

Montgomery County is Leading the Way Toward State and National Paid Sick Days Standards

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The state of Maryland is home to Montgomery County where, beginning October 1, 2016, workers will be guaranteed the right to earn between four and seven paid sick days annually – depending on the size of their employers – to seek medical care or care for their own or a loved one's health.

Montgomery County is among a growing list of states and localities across the country that have or will soon have paid sick days laws in place. A list of current laws is available at NationalPartnership.org/PSDLaws, and details on each of these laws are available at NationalPartnership.org/PSDstatutes. A growing body of evidence shows that these laws are working well.¹

Still, access to paid sick time should not depend on where a person lives or works. Nationwide, more than 43 million private sector workers – nearly 40 percent of the workforce² – cannot earn paid sick time. When workers do not have paid sick days, the consequences can be significant. For a typical family in the United States without paid sick days, 3.5 days lost to illness are equivalent to the family's entire monthly grocery budget.³

Paid Sick Days Benefit Families, Business and Our Economy

- ▶ **Paid sick days keep families healthy.** When workers have paid sick days, they are able to get regular physicals and take their children to well-child visits and for immunizations, which may prevent serious illnesses.⁴ Children with serious illnesses do better when their parents are able to stay with them.⁵
- ▶ **Paid sick days are good for business.** Employee turnover is expensive – on average, one-fifth of an employee's annual salary.⁶ Paid sick days result in reduced turnover,⁷ which leads to reduced hiring and training costs for businesses.
- ▶ **Paid sick days decrease unnecessary health care costs.** Universal access to paid sick days would eliminate an estimated 1.3 million emergency room visits each year, saving \$1.1 billion annually in costs to individuals, private insurers and public programs, such as Medicare and Medicaid.⁸

Setting Standards for Maryland and the Nation Should Be Priorities

STATE PROGRESS



- ▶ **Currently, workers in Maryland are not guaranteed the right to earn paid sick days by state law.** Maryland families need paid sick days to protect their financial stability, help maintain a strong state economy and promote their own good health and that of their communities.

FEDERAL SUPPORT AND LEGISLATION

Beyond Maryland, workers across the United States want, need and deserve a paid sick days standard. Currently, there is no federal law that guarantees workers in the United States the right to earn paid sick days.

- ▶ **At the national level, there is strong public support for universal access to paid sick days:** 85 percent of voters want employers to provide paid sick time.⁹
- ▶ The federal **Healthy Families Act (H.R. 932/S. 497)** would establish a national paid sick days standard, allowing workers in businesses with 15 or more employees to earn up to seven job-protected paid sick days each year to be used to recover from their own illnesses, access preventive care, provide care to a sick family member, attend school meetings related to a child's health condition or disability or seek assistance related to domestic violence, stalking or sexual assault. Workers in businesses with fewer than 15 employees would earn up to seven job-protected *unpaid* sick days each year to be used for the same reasons, unless their employers choose to offer paid sick days.

People across the United States should have a fair shot at getting the care they need, caring for a child or assisting a loved one – no matter where they live or work. For more, visit www.PaidSickDays.org.

1 National Partnership for Women & Families. (2015, April). *Paid Sick Days: Low Cost, High Reward for Workers, Employers and Communities*. Retrieved 8 July 2015, from <http://www.nationalpartnership.org/research-library/work-family/psd/paid-sick-days-low-cost-high-reward.pdf>

2 U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2015, July). *National Compensation Survey: Employee Benefits in the United States, March 2015*. (Table 6). Retrieved 24 July 2015, from <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/ebs2.pdf> (Based on 39 percent of a private sector workforce of 112 million people)

3 Gould, E., Filion, K., & Green, A. (2011, June 29). *The Need for Paid Sick Days: The lack of a federal policy further erodes family economic security*. Economic Policy Institute Publication. Retrieved 8 July 2015, from <http://www.epi.org/page/-/BriefingPaper319.pdf?nocdn=1>

4 Peipins, L. A., Soman, A., Berkowitz, Z., & White, M. C. (2012). The lack of paid sick leave as a barrier to cancer screening and medical care-seeking: results from the National Health Interview Survey. *BMC public health*, 12(1), 520.

5 Schuster, M. A., & Chung, P. J. (2014). Time Off to Care for a Sick Child—Why Family-Leave Policies Matter. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 371(6), 493-495.

6 Boushey, H., & Glynn, S. (2012, November 16). *There Are Significant Business Costs to Replacing Employees*. Center for American Progress Publication. Retrieved 8 July 2015, from <http://www.americanprogress.org/wpcontent/uploads/2012/11/CostofTurnover.pdf>

7 Hill, H. D. (2013). Paid Sick Leave and Job Stability. *Work and occupations*, 40(2), 143-173.

8 Miller, K., Williams, C., & Yi, Y. (2011, October 31). *Paid Sick Days and Health: Cost Savings from Reduced Emergency Department Visits*. Institute for Women's Policy Research Publication. Retrieved 8 July 2015, from <http://www.iwpr.org/publications/pubs/paid-sick-days-and-health-cost-savings-from-reduced-emergency-department-visits>

9 New York Times and CBS News Poll. (2015, May). *Americans' Views on Income Inequality and Workers' Rights*. National telephone poll conducted with 1,022 adults on landlines and cellphones May 28-31, 2015, by the *New York Times* and *CBS News*. Retrieved 8 July 2015, from http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2015/06/03/business/income-inequality-workers-rights-international-trade-poll.html?_r=0