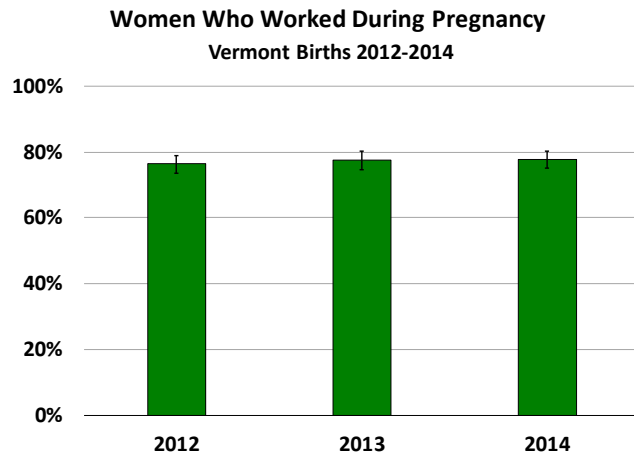


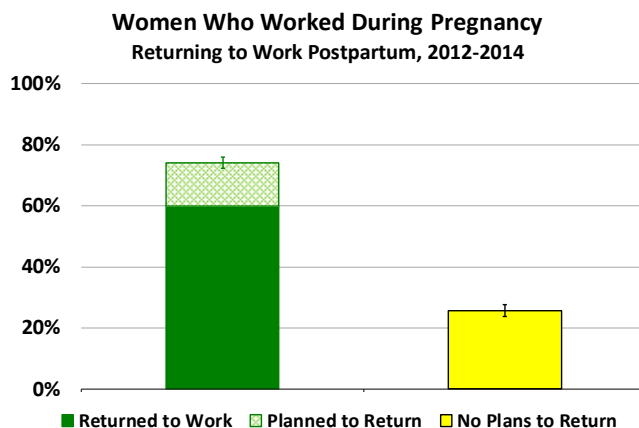
The Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS) is a survey of women who recently gave birth that asks about their experiences and behaviors before, during and shortly after their pregnancy. Vermont has participated in PRAMS since 2001. Since 2012, Vermont PRAMS has asked about employment and workplace leave. The following is a report on employment during and after pregnancies and use of workplace leave.



“During my pregnancy I did a lot of physical work. My job was very stressful and at the end of my pregnancy I was worried I would have to stop working before my baby was born, and that this was going to take time away from my 12 week leave with my baby.”

Between 2012 and 2014, 76% to 78% of women worked during pregnancy. Older mothers, those with college educations, married women, and those with higher incomes, were all more likely to work during pregnancy. Ninety percent of those with private insurance (either through her own job or that of a spouse or family member) and 62% of those on public insurance worked during pregnancy.

Returning to Work



“I am very lucky to work for a company that allows me to bring my baby to work with me for the first year. I feel a lot of support.”

In 2012-2014, 74% of mothers who worked during pregnancy had returned to work or planned to return to work; 26% had no plans to return¹.

¹ Respondents complete the PRAMS survey at different times after pregnancy, typically two to nine months postpartum. Because these varied response times are closely related to whether a mother will have already returned to work, those who had planned to return have been combined with those who had already returned to work.

Type of Leave Taken

Sixty-four percent of women had returned to work or planned to return took some amount of unpaid leave, and 51% took some amount of paid leave. Three percent took no leave. Almost half of mothers only took unpaid leave.

"My baby was born [with a congenital condition] and will need surgery. I am on an unpaid leave from work but will have to quit my job because the leave was not extended long enough."

