



ARUBA
FAMILY FRIENDLY
WORKPLACES

Manager Onboarding



PARENTING
FOR LIFELONG HEALTH
"every parent, everywhere"

unicef 
for every child

About the AFFW Certification



The Aruba Family-Friendly Workplace (AFFW) Certification is a national programme designed for organisations of all sizes and sectors operating in Aruba. It provides a clear framework to help organisations strengthen the policies and practices that support employees with family responsibilities.

Led by the Directorate of Social Affairs, in collaboration with UNICEF The Netherlands and Parenting for Lifelong Health, the certification brings together representatives from government, the private sector, and civil society to position Aruban organisations as international leaders in workplace excellence.

Children thrive when parents and caregivers have the support they need, and workplaces play an important role in making that possible. The AFFW Certification is built on direct feedback from Aruba's workforce to help employers review their current approach to upholding a family-friendly culture, and identifying improvements that benefit both employees and the organisation.

The impact of the certification extends beyond any single workplace. By strengthening family-friendly practices, participating organisations contribute to a more inclusive, prosperous, and supportive working environment across Aruba.

Vision

A future where Aruba is a world leader in inclusive workplace excellence, with organisations across all sectors embedding family-friendly practices into their operations and strategies. Through structured certification, practical implementation support, and a shared national commitment to caregiver wellbeing, workplaces actively strengthen productivity, retain talent, and contribute to healthier families, stronger communities, and sustainable economic growth.

Mission

Through a structured certification pathway, practical guidance and ready-to-use tools, the Aruba Family-Friendly Workplaces (AFFW) Certification actively enables organisations to adopt and strengthen family-friendly workplace practices. By supporting caregiver wellbeing and work-life balance, AFFW helps employers attract and retain talent, strengthen productivity, and respond to Aruba's workforce realities.

Purpose of this Document

As a leader, your role is central to the AFFW Certification. The application process begins with informed leadership and a clear commitment to creating a supportive work environment. By championing these principles and aligning internal practices, you help advance meaningful and sustainable progress across your organisation.

This Manager Onboarding is designed to help you understand the certification purpose and criteria, in order to actively support your workplace's application. We also encourage you to explore the **AFFW website** and the **Applicant Handbook** for additional clarity and guidance.



AFFW Values

The AFFW Certification is guided by a set of core values that shape how organisations can lead the cultural shift toward healthier, more supportive workplaces for caregivers. These values provide direction for workplace policies and everyday management practices:

- **Accessibility:** Ensure employees clearly understand their legal rights and available benefits. Information should be easy to access and available in the main languages spoken in Aruba, so all employees can make informed decisions about their work and family responsibilities.
- **Ongoing Support:** Create a workplace culture where managers provide consistent, empathetic support to employees navigating parenting and caregiving responsibilities. Support should be reflected in both policies and practices.
- **Gender Equality:** Support both women and men as caregivers to promote more equitable homes. This includes strengthening parental leave protections, encouraging shared caregiving responsibilities, and ensuring that family-related benefits are accessible to all genders.
- **Inclusivity:** Recognise the diversity of families. Provide meaningful support to single caregivers, caregivers of children with disabilities, adolescent caregivers, and other employees with specific caregiving needs.
- **Collaboration:** Work in partnership with government, civil society, and the wider community, under the shared understanding that family-friendly practices improve wellbeing for families today and future generations tomorrow.
- **Safe and Supportive Environments:** Foster a workplace culture that prioritises employee wellbeing. Clear policies, respectful leadership, and supportive practices contribute to higher engagement, stronger retention, and improved performance.
- **Community Involvement:** Acknowledge that parenting does not happen in isolation and caregiving extends beyond the workplace. Employers can support families by connecting employees to relevant services and resources that contribute to their children's healthy development and promote a more balanced distribution of responsibilities.

Why It Matters: The Case for Family-Friendly Workplaces

When workplaces support parents and caregivers, the benefits extend beyond the individual employee: families are stronger, children have better opportunities to thrive, and organisations build more engaged and effective teams. Research consistently shows that family-friendly practices deliver measurable advantages for both employees and employers by:

1.



Reducing Stress and Improving Work-life Balance

Family-friendly policies such as childcare support, workshops and training and flexibility help employees manage their responsibilities more effectively by reducing stress and improving overall well-being.

2.



Supporting Early Childhood Development

Family-friendly policies give parents the time and stability needed to provide the essential care for a child's healthy early development. Paid maternity and paternity leave allow parents to bond with their child, supporting secure attachment and responsive care.

3.



