

Parental Leave Policies in Otolaryngology Residency Programs: Influence of Department Chair Gender and Program Size

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Introduction

Childbearing years often coincide with residency training, making parental leave support essential¹. Yet few surgical residencies, otolaryngology included, clearly present such policies. Sandler *et al.* found just 28% of general surgery programs listed a parental leave policy online². This study examines parental leave policies, benefits offered, and how department chair gender and program size may influence their availability

Data Analysis

- Identified 125 Otolaryngology–Head and Neck Surgery residency programs via the AAMC ERAS Directory³
- Reviewed official program websites to collect data on:
- Presence of parental/family leave policies
- Leave duration and whether it was paid
- Inclusion of non-birthing parents
- Department chair gender
- Number of residents per year



Results

- 40 of 125 programs (32%) listed parental leave policies on their websites
- Of those, 17 programs (42.5%) offered 6 weeks of paid leave; durations ranged from 2 to 12 weeks
- Only 7 programs (17.5%) specifically mentioned leave for non-birthing parents

Department chair gender:

- Female: 12.8% (n = 16)
- Male: 87.2% (n = 109)
- No significant association between chair gender and policy presence ($p = <.266$).

Program Size:

- No significant difference in average number of residents per year between programs with vs. without policies (3.1 vs. 2.9, $p = <.526$).

Conclusion

- Most otolaryngology residency programs do not list parental leave policies
- Similarly, Siljander *et al.* found only 5 of 166 orthopedic programs listed such policies⁴
- The majority of otolaryngology programs are led by male department chairs
- Program size was not significantly associated with policy presence

Figure 1 Proportion of Otolaryngology Programs Advertising Parental Leave Policies (N = 125)

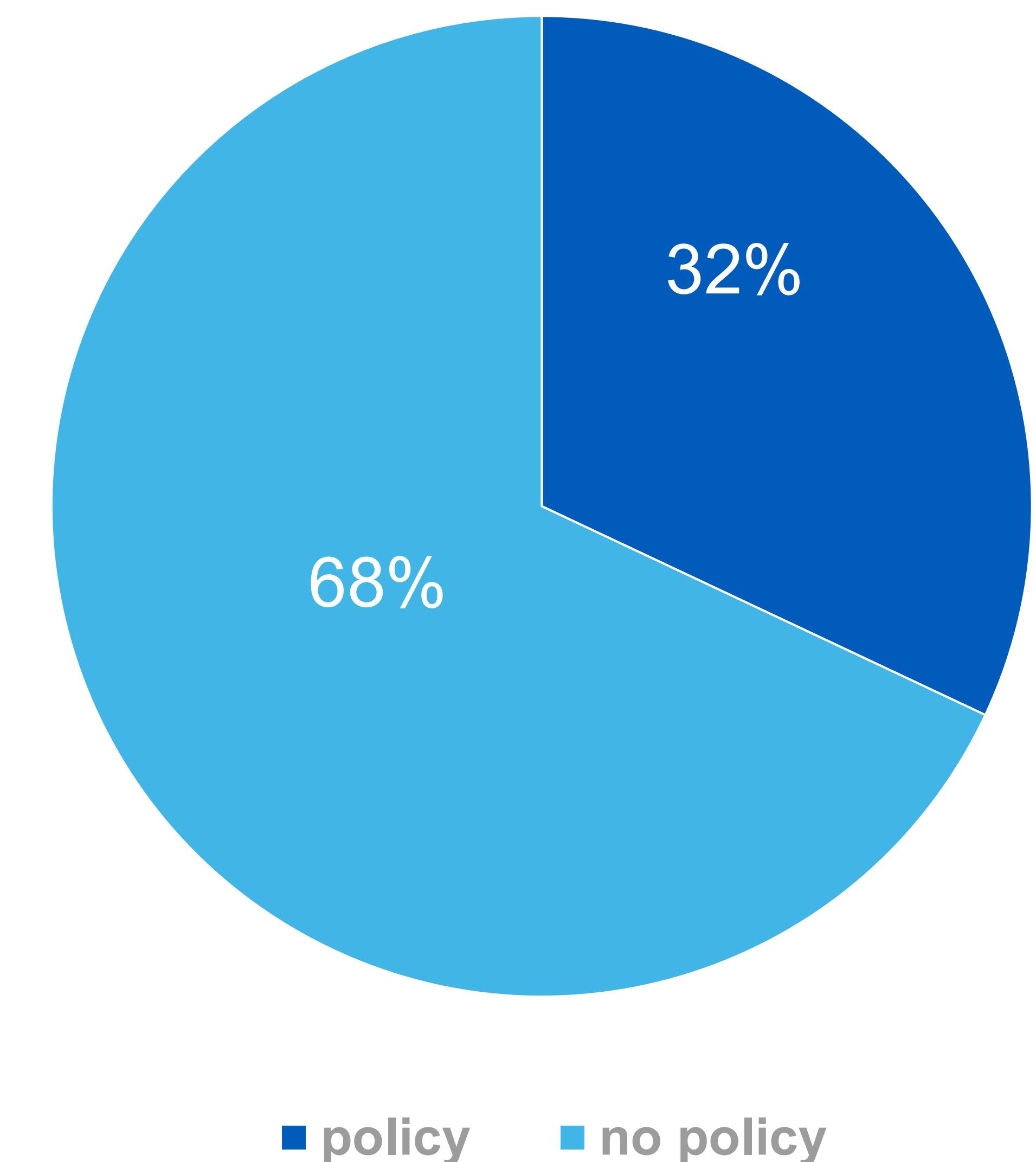


Figure 1 “Policy” refers to a parental or family leave policy posted directly on the residency website or linked through it.

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