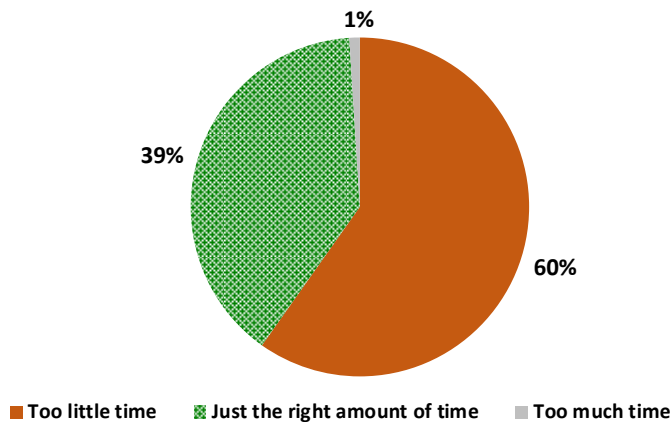
Leave Used by Mothers Who Returned or Planned to Return to Work, 2012-14 Births



Feelings about Leave Time

Sixty percent of mothers who had returned to work or planned to return to work felt that they had too little leave time available. Around 39% felt it was the right amount of time, and 1% felt they had taken too much leave.

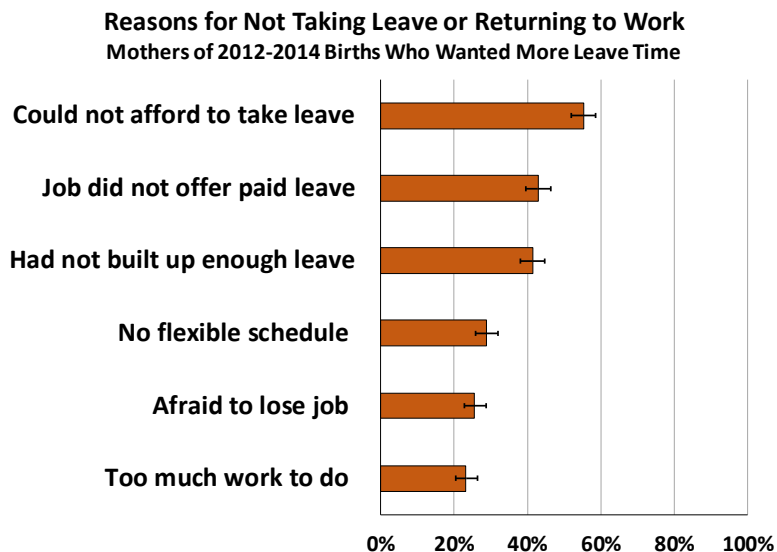
Feelings about Leave Time Duration
Mothers of 2012-14 Births, Worked During Pregnancy



"I [felt] really depressed after my son was born because my job does not pay for birth leave and I had to go back to work earlier because my family needed money."

Why Women Returned to Work Before They Wanted to

Among those who felt they had too little time, over half reported that they could not afford to take more leave time. Close to half had not built up enough leave, and a similar percentage had jobs that did not offer paid leave.



“Being protected for 12 weeks unpaid does not help pay the bills. My husband lost his job due to layoffs so I needed to go back to work 3 weeks postpartum. I was not mentally or physically ready.”

The following questions about work and workplace leave were used in this data brief:

At any time during your most recent pregnancy, did you work at a job for pay?

Have you returned to the job you had during your most recent pregnancy?

- No
- No, but I will be returning
- Yes

Which of the following describes the leave or time you took off from work after your new baby was born?

(Check all that apply)

- I took paid leave from my job
- I took unpaid leave from my job
- I did not take leave

How did you feel about the amount of time you were able to take off after the birth of your new baby?

- Too little time
- Just the right amount of time
- Too much time

Did any of the things listed below affect your decision about taking leave from work after your new baby was born?

- I could not financially afford to take leave
- I was afraid I’d lose my job if I took leave or stayed out longer
- I had too much work to do to take leave or stay out longer
- My job does not have paid leave
- My job does not offer a flexible work schedule
- I had not built up enough leave time to take any or more time off

Quotations in *bold italicized text* are from comments added by Vermont mothers who completed a PRAMS survey for a birth in the years 2012-2014. Quotes may be edited for spelling, clarity, or confidentiality.

Questions or comments about this report, or requests for further data, may be sent to John Davy at john.davy@vermont.gov or (802) 863-7661. More information about Vermont PRAMS can also be found at <http://www.healthvermont.gov/PRAMS>.