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# Supporting Family Caregivers: A Roadmap for States

The 2022 National Strategy to Support Family Caregivers provides a roadmap for states to better support family caregivers. This overview highlights policy strategies and promising practices for states.

## The Challenge

The pandemic heightened reliance on family caregivers and the shortage of direct care workers who provide care. States are being called upon to address these crises.

## A Historic Solution

The [National Strategy to Support Family Caregivers](#), as required by the RAISE Act, was presented to the U.S. Congress in September 2022. The strategy lays out actions — by federal and state governments, communities, employers, and others — to increase recognition and support for family caregivers.

## State Roadmap

To inform the National Strategy, the National Academy for State Health Policy (NASHP) created the [RAISE Act State Policy Roadmap for Family Caregivers](#). The roadmap helps states interested in expanding supports for family caregivers by offering the following policy strategies and promising practices.



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## Public Awareness and Outreach

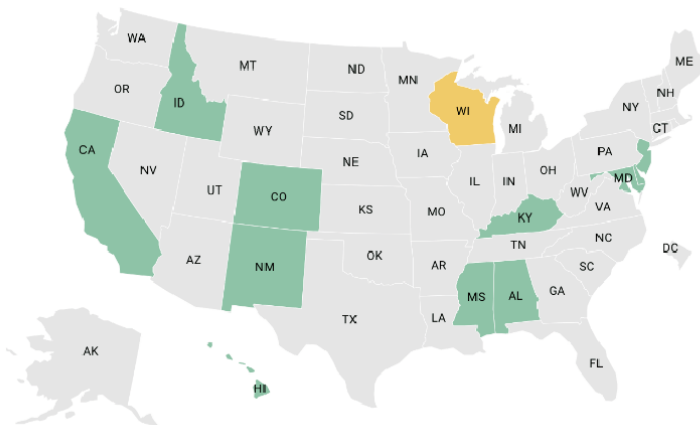
To increase outreach and identification of family caregivers, who often do not self-identify as caregivers or know where to turn for information, states can...

- Launch public outreach campaigns for family caregivers
- Specify outreach targeted to family caregivers in regulation, policy, procedure manuals, and state plans on aging
- Create and engage state family caregiving taskforces, councils, and commissions

### State Examples

From 2014 through 2019, 12 states created family caregiving task forces.

[Explore the map to learn more.](#)



### Get the Roadmap.

[Explore more recommendations, strategies, and state actions](#) to build public awareness and reach out to caregivers

## Engaging Family Caregivers in Health Care Services and Systems

To ensure person- and family-centered care, where providers listen to and engage family caregivers, states can...

- Engage family members as part of the care team, especially during care transitions and hospital discharges
- Assess family caregivers for their own needs
- Ensure that family members receive the information they need to care for the individual
- Measure family caregiver engagement for quality improvement and payment

### State Examples



**South Dakota** incorporates caregiver assessments for its structured family caregiving service within its [Medicaid waiver](#). Qualified agencies are required to conduct a comprehensive caregiver assessment and establish a plan for educating, coaching, and supporting the caregiver.



**Illinois** recently expanded the use of an evidence-supported tool to assess family caregivers' needs, with area agencies on aging in 12 of the 13 regions of the state using or planning to utilize it.



### Get the Roadmap.

[Explore more recommendations and state strategies](#) to engage family caregivers in health care systems

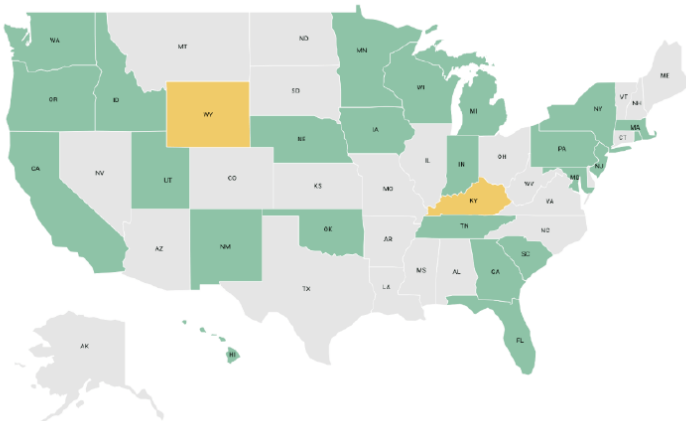
## Services and Supports for Family Caregivers

To help caregivers obtain services that enable them to provide care in the home, states can...

