the City and County of Denver, CWLG Conference Chair

• Dionne Williams – Executive Director for the Office of Children’s Affairs, City and County of Denver

• Kelly Houghteling – Interim Town Manager, Town of Wellington, National League of Women in Government President

ABOUT THE PLAYBOOK:

We want this to be as turn-key as possible. Playbook will include source material, policy templates, tool explanation/implementation guides.
For the first time in history, the nation's unemployment claims have a largely female, non-white face to them. – Katie Kindelan, ABC News
WHAT THIS MEANS

• Women account for 54% of total job loss due to COVID-19
• 1 out of 4 women report lack of childcare as reason for unemployment during the pandemic, twice the rate of men
• Women of color lose even more hours due to lack of childcare
• Calls to Center for Worklife Law increased 250% between April and June – most from mothers

"One single mom is ineligible for Families First, which excludes health care workers, emergency responders and those who work for companies with over 500 employees. She has no child care options for her 6-year-old and 8-month-old. She exhausted all of her paid leave options while on maternity leave. "I have been given two options: either resign or get fired," she told us. She resigned. She’s one of an estimated 106 million people not guaranteed coverage under the act. – Joan C. Williams, professor of law and director of the Center for WorkLife Law at the University of California, Hastings, College of the Law."
MAKING A BAD SITUATION WORSE

• U.S. ranked 17th out of 22 industrialized countries in female labor force due to lack of family friendly policies

• Women who leave the workforce for a short period of time see the economic impact for the rest of their career

• Poverty rate for women over 65 is almost double that of men over 65

• For every $1 men make, women make $0.80

• Quality childcare was already an issue before the pandemic
WOMEN MAKE ORGANIZATIONS BETTER

A gender-diverse workforce:

• Better serves diverse populations
• Outperforms those lacking diversity, especially when leadership is diverse
• Constantly reexamines facts and remains objective
• Leads to higher levels of innovation and improved financial performance
• Provides easier access to resources, such as wider industry knowledge

91% of working Americans said mothers can bring unique skills to leadership roles
FLEX SCHEDULES & PERFORMANCE METRICS

A one-two punch to support working mothers and your organization’s goals
HOW THIS CAN HELP

• Makes an impossible situation less impossible – flexibility is most mothers’ #1 request

• If you know the goals your team should be hitting, it shouldn’t matter when they do the work

• Puts performance metrics into action, which helps any organization meet their goal

• Mothers on flex schedules end up working more hours, and make more money throughout their career

ICMA conference
HOW TO IMPLEMENT

• Include Flexible Schedule Policy in your Employee Handbook – in your playbook

• Pick performance metrics that measure predictable and influenceable actions to meet your ultimate goals

• Create a dashboard that easily shows these performance metrics to the team and the supervisor
FAMILY LEAVE POLICIES & CROSS TRAINING

Because only women can have children, but anyone can be hit by a bus
HOW THIS CAN HELP

• Better health outcomes for children and parents
• Women are more likely to return to their job if offered paid family leave
• Women are more likely to be the caregiver of an elderly family member
• Additional business outcomes: can reduce backlogs, great for workload balancing, can reduce budget risks like turnover costs and frozen positions for men and women
HOW TO IMPLEMENT

• Include Family Leave Policy in your Employee Handbook – in your playbook
• Ensure policy is open to men and women
• Create simple and easily understandable standard work for each value stream
• Cross trainer tests the standard work, trains with expert, pilots while expert is on vacation
CHILD CARE SUPPORT
HOW THIS CAN HELP

• Providers are at risk: lost revenue, strict reopening guidelines, high operating costs and lower parental confidence

• Families are at risk: remote schooling and putting pressure on employers, providers, family networks and parents, especially essential workers (often women) and families facing disadvantage.

• Children are at risk: Fewer safe spaces and interactions with trusted adults, increased learning loss, and decreased socialization

“Parents with minor children comprise almost one-third of the country’s workforce; any economic recovery will rely on their continued participation or reentry into the labor force. The status of schools and childcare programs in the fall will dictate the ability of working parents to fully return to work, and therefore will also largely dictate the speed and robustness of economic recovery.” Brookings Institute, 2020
HOW TO IMPLEMENT

• Increased access to childcare as an employee benefit
• Leverage partnerships and city assets to create new opportunities and spaces for childcare
• Create funding channels that support working families and provide multiple options for care
• Prioritize caregivers in recovery plans, including access to testing, supplies, basic needs services, training, and communications with families
EQUITABLE HIRING, ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT, COMPENSATION & TRAINING
EQUITABLE HIRING

- Remove names and other clues about gender and race from resumes
- Eliminate gendered phrasing in job ad and Muni Code
- Include salary & don’t ask salary history
- Expand job posting locations
- Be less critical of employment gaps
- Bias training for hiring panel
- Finalist pool with more than one minority
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Statement
ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT

1. **Manager Support** – lead with empathy and **listen** to your employees

2. **Sponsorship** – sponsorship can open doors

3. **Inclusive and Unbiased Hiring and Promotion** – Create fair hiring and promotions, conduction pay audit / compensation study, look beyond wages

Source: Women in the Workplace, 2019 @leaninorg

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The “Problem” Woman of Colour in the Workplace

- **The Woman of Colour enters the organization**
  - Honeyymoon
    - the Woman of Colour feels welcomed, needed, and happy
  - Reality
    - the Woman of Colour points out issues within the organization
    - she tries to work within the organization’s structure and policies
    - she ponders for accountability

- **The Woman of Colour exits the organization**
  - Willing to go
  - Reluctant to go

- **Response**
  - the organization denies, ignores, and blames
  - the responsibility of fixing the problem is placed on the Woman of Colour
  - People of Colour are pitted against one another

- **Retaliation**
  - the organization decides that the woman of colour is the problem and targets her
  - the organization labels the conflict as a “communication issue” or claims that she is not qualified or “not a good fit”

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Adapted from “The chronicle of the problem woman of color in a non-profit” by SaltHouse Progressive Alliance for Nonviolence
www.coco-net.org
The Gender Pay Gap Visualized
Gender pay gaps and equal pay days for different races and ethnicities in the U.S.

For every dollar white, non-Hispanic men earned in 2018, women were paid...

- Asian women: 85 cents
- Women overall*: 80 cents
- White non-Hispanic women: 77 cents
- Black women: 61 cents
- Native American women: 58 cents
- Latina women: 53 cents

To earn what white, non-Hispanic men earned in 2018, they would have to work until...

- Mar 5, 2019
- Apr 2, 2019
- Apr 19, 2019
- Aug 22, 2019
- Sept 23, 2019
- Nov 20, 2019

* compared to men overall
Based on median annual earnings of full-time, year-round workers
Sources: National Women's Law Center, Wikimedia Commons
TRAINING

Problem: Women have less access to training & training budgets are cut in downturns

Solution:

• Ensure BIPOC/women are explicitly offered development opportunities
• In-house training options
• Partner with outside agencies/cities
• Cross training employee in new skills
• Guest speakers from college or university
• Provide opportunities to manage people and projects
• Programming from ICMA Affiliate Groups

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STAY IN TOUCH

We’re here to help and celebrate your successes!

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