

Talking Points on Need for Continued Investment in Emergency Paid Sick Days and Paid Leave

- In the midst of the global health crisis, more than 300 million people in the United States are affected by stay at home orders that are necessary to stop the spread of COVID-19. In nearly every state, schools and businesses must close their doors and people who feel sick or are high risk are supposed to stay home. Yet, many Americans are not able to take time off work to care for themselves or a loved one without risking a job or paycheck.
- Congress has taken the important first step to provide access to paid sick days and paid leave for millions of Americans by passing the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) and the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.
- As this crisis continues in parts of the country or there are considerations for reopening the economy, Congress must take additional steps to ensure all workers have access to paid sick days and paid leave, including:
 - **People who work for large businesses.** Low-income hourly workers from big companies, like the clerk at the grocery store or warehouse workers, are forced to make the impossible decision between taking care of themselves or a family member and earning a paycheck.
 - **People who work for small businesses.** Small businesses need financial relief to navigate the pandemic, but it shouldn't be at the expense of their workers. The 34 million workers who are employed by small businesses must be able to take time off when they get sick or need to care for a family member.
 - **Health care workers and first responders.** Frontline health care workers and first responders, and their support staff, put their own health at risk when they treat and care for sick patients, yet they can't take emergency time off work when they get sick without missing a paycheck.
 - **People who run out of sick days while caring for themselves or an ill family member.** It can take up to six to eight weeks to beat the COVID-19 infection and workers who get the virus, or are caring for an ill member of their family, shouldn't have to go without a paycheck or return to work before they've fully recovered. Ten paid sick days just isn't enough for many infected individuals.

- Additionally, workers should be able to receive full wage replacement for all purposes when they take paid sick leave.
- The pandemic has exposed huge flaws in our nation's social safety net that harm working families and our public health. It has demonstrated that low-income workers, workers of color and women are less likely to have paid sick days and paid family leave – further widening racial and gender inequities.

Who Falls into the Gap?

- A grocery store clerk has been diagnosed with COVID-19. He has already taken his 10 sick days, but still has symptoms. While he knows it's best to stay home until his symptoms are gone, he risks missing a paycheck if he doesn't go back to work. **The solution: Businesses with over 500 employees should be required to provide paid leave, so workers don't have to miss a paycheck when they are diagnosed with COVID-19.**
- A waitress is delivering food for the restaurant that she works at. But now she's feeling ill and can't decide whether to miss a paycheck and potentially lose her job, or keep delivering food, putting her colleagues and customers at risk. **The solution: Small businesses should be required to provide paid sick days so employees can recover and avoid getting others sick.**
- A single mom who is a chef at a small restaurant needs to take time off to care for her kids whose schools are closed. She works for a small business that has self-exempted itself from the law. She has no choice but to quit her job so she can take care of her kids. **The solution: Small businesses should be required to provide paid family leave, so workers don't have to decide between earning a paycheck and taking care of their children.**
- A hospital janitor who gets sick and can't take emergency paid time off work because he is considered a health care worker, according to the U.S. Department of Labor. **The solution: Frontline health care workers, first responders and their support staff must have access to paid sick days and paid leave.**

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

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