**POLICY MINI-BRIEF SERIES**

**WORK-FAMILY INFORMATION ON: PAID SICK DAYS**

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**WHY ARE PAID SICK DAYS AN IMPORTANT POLICY ISSUE?**

“In terms of public health policy, paid sick days are a proactive deterrent to the unnecessary spread of germs, virus, and resulting illness, so in my view should be made available to employees wherever possible. From an economic standpoint, it seems an employer would willingly invest in paid leave for an employee who is ill rather than risk widespread infection throughout the workplace.”

Senator Mary Ann Handley, CT

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**WHAT ARE PAID SICK DAYS?**

Paid sick days address the need for some paid time off for short-term illnesses, routine medical appointments, treatment needed due to domestic violence, and caring for sick family members. There are two paid sick day models: a minimum standard that guarantees employees a certain number of paid sick days, and a flexibility standard that allows employees to use accrued sick days to care for sick family members.

Want more POLICY INFORMATION?  
http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/pdfs/policy_makers10.pdf

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**HOW DO PAID SICK DAYS AFFECT WORKERS AND EMPLOYERS?**

**FOR WORKERS:**

Workers without paid sick days who stay home when they or their family members are sick risk losing their income, jobs, health insurance, and, in some cases, must turn to welfare.

**FOR EMPLOYERS:**

Employers without paid sick days encourage workers to come to work sick, resulting in presenteeism, which leads to:

- Lower productivity
- Higher likelihood of infecting co-workers and the public
- Greater health-care costs
- Increased turnover costs

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**RECENT LEGISLATION**

Paid sick day legislation has been proposed or enacted at the federal, state, and local levels.

**FEDERAL (PROPOSED)**

The Healthy Families Act would ensure that all employees working 30 hours or more per week have seven paid sick days a year.

**STATE (PROPOSED)**

Thirteen states have proposed legislation for paid sick days this past legislative session (AK, CA, CT, IL, MA, ME, MN, NC, OH, PA, TN, VT, WV).

**LOCAL (PASSED)**

San Francisco, CA; Washington, DC; and Milwaukee, WI have successfully passed paid sick days legislation.

Want more LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION?  
http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/bills.php#statutes

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**% DID YOU KNOW?**

- On average, workers need 1.8 sick days a year to care for themselves and 4 days a year to care for sick children (Lovell, 2004).
- Over 59 million American workers (nearly half of the workforce) do not have access to paid sick days (Lovell, 2004).
- Nearly 86 million American workers do not have paid sick days to care for sick children (Lovell, 2004).
- Nearly 80% of low-income workers do not have access to paid sick days (Lovell, 2004).
- 35% of American workers have significant elder-care responsibility, and 1/3 of this group must reduce work hours to provide care (Families and Work Institute, 2002).
- 86% of U.S. adults believe that employers should be required to provide paid sick days to their employees (National Opinion Research Center, 2008).

Want more STATISTICS or the full references for above statistics?  
http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/statistics.php?search_text=paid-sick

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**SITES WITH MORE INFORMATION**

- Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP), at:  
  http://www.clasp.org
- Institute for Women’s Policy Research (IWPR), at:  
  http://www.iwpr.org/index.cfm
- National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB), at:  
  http://www.nfib.org
- National Partnership for Women and Families, at:  
  http://www.paidsickdays.org
- The Urban Institute, at:  
  http://www.urban.org/about/index.cfm

Want more LINKS TO SITES?  
http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/topic_extended.php?id=42&type=2&linktype=other&area=All

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**SUGGESTED READINGS**


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The Policy Mini-Brief Series provides a summary of Paid Sick Days policy information.  
To learn more about Paid Sick Days, go to http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/pdfs/policy_makers10.pdf