



SHRM PUBLIC POLICY PRIORITIES

SHRM®
BETTER WORKPLACES
BETTER WORLD™

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WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

ISSUE

Over 1 in 5 employers have asked employees to learn new skills to support changes in their business. Now more than ever, it is important for employers to maintain investments in training and workplace learning to give them and their employees a competitive edge.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Work-Based Learning:** SHRM supports public policies that foster and expand work-based learning opportunities, including apprenticeships, skills-based hiring and enhanced employability skills instruction in K-12 education.
- **Untapped Talent:** SHRM supports policy initiatives that promote hiring from underutilized talent pools, such as the formerly incarcerated, older workers, individuals with disabilities and veterans.
- **Education Assistance:** SHRM believes employer-provided education assistance should be expanded to include student loan repayment and the monetary limit increased to give employers flexibility in the design of benefit offerings for recruitment and retention purposes.

BOTTOM LINE

To help close the skills gap and improve individual prosperity, employers and government should adopt practices and policies that support efforts to hire, educate and train individuals for the modern workplace, including utilizing non-traditional talent pools.



WORKPLACE EQUITY

ISSUE

Everyone in the workplace deserves fair treatment. SHRM research found that 27 percent of American workers believe workplace equity is the most important issue they face at work. Addressing pay disparities remains a challenge for employers, as pay gaps may be attributable to discrimination but could also be due to differences in employee duties, contributions and/or experiences that require individualized examinations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Workplace Culture:** SHRM urges employers to foster healthy workplace cultures. Strong anti-harassment and anti-discrimination policies are important, but culture is key to prevention.
- **Pay Audits:** SHRM believes public policy should incentivize employers to proactively conduct self-evaluations of pay and correct improper disparities in compensation.
- **Transparency:** SHRM encourages employers to have discussions about pay expectations and share with their employees information on how pay decisions are made.
- **Federal Framework:** SHRM advocates for a federal standard of equal pay for equal work, rather than different standards at state and local levels.

BOTTOM LINE

Bias, discrimination and inequity in the workplace are organizational culture issues. The path toward equity means recognizing there are systemic gaps that adversely impact one group over another and addressing them proactively.



WORKPLACE FLEXIBILITY AND LEAVE

ISSUE

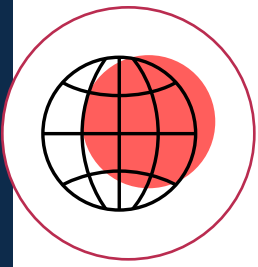
Organizations with modern workplace flexibility and leave policies are better positioned to balance the needs of their workplaces and workers. However, U.S. employers are burdened by a patchwork of state and local paid leave laws that create a fragmented, costly system. A voluntary, national paid leave program will provide employers certainty and predictability through a standardized option.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Voluntary Leave:** SHRM encourages employers to voluntarily offer paid leave and flexible work options to their employees.
- **No Mandates:** SHRM believes government mandates limit employer flexibility. Public policy should accommodate varying work environments, employee representation, industries and organizational size.
- **Federal Framework:** SHRM supports public policies that provide employers with certainty and predictability through a voluntary federal framework rather than a fragmented patchwork of state and local laws.

BOTTOM LINE

The United States needs a 21st century workplace flexibility and paid leave policy that is free of mandates, works for employers and employees and foregoes a one-size-fits-all approach.



WORKPLACE IMMIGRATION

ISSUE

Global talent contributes to and complements the American workforce. According to SHRM research, 86 percent of C-suite executives have workforce strategies that rely on temporary visas. The U.S. immigration system should promote competition and innovation and provide tools to recruit and retain top global talent.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Access to Talent:** SHRM supports policies that ensure employers have access to visas to recruit, hire, transfer and retain top talent, especially those educated and trained in the United States.
- **Employment Verification:** SHRM advocates for one reliable, entirely electronic employment verification system that integrates the Form I-9, provides users a good faith defense and is only for new hires.
- **Pre-Certified Employers:** SHRM believes a “Trusted Employer” program should be implemented to create efficiencies for employees, employers and the government.

BOTTOM LINE

The United States needs a modern workplace immigration system that allows employers to access top global talent, creates efficiencies and protects workers.



WORKPLACE HEALTH CARE

ISSUE

More than a third of employees registered to vote believe health care is the most important issue for the 46th president to address. The employer-based system is the foundation of health insurance in the United States. These plans provide access to valuable benefits that address physical and mental health. Rising costs and continued policy uncertainty pose risks to sustaining employer-sponsored health insurance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Employer-Based System:** SHRM believes public policy should strengthen and improve the employer-based health care system, including preservation of the current tax treatment of employer-sponsored health plans.
- **Definition of Full-time:** SHRM believes the definition of full-time employment for purposes of health care coverage should be 40 hours per week, consistent with the *Fair Labor Standards Act* overtime requirement.
- **Wellness Programs:** SHRM supports adoption of employer wellness programs to encourage healthy behavior and to lower costs for employers and employees.

BOTTOM LINE

SHRM believes any approach to U.S. health care reform must preserve the option for employers to provide health insurance, which supports more than 181 million Americans. Health care reform must also offer affordable access to care for all Americans.



WORKPLACE GOVERNANCE

ISSUE

Government policies affect a wide range of workplace issues, especially the relationship between employers and employees. The pace and complexity of change also affect workplace governance. As a result, clear, balanced rules and guidance on governance issues are critical to creating better workplaces.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Labor-Management Relations:** SHRM supports balanced labor-management relations and recognizes the right of employees to form or join a union – and the right of employers to obtain advice on these matters. Decisions should follow democratic principles, including an open flow of information and a secret ballot that ensures majority interest prevails.
- **Minimum Wage:** Since the federal minimum wage has not changed since 2009, SHRM believes a reasonable increase, phased in over time to recognize the impact on small businesses, is warranted.
- **Employment Relationships:** SHRM supports the ability of employers to enter into non-compete agreements with employees as an essential protection of their intellectual property. SHRM also supports arbitration clauses as an effective tool for employers and employees to resolve issues without costly and protracted legal processes.

BOTTOM LINE

To ensure workplaces function to the benefit of employers and employees and to avoid unintended consequences that hurt employers, employees and the overall economy, a range of perspectives should be considered in developing workplace governance policies.

SHRM BELIEVES IN THE POWER OF POLICY, NOT POLITICS.

For more information, please contact
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SHRM, the Society for Human Resource Management, creates better workplaces where employers and employees thrive together. As the voice of all things work, workers and the workplace, SHRM is the foremost expert, convener and thought leader on issues impacting today's evolving workplaces. With 300,000+ HR and business executive members in 165 countries, SHRM impacts the lives of more than 115 million workers and families globally. Learn more at SHRM.org and on Twitter [@shrm](https://twitter.com/shrm).



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