

Understanding the Difference Between Paid Sick Days & Paid Family and Medical Leave

Paid Sick Days

Short-term leave, usually taken intermittently in hourly or daily increments

Typical Uses:

- To recover from short-term illnesses (like the flu)
- To care for a sick family member
- To seek various types of assistance related to domestic violence
- To seek preventive care (e.g., well-baby visits, annual physicals)

How It Is Paid:

Paid sick and safe days are fully paid through payroll. Employees are paid at the same hourly rate and the pay is included in their regular paycheck.

What You Should Know:

Paid sick and safe days allow workers to accrue and use incremental, job-protected time away from work to attend to their and their family's health. 14 states and 21 localities across the country have enacted and implemented a paid sick days law allowing workers to take time to attend doctors' appointments, pick up sick children, accommodate public health emergencies and business or school closures and address instances related to domestic violence.

Paid Family and Medical Leave

Longer-term leave (usually weeks or months, but may be taken intermittently)

Typical Uses:

- To undergo medical treatment or recover from a serious illness
- To bond with a new child (newborn, adopted, foster)
- To care for a family member with a serious illness
- For reasons related to a family member's military service

How It Is Paid:

Paid family and medical leave is funded by payroll contributions. Typically, both the employer and employee contribute to the fund.

What You Should Know:

Paid family and medical leave provides workers with paid time away from work to focus on a serious personal illness, tend to a seriously ill family member or bond with a new child. To date, 12 states, including the District of Columbia, have enacted paid family and medical leave laws allowing workers to bond with a new child, care for an ill or ailing family member, recover from surgery, or manage a chronic illness while maintaining their financial security.

Workers Need Both Paid Sick Days and Paid Family and Medical Leave

At some point, every person will have a serious health issue or an ill family member that will need care. At the same time, every person gets sick and needs a day or two to recover. Paid sick days and paid family and medical leave provide workers with the time they need to fully care for themselves and their families.

The **Healthy Families Act** would allow workers to earn up to seven *paid* sick days to use to recover from illness, access preventive care or care for a sick family member. Workers in places of employment with fewer than 15 employees would earn up to seven *unpaid*, job-protected sick days.

Who Has Paid Sick Days?

14 States: The District of Columbia, Connecticut, California, Massachusetts, Oregon, Washington, Vermont, Arizona, Rhode Island, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Colorado and New Mexico

17 Cities and 4 Counties: San Francisco, Oakland, Emeryville, Los Angeles, Santa Monica, San Diego and Berkeley, Calif.; Seattle and Tacoma, Wash.; New York City and Westchester County, N.Y.; Philadelphia, Pittsburgh and Allegheny County, Pa.; Montgomery County, Md.; Bloomington, Minneapolis, St. Paul and Duluth, Minn.; Chicago and Cook County, Ill.

The **Family And Medical Insurance Leave (FAMILY) Act** would create a national paid leave insurance program to provide up to 12 weeks of paid leave when a new child arrives or a serious personal or family medical need arises. This national program would build off the progress and precedent set by state paid leave laws.

Who Has Paid Family and Medical Leave?

12 States: California, New Jersey, Rhode Island, New York, the District of Columbia, Washington, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Oregon, Colorado, Maryland and Delaware

The National Partnership for Women & Families is a nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy group dedicated to promoting fairness in the workplace, reproductive health and rights, access to quality, affordable health care and policies that help all people meet the dual demands of work and family. More information is available at NationalPartnership.org.

© 2022 National Partnership for Women & Families. All rights reserved.