Improving Mother and Infant Health

Workplace support for breastfeeding is associated with better long-term health outcomes for infants and reduced risks of Type 2 diabetes and breast cancer for mothers. By supporting breastfeeding through appropriate workplace measures, organisations contribute to healthier families and can help reduce long-term healthcare costs for both employers and the wider community.



Driving Performance and Engagement

Clear, supportive policies contribute to stronger employee engagement, and improved overall performance. Organisations with highly engaged employees can achieve profit margins up to 23% higher than their peers. Family-friendly practices can also enhance your organisation's reputation, positioning you as a responsible employer within the community.



Building a Competitive Employer Brand

Offering family-friendly policies helps your organisation stand out as employer of choice, attracting and retaining qualified staff, including younger generations who prioritise work-life balance. Flexibility is one of the most valued workplace benefits. Globally, 71% of employees say they would remain longer in a role that offers genuine flexibility, while 4 in 10 have left or considered leaving a job due to a lack of it.



Strengthening Employee Loyalty and Stability

Employees who feel supported are more likely to stay and to recommend their workplace to others. Policies such as flexible scheduling, paid leave, and childcare support can reduce turnover, increase team stability, and lower recruitment costs. In family-friendly workplaces, 89% of employees report they would recommend their organisation as a good place to work.



Supporting Sustainable and Inclusive Growth

Family-friendly practices support responsible business conduct and inclusive workplace culture, as reflected in broader Environmental, Social, Governance (ESG) and Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) commitments. By strengthening how your organisation supports employees, its resilience, competitiveness, and long-term sustainability are also enhanced.

Understanding the Applicant Journey

1.



Learn about the AFFW Certification through the Applicant Handbook

2.



Check if your organisation is eligible

4.



Submit the Application Form

3.



Share Manager Onboarding with your organisation

Await application assessment



5.



Send out AFFW Employee Experience Survey

6.



Certification results!

Your Role in the AFFW Application Journey



Steps 1 & 2: Learn About the AFFW Certification and Confirm Eligibility

By this stage, your organisation's application lead has already reviewed the certification requirements (Step 1) and confirmed your eligibility to apply (Step 2). You can learn more about this by consulting the **AFFW website** and the **Applicant Handbook**.



Step 3: Leadership Alignment

Leadership engagement is a core component of the AFFW Certification. For this reason, you are expected to review and discuss this document with your fellow leaders to ensure alignment on the certification criteria. With this shared understanding, you can confidently champion the implementation of family-friendly policies and practices in support of your application.



Step 4: Application Submission and Review

Your organisation's application lead will prepare and submit the online Application Form. You can support this step by helping gather relevant information and documents such as written policies, internal communications, or photographs. An Evaluation Committee will review the submission and confirm that your organisation meets the criteria before proceeding to the Employee Experience Survey.



Steps 5: Employee Experience Survey

Organisations that pass the initial review are invited to distribute the Employee Experience Survey to employees. This brief and anonymous survey is designed to confirm that policies and practices are reflected in the day-to-day workplace experience. You play a key role in ensuring this feedback is successfully received by reinforcing trust and encouraging participation.



Step 6: Certification Results

The Evaluation Committee reviews the survey results alongside the initial application to confirm their alignment. Organisations that meet the criteria receive the AFFW Certification, valid for two years and eligible for renewal. All applicants, regardless of the outcome, also receive an Evaluation Report outlining strengths and opportunities for improvement. At this stage, your involvement is key in sharing the results with employees and the wider community, and using the feedback to guide continuous improvement in your organisation's family-friendly practices.

The AFFW Certification Criteria

The AFFW Certification Criteria were developed through consultation with employees, employers, government, civil society, and unions. These local insights were combined with international best practices to ensure that each criterion reflects what matters for Aruban families and remains practical for organisations to implement.

Organisations of different sizes and sectors operate in diverse ways. For this reason, the criteria are designed to be proportional and flexible. This ensures a shared foundation across all participating workplaces while recognising organisations that exceed the core standards. It also provides a clear roadmap to support continuous improvement over time.

