

Healthy Families Act (HFA) Factsheet



No one should be punished for being a good parent or following doctor's orders. Yet today, over 30 million workers lack access to even a single paid sick day. They lose pay and risk losing their job when they are sick or need to care for a sick loved one. [BIPOC workers](#), lower-wage workers, and hourly workers are the least likely to have access to paid sick time - and most likely to be considered [essential workers](#) during the pandemic.

The pandemic made abundantly clear how interdependent our lives are and how unprepared we were to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. But where people had paid sick days, we saw a significant reduction in cases and deaths.

To address this, Senator Patty Murray (D-WA) and Representative Rosa DeLauro (D-CT) have introduced the Healthy Families Act, to guarantee workers earn up to seven paid sick days each year.

Why is this important?

- [Emergency paid sick days during the pandemic reduced COVID-19 infections by 56%.](#)
- A quarter of adults in the US report having been fired or threatened with job loss for taking time off for being sick or caring for a sick loved one.
- For a low-income family without paid sick days, going just 3.5 days without wages is the equivalent to losing a month's groceries.
- The Center for Disease Control estimates that sick restaurant workers contaminating food cause more than 2.5 million cases of food borne illness.
- Policies like paid sick days increase job retention and help reduce unemployment, ultimately strengthening the economy.

What Does the HFA Do?

- Guarantees workers in businesses with 15 or more employees can earn up to seven job protected paid sick days each year to be used to:
 - o recover from their own illnesses, access preventive care, provide care to a sick family member, or attend school meetings related to a child's health condition or disability.
 - o *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 employer chooses to offer paid sick days. **Continue reading to learn about how we can work together to include all workers in HFA.***
- Recognizes "family" as broadly defined to reflect diverse family arrangements.
 - o Workers would be able to use their time when they need to care for a child, parent, spouse, domestic partner or other individual related by blood or affinity who has an illness, injury, needs preventive care or is otherwise in need of care.
- Ensures workers who are victims of domestic violence, stalking or sexual assault can use their paid sick days to recover or seek assistance.
- Workers would earn a minimum of one hour of paid sick time for every 30 hours worked, up to 56 hours (seven days) per year, unless their employer selects a higher limit.

Fighting for Equity in the HFA

Contact Family Values @ Work for more information or visit our website to share your story - familyvaluesatwork.org

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- As written, the HFA provides a baseline of support for workers. Over the years, 17 states and 22 cities/counties have passed paid sick and safe days laws and continued to improve the model to make it effective and inclusive.
- To be accessible, affordable, and adequate, HFA must be amended so that all workers, not just those in businesses of 15 or more, earn paid sick and safe days under the law. Unpaid days for workers in smaller businesses mean that many people will not be able to take time to care for themselves or their loved ones, which will destabilize our economy and our families. Many city and state paid sick days laws cover businesses of all sizes, and small businesses report good or neutral effects from these laws.

Our Nation is Ready for Guaranteed Paid Sick Days

From California and Rhode Island to Minneapolis and Pittsburgh, 39 locations have passed paid sick days laws, newly covering more than 19 million workers. Even more cities have passed emergency paid sick days laws to cover care during the pandemic.

In all of the locations where paid sick days laws have been implemented, we have seen positive reactions from both workers and the business community, including businesses that were initially opposed to the policy. Now, nearly 90% of Americans, including 96% of Democrats and 73% of Republicans, believe passing laws like the Healthy Families Act is important for keeping working families economically secure.

Despite this progress, we still have work to do. Nearly a third of working people — and more than three-quarters of those who handle our food or care for our frail and elderly — still do not earn even a single paid sick day. We need a national policy that covers all Americans. It's time to pass HFA now!

What You Can Do

- Contact your elected officials and tell them to support the Healthy Families Act (HFA).
- Use social media to highlight the need for paid sick days and the Healthy Families Act by using hashtags #HFAnow and #PaidSickDays.