- Blend and braid federal and state funding for services such as home and respite care that can give family caregivers a needed break
- Leverage new Medicaid funding and flexibility
- Rebalance toward more home and community-based services
- Pay family caregivers through Medicaid self-direction options

### State Examples

[Explore how states are educating, training, and counseling family caregivers](#) through Medicaid home and community-based services waivers.



#### Get the Roadmap.

[Learn more](#) about how states can fund training and support for family caregivers, including state strategies and promising practices

## The Direct Care Workforce

To ensure that a well-trained direct care workforce is available to family caregivers, who often struggle to find qualified aides to provide care, states can...

- Coordinate workforce policy and resources across agencies
- Develop career pathways
- Improve and streamline training and working conditions
- Create registries to match workers with clients and credential portability for aides to work in various settings or as a career ladder
- Collect data on turnover rates, tenure, full-time/part-time status, vacancy rates, wages, benefits, and recruitment and retention

### State Examples



Tennessee's Medicaid agency worked with the [Quality Improvement in Long-Term Services and Supports \(QuILTSS\)](#) Institute to develop a career and education pathway for direct care workers that allows them to “learn and earn” while acquiring credentials that will increase their wages.



The **Oregon** Home Care Commission operates a [statewide registry and referral system](#), which combines a registry of work credentials with a portal for matching direct care workers with people in need of care.



### Get the Roadmap.

[Explore more recommendations, examples, and state strategies](#) to strengthen the direct care workforce

## Financial and Workplace Security

To prevent financial hardship and destitution, states can...

- Enhance family leave requirements
- Establish tax credits for caregiving expenses
- Establish protections against workplace discrimination based on family responsibilities
- Include family caregiving in unemployment insurance eligibility
- Promote financial education and planning for family caregivers

### State Examples of Family Leave from Work

- [New Jersey](#) and [Washington](#) implemented paid family leave programs
- [Arizona](#) and [Nevada](#) mandate paid sick leave
- [Illinois](#) and [New Mexico](#) mandate allowing the flexible use of sick leave
- [Hawaii](#) expanded Family and Medical Leave Act coverage and benefits



#### Get the Roadmap.

[Learn more about state strategies and approaches](#) to assure the financial security of family caregivers

## Research, Data, and Evidence-Informed Practices

To promote data and research on family caregivers, which is needed to inform policies and evidence-based practices, states can...

- Use broader definitions of family caregiver that go beyond blood relatives
- Collect family caregiver data and outcomes — for example, through family caregiver assessments, plans of care, or a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) caregiver survey
- Compile state inventories of family caregiver services
- Develop state evaluations of family caregiver programs
- Implement evidence-supported programs for family caregivers

### State Examples



**Washington** has demonstrated [cost savings and improved outcomes](#) from supporting family caregivers, based on data from family caregiver assessments combined with data on emergency department visits, inpatient admissions, 30-day readmission rate, nursing home admission rate, and mortality rate.



**California** used national caregiver data as a comparison for state-level outcomes from its Caregiver Resource Centers. The [evaluation](#) found that the caregivers served by the resource centers were at high risk and were highly satisfied with the services.



### Get the Roadmap.

[Learn more](#) about how states can use research, data, and evidence-informed practices to support caregivers, including state strategies and approaches

For more information and state examples, read the [RAISE Act State Policy Roadmap for Family Caregivers](#), funded by The John A. Hartford Foundation and the RRF Foundation for Aging, in collaboration with the U.S. Administration for Community Living.



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