



# 2022 Family-Friendly Focus



## San Luis Obispo County Family-Friendly Workplaces

The Family-Friendly Workplaces Program is a partnership among First 5 San Luis Obispo County, the San Luis Obispo Chamber of Commerce and the County of San Luis Obispo. This FREE initiative, housed within the Chamber, aims to help businesses hire and retain employees, support working parents' balance between job and home life, and bolster the economic vitality of our communities. The program builds on the SLO County Family-Friendly Workplace Toolkit which was created by the "We Are the Care" Initiative – a countywide coalition dedicated to addressing local child care and related work-life balance challenges faced by local families.

## DECEMBER 2022: Reflections and Projections

As we reflect on 2022, we celebrate strides to improve quality of life for families and build stronger communities on the Central Coast. The launch of the Family-Friendly Workplaces Program has bolstered local businesses' efforts to support employee-parents, address work-life balance issues, strengthen productivity, and get more parents back to work. While not a one-size-fits-all approach, here are some powerful examples of positive practices in action:

- **Morris & Garritano** offering employees the option to work remotely or in hybrid locations and to modify their hours to accommodate individual needs.
- **RRM Design Group** implementing Dependent Care Flexible Spending Accounts as well as extra assistance for unexpected child care costs.
- **Tolosa Winery** rolling out a 4/10 schedule that encourages life balance and champions sustainable strategies.
- **The Land Conservancy** integrating with California's paid family leave and medical leave programs to grant employees up to 14 weeks of full-time pay for a qualifying event or situation.
- **Trust Automation** maintaining an on-site early learning and care center to help working parents avoid breakdowns in care, reduce commute times and allow them to feel less stressed on the job and in life.
- **Lumina Alliance** breaking from traditional norms and office-space expectations to welcome babies, young children, and even family pets in the workplace.
- **The Central Coast Breastfeeding Coalition** assisting employers in creating and implementing lactation accommodation policies based on and building upon California law.
- **iFixit** providing a \$1,000 bonus to employees who have a new baby, 100% salary continuation while parents are on pregnancy leave and paid family leave, Dependent Care Flexible Spending Accounts, plus a \$1,250 stipend per year for childcare expenses.
- **Carmel & Naccasha LLP** bestowing on its team members the coveted gift of time with a summer-long '40-for-36' plan where employees get paid for their regular schedule while working a 36-hour work week.
- **The Pad Climbing** taking family-friendly practices to new heights with unlimited paid leave, lactation accommodations, infants-at-work, work location/time flexibility, telecommuting options, and extras like a workplace wellness program and financial planning help.

At the forefront of these encouraging shifts is Workforce Development Manager Christina LeFevre Latner, who leads the campaign to educate employers on the benefits of family-friendly policies— sharing the beneficial economic impacts and long-term outcomes for children, too. LeFevre Latner and her team have hosted peer-to-peer workshops where employers could exchange ideas and share experiences implementing practices and have launched an assessment tool that allows businesses to gauge how family-friendly they are, while giving employers insight into other available options to enhance practices. The tool became a base for the SLO County FFWPs Award Program and serves as a recruiting mechanism for FFWPs in hiring. In 2023, we hope to see strengthened partnerships with Chambers of Commerce across the county; the facilitation of more workshops; a growing list of businesses seeking assessments, consultation and assistance; the development of industry-specific recommendations for hospitality and/or agriculture; and the start of collaborations on building child care options. The future looks brighter when we work together to create the best possible environment for people to live, raise families, and pursue their passions in a place they love. Thanks to the County of San Luis Obispo – First 5's shared investor in the FFWPs Program; to the SLO Chamber for hosting this vital countywide program; and to the multiple community, business and government leaders who are committed to achieving a shared vision for all.