The Legal Baseline

To put AFFW practices into action, it is essential to understand the key legal obligations that shape family-friendly employment in Aruba. The Civil Code of Aruba (CCA) establishes the statutory minimums that all employers must provide to support employees and their families, including:

- **Twelve weeks of paid maternity leave** – typically four to six weeks before birth and six to eight weeks after– provided the employee gives two months' notice (*Article 629a, CCA*).
- Fathers are entitled to **two paid working days of paternity leave**, to be taken within four weeks of the child's arrival at home. (*Article 629b, CCA*).
- Breastfeeding mothers may take **paid lactation breaks** for up to a quarter of their shift during the **nine months following birth**, and employers must provide a lockable, hygienic room for that purpose (*Article 657c CCA*).
- The Code **prohibits pregnancy-based discrimination**, guarantees equal treatment for part-time and fixed-term employees, and requires employers to ensure workplace health and safety, forming the statutory basis for family-friendly workplace practices (*Article 670, CCA*).
- **Income protection is reinforced by Aruba's social-insurance laws.** The General Health Insurance (AZV) is partly paid by the employer and partly by the employee. The National Ordinance on Health Insurance (LvZV) prohibits passing those costs back to the worker and it further strengthens that safety net: female employees on maternity leave receive 100% of their average daily wage for the full twelve-week period, while ordinary sickness is covered at 80% (with the government covering 100%) (*Art. 17, Lv ZV*).
- **General labour protections**, including wage continuation during illness and entitlement to paid leave in specific circumstances (*Articles 629 and 628 BWA*), support employees in balancing work and family responsibilities. These are reinforced by statutory provisions ensuring equal treatment, prohibiting discrimination, including on the basis of pregnancy and motherhood, and safeguarding fair working conditions across employment, termination, working hours, and contract types (*Articles 646, 647, 648, 649, and 649a BWA*).

The AFFW Certification aims to go beyond this legal baseline to strengthen workplace support and advance family-friendly standards. However, it is essential that organisations start by upholding and clearly communicating these rights.

AFFW Certification Criteria

Below is a description of each AFFW Certification criterion. More detailed information about the related Applicant Form questions and supporting documents required can be found in the [Applicant Handbook](#).

Criteria

What it means for organizations

Leadership and Culture of Care



Leaders and managers play a central role in building and sustaining an inclusive, family-friendly workplace culture. All managerial staff are required to read the AFFW Manager Onboarding and to actively promote family-friendly policies and practices within the organisation. This includes ensuring that policies are clearly communicated and employee rights are consistently upheld.

Work-Life Flexibility



Organisations are expected to support employees in balancing work and family responsibilities through flexible, family centred practices such as paid time off for emergencies or medical appointments, remote work arrangements, flexible or predictable schedules, and other accommodations for caregivers. It also involves clearly communicating these flexibility options and having an accessible procedure for employees to request them.

Family Learning and Well-being



Organisations are expected to offer at least one workshop or training session each year focused on parenting, well-being, or mental health. These activities should support caregivers in strengthening the knowledge and skills they need to care for their families and staying healthy while balancing the demands at home and work.

Parental Leave



To meet the AFFW standard, organisations must provide at least 12 weeks of paid maternity leave and 5 days of paid paternity leave. Organisations that currently offer only the legal minimum of 2 days of paternity leave may still apply, but are expected to reach the 5-day standard within the next two years. Additional parental leave benefits, such as extended leave or flexibility in the timing of leave, are encouraged.

Breastfeeding Policy



Organisations are expected to support breastfeeding employees in the workplace in order to promote maternal health, infant nutrition, and overall family well-being. This includes respecting the right to lactation breaks, providing a private and suitable space for breastfeeding or expressing milk, and clearly communicating this support within the workplace.

Childcare Solutions



Organisations should support employees by providing a list of childcare providers, such as nurseries, daycares, home based care, and after school programmes, and ensuring this information is clearly communicated across the organisation. Additional childcare support, such as subsidising childcare costs, offering a childcare allowance, or extending flexibility policies to accommodate caregiving responsibilities, is encouraged.

Workplace Excellence



Organisations are encouraged to have additional initiatives that strengthen a supportive workplace culture. These may include family events, community oriented activities, regular internal reviews to monitor progress, or other efforts that enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of family friendly policies and practices.

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Aruba Family-Friendly Workplaces: Manager Onboarding

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Thank You For Your Commitment!

Your leadership and engagement are essential to putting family-friendly practices into action. This document is intended to clarify your role in championing the AFFW Certification process and supporting your organisation's adoption of family-friendly policies.

Earning the AFFW Certification formally recognises your organisation's efforts in this area. It provides visibility, practical guidance, and ongoing support to strengthen workplace practices, while connecting your organisation to a wider network of employers advancing family-friendly policies across Aruba.

With this foundation, your organisation is ready to move to the next stages: submitting the Application Form and encouraging participation in the Employee Experience Survey. Your leadership will be key in supporting the process, ensuring the organisation can document and highlight the policies and practices that make it a leading Family-Friendly Workplace.

Version Notice

March 2026. Please refer to the AFFW official website for the most current version.

