

Pittsburgh City Council Passes Paid Sick Days Act

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On Monday August 3, 2015, Pittsburgh City Council approved an ordinance titled "Paid Sick Days Act" requiring employers to offer paid sick days to employees. The ordinance is designed to benefit 50,000 workers in the city of Pittsburgh who currently lack the option of paid sick days.

Under the ordinance, an employee earns one hour of paid or unpaid sick time for every 35 hours worked. Whether the time must be paid or unpaid depends on the size of the employer's work force. Employers with at least 15 workers are required to offer as many as five *paid* sick days (up to 40 hours) per year to each worker. Employers with fewer than 15 employees are required to offer as many as three *unpaid* sick days (up to 24 hours) per year to each worker. Employees are permitted to use the sick days for a personal illness or illness of a family member. Employees are entitled to begin using accrued sick time 90 calendar days after the commencement of employment. The law, however, exempts from its requirements seasonal employees, independent contractors, federal employees, and members of a construction union covered by a collective bargaining unit.

Pittsburgh Mayor William Peduto has said that he intends to sign the ordinance into law. Once signed, Pittsburgh will join Philadelphia as the only two Pennsylvanian municipalities with required sick leave laws. The ordinance will become effective on the 90th calendar day following posting of the required regulations and notice to employers. Pittsburgh business owners plan to oppose the ordinance in court.

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