



NEWS from the Shelby County Mayor's Office

Lee Harris, Mayor

Vasco A. Smith, Jr., Administration Building
11th Floor, 160 North Main, Memphis, Tennessee 38103

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MAYOR LEE HARRIS ANNOUNCES PLAN FOR NEW CHILDCARE BENEFIT FOR FAMILIES AT INAUGURAL WORKING MOTHER'S APPRECIATION BRUNCH
The brunch honors over 250 working mothers of Shelby County Government as a precursor to a new benefit announcement during the Shelby County Board of Commissioners' General Government Committee meeting.

WHO: Shelby County Mayor Lee Harris and Chief of Staff Danielle Inez
WHAT: Working Mother's Day Brunch and Announcement of New Childcare Benefit
WHEN: 10:15 a.m., Wednesday, May 18, 2022 (brunch) and 12:00 p.m., Wednesday, May 18, 2022 (General Government Committee Meeting)
WHERE: Vasco A. Smith, Jr. Administration Building, First Floor, 160 North Main Street, Memphis, TN, 38103

Shelby County, TN – On Wednesday, May 18, the Shelby County Mayor's Office will announce "A Childcare Benefit for Working Families," a new benefit for county employees. The benefit is expected to offset the rising cost and often overwhelming burden of childcare for employees, especially mothers. It prioritizes single-income households and excludes high-wage earners with the goal of cultivating a diverse talent pipeline for leadership positions within Shelby County Government. The program has been in development for months and earned the support of organizations like Girl Scouts Heart of the South, the Memphis Urban League, and the Women's Foundation for a Greater Memphis.

Shelby County Mayor Lee Harris: "We greatly appreciate the hard work and resourcefulness of the army of working moms in Shelby County Government and around our community. We recognize that affordable and accessible childcare is essential for working moms in Shelby County, many of whom are juggling careers and family. We haven't found a similar model to the Shelby



County Childcare Benefit anywhere in the region. But, it's important that Shelby County leads the way when it comes to supporting working families. We are excited to be able to help moms and children and to bring peace of mind to many of our families. I might add also that this new childcare benefit builds on our other initiatives, like paid parental leave and our aggressive push for livable wages.

Danielle Inez, Chief of Staff to Shelby County Mayor Lee Harris: “As a working mother in Shelby County Government, I am passionate about this new benefit for county employees. Since the pandemic, American women have left the workforce in record numbers, too often because of a lack of childcare. Research shows this has been especially true for Black mothers. When affordable and available childcare providers shut down during COVID, these were the moms who found themselves in the impossible position of having to leave their jobs to care for their children. Employers, like Shelby County Government, have the power to give these mothers better options. That’s why we want to lead the way with policies that make it easier for mothers to remain in the workforce.”

Shante Avant, Vice President of the Women’s Foundation for a Greater Memphis: “Over ten years ago, the Women’s Foundation partnered with several national agencies to publish a paper about the impact of expensive childcare on mothers in the workplace. Today, the inequitable burden of childcare continues to fall in the laps of mothers and less than 7% of employers across the country have invested in a solution. I appreciate partners like the Shelby County Mayor’s Office for seeking out solutions and implementing benefits like this one to address the needs of parents, especially mothers, in the workplace. We are all better served when women are better supported.”

More information about the program will be shared during the Working Mother’s Day Brunch and the Shelby County Board of Commissioners’ General Government Committee meeting.

(End of Release)