



IN CALIFORNIA, CARE CAN'T WAIT:

BUILDING CARE SYSTEMS THAT WORK FOR ALL



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THE CURRENT STATE OF CARE

Across California, people of every age, ability and experience lack access to care; child care workers and direct care workers aren't paid a family sustaining wage, and family caregivers don't have the support they need to provide the care that their loved ones need. The need for public investments in child care, Home and Community Based-Services (HCBS) and paid leave is widely felt in the state, a reflection of long-standing racial, gender, ability, age and class-based inequities that have resulted in a patchwork system for care that too often prevents California families and communities from thriving. The urgency for change is reflected in a 2021¹ survey conducted by Caring Across Generations, in partnership with local allied organizations, of 125 California caregivers in the cities of Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Sacramento. In their own words, California caregivers shared the many challenges families encounter as they navigate caregiving responsibilities, largely on their own.



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“You just don't have any relief from the constant day to day. It can and it does affect your overall morale in caregiving.”

- MARIA, SAN FRANCISCO

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¹ Data was collected from online surveys with 125 caregivers across three areas of care: Early Childcare and Education Services, Paid Family and Medical Leave, and Long-term Supports and Services from the cities of San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Sacramento.

THE NEED FOR CARE IS GROWING

Despite the fact that nearly everyone in California is, will be, or will need a caregiver at some point in their lives, our systems lack the capacity to care for all. California does not have the systems in place to provide universal access to Long-term Services and Supports (LTSS) in the home and community for older adults and people with disabilities, Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), or Paid Family and Medical Leave (PFML) for all people who need it. Instead, there is a patchwork care infrastructure that leaves Californians scrambling to find the care they need.

WHO ARE CALIFORNIA'S CAREGIVERS?

Caregivers include a much broader number of people than is often understood. While we often only think of paid caregivers as healthcare professionals, paid caregivers are also home health aides, job coaches and other direct care workers. Without enough direct care workers, unpaid caregivers have to step up and provide thousands of hours of support to parents, children, grandparents, siblings, neighbors, and friends, often at great expense. These caregivers are rarely financially compensated for the support they provide in assisting with daily activities, finances, companionship, and more. Households with unpaid caregivers, whether living on one income or two, often face enormous—sometimes insurmountable—financial strain due to high and increasing cost of living.



THERE ARE **6.7**
MILLION FAMILY
CAREGIVERS
IN CALIFORNIA²,
AND NEARLY
700,000 DIRECT
CARE WORKERS.³

² Tan, Sean. et al. 2021. Who Is Caring for the Caregivers? The Financial, Physical, and Mental Health Costs of Caregiving in California, UCLA Center for Health Policy Research.

³ PHI. "Workforce Data Center." Accessed 7/13/2022.
<https://www.phinational.org/policy-research/workforce-data-center/#states=06>



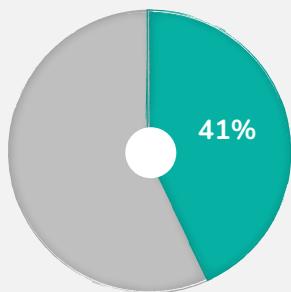
California caregivers provide 20 or more hours of care to a family member or friend in a typical week.

BUT ONLY

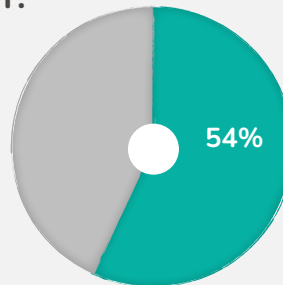


California caregivers receive payment for any of the hours spent providing care.⁴

ACCORDING TO OUR CALIFORNIA CAREGIVER SURVEY:



41% of respondents said they faced issues affording care, both for child care and long-term care.



54% of respondents experienced a loss of income when trying to access paid leave.

Even for those lucky enough to find direct care workers, or child care, paid caregivers who are employed privately by families or through an agency are often so poorly compensated that turnover in the profession is alarmingly high, the quality of care provided may not be what it could or should be, and those in need of care are forced to wait far too long to receive the support they need. This has been the status quo for decades, and it is unacceptable.



Usually when you need long-term care services you need it now, not in the future. With a waitlist, you never know when an opening is going to occur.

- TIEN, SACRAMENTO



⁴ Tan, Sean. et al. 2021. Who Is Caring for the Caregivers? The Financial, Physical, and Mental Health Costs of Caregiving in California, UCLA Center for Health Policy Research.

Across the country and especially in California, the cost of living continues to rise along with the growing demand for affordable, quality care for both young and aging populations. Caregiving as we know it today is simply unsustainable.

“

My working hours were reduced to part time, and eventually I had to either choose to take care of my mom or agree to be laid off.

- IVANA, LOS ANGELES

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California policy makers who care about care, including those directly impacted, must join together to create solutions across the care system that gives all Californians a better chance to support their loved ones financially, physically and emotionally.

ACCORDING TO OUR CALIFORNIA CAREGIVER SURVEY, OF BIPOC CAREGIVERS:



41%

reported experiencing discrimination when attempting to access child care.

23%

reported experiencing discrimination when attempting to access long-term care.

51%

reported experiencing issues finding culturally aligned child care.

40%

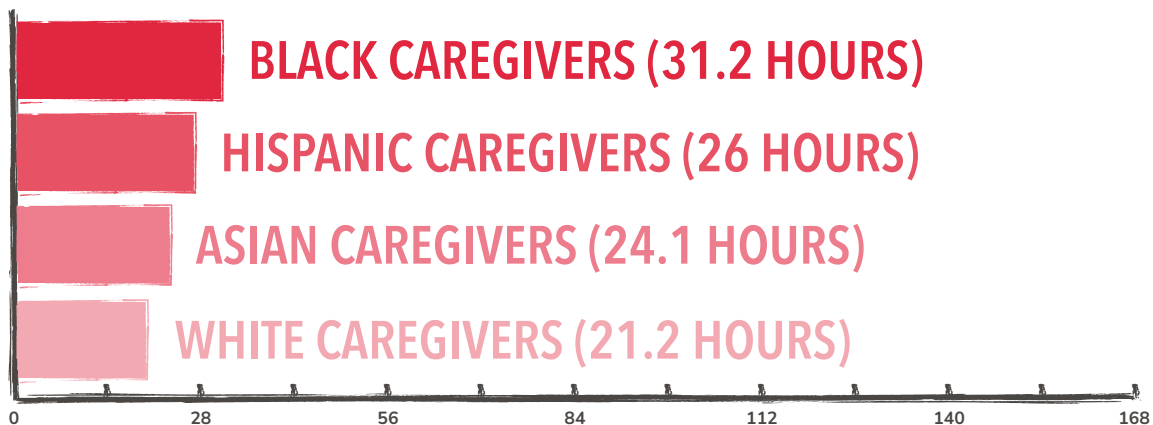
reported experiencing issues finding culturally aligned long-term care.

BIPOC CAREGIVERS NEED SUPPORT

The lack of a care infrastructure places the heaviest burden upon women in Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities in California. This situation has long trapped BIPOC women, children, and families in generational poverty. Overhauling and strengthening California's caregiving infrastructure can break that bleak cycle.



HOURS SPENT CARING PER WEEK⁵:



Hispanic (61%) and Black (59%) caregivers more often report that caregiving provides them with a sense of purpose at a significantly higher rate than for both White (46%) and Asian American (48%) caregivers⁶.

With support, BIPOC caregivers will be able to care for their families without the high cost of coming in and out of the workforce and the stressors of navigating outdated, inadequate systems that take for granted the costs they will bear.

⁵: AARP Family Caregiving and National Alliance for Caregiving. May 2020. "Caregiving in the U.S." <https://www.caregiving.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/full-report-caregiving-in-the-united-states-01-21.pdf>

⁶: National Alliance for Caregiving, National Minority Quality Forum, and Diverse Elders Coalition. Nov 2021. "Caregiving in a Diverse America: Beginning to Understand the Systemic Challenges Facing American Family Caregivers." https://www.caregiving.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/NAC_AmgenDiverseCaregiversReport_FinalDigital-112121.pdf



INVESTMENTS WORK: PANDEMIC SPOTLIGHT

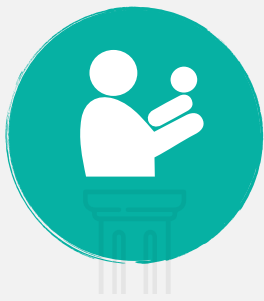
The pandemic shone a spotlight on the lack of a caregiving infrastructure in California, yet short-term federal policy solutions across the care pillars have benefited Californians. The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) that passed in March of 2021 included:

- \$4.6 billion spending plan to support access to home and community-based services (HCBS), including raising wages for paid direct care workers.
- \$3.8 billion in child care ARPA funding, including the \$2.3 billion in funds that California received specifically for direct support to child care providers.
- Extension of emergency COVID paid leave through September 2021.

THE SOLUTION: UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO CARE

In order to create a system that provides universal care for all of California's families, we must change the patchwork system that currently exists into a robust system that covers every Californian.

This universal caregiving system is made up of three essential components:



**EARLY
CHILDHOOD
CARE AND
EDUCATION
(ECCE)**



**PAID FAMILY
AND
MEDICAL LEAVE
(PFML)**



**LONG TERM
SERVICES AND
SUPPORTS
(LTSS)**

**SPECIFICALLY EXPANDING ACCESS
TO HOME AND COMMUNITY-BASED
SERVICES (HCBS).**

CALIFORNIA CARE CAN'T WAIT

The good news is that “California Care Can’t Wait,” a campaign to create and pass policy solutions across care systems, is advocating for a better future for caregivers: one in which our society makes necessary investments in the systems that support caregiving and recognizes care as a shared responsibility, not an individual one. To make that future a reality, we must reimagine care by creating new state level policies for universal child care, paid leave, and long-term services and supports, including expanding access to home and community-based services. Along the way, we must seize every opportunity to expand access to all three pillars of our care system, leverage federal investments across the care pillars, and strengthen systems that support both paid and unpaid caregivers. Care consumers, too, must be able to earn a decent living while providing – and receiving – dignified care at every stage of life.

POWER BUILDING FOR CARE:

Caregivers – whether they are paid or unpaid for their essential work – have the power to change our caregiving system if they come together, tell their stories, and call on our elected leaders to create policies that support families across generations.

“

I would ask for a law so that being a caregiver doesn't come with economic worries, and there aren't so many obstacles to have the services and help for the person we care for.
And to recognize our labors.

- ANALISA, LOS ANGELES

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THE TIME IS NOW

As California works to address the lack of support for those who receive care and provide care in California, our state leaders have an opportunity to build a robust care system in California that is smart, more equitable, more cost effective and more inclusive than our current systems. That means starting with a bold plan to build a strong, healthy care infrastructure in California, including child care, paid leave, and long-term services and support for people with disabilities and aging adults. Care Can't Wait in California.



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