

Support the Healthy Workplace Act: It's About Time!



Did you know ...

- **43% of all workers** in Illinois – over 2.5 million – have no right to a single paid sick day
- Workers **can be fired** for missing work to care for their sick child or elderly parent.
- Workers who come to work sick are less productive and infect other workers, customers, and the public. **The Healthy Workplace Act will lead to substantial savings to employers** by reducing turnover and spread of the flu at work.

Workers should not have to choose between taking a sick day and keeping a job.

Healthy Workplace Act (HB 3665) Basics:

Employees, full- and part-time, can earn up to 7 paid sick days per year, accrued hourly for every 30 hours worked.

- For example, a full-time worker earns one 8-hour sick day after 6 weeks, and 7 sick days after 42 weeks

Provides sick day leave: 1) for an employee's own illness; 2) to care for an ill family member; or 3) for medical appointments.

Requires employers who do not already provide at least 7 paid sick days to provide this standard employment benefit.

Paid Sick Days Benefit BOTH Employers and Employees

Benefits to business:

- Workers regain their health and return to full productivity faster
- Ill workers do not infect others, which decreases absentee expenses
- Reduced turnover and re-training costs
- "Presenteeism" – workers coming to work when sick – costs companies more than they spend on healthcare expenses¹

Benefits to workers:

- Workers most in need can stay home when illness strikes and not forfeit a day's wages. This will help:
 - 75% of low-wage workers, who do not receive paid sick days
 - 78% of working mothers with school-age children
 - the majority of workers, whose paid sick days do not allow them to care for a family member, ill spouse or aging parent with medical needs

Paid sick days are only required in San Francisco, Milwaukee and Washington, D.C.

"Sick leave is one issue where people just looked at adjusting their policies and moved on. It hasn't been a big issue."

--- *Golden Gate Restaurant Association Director Kevin Westlye*

For more information, contact Melissa Josephs at Women Employed, 312-782-3902 x234, mjosephs@womenemployed.org, or go to www.SickDaysIllinois.org.

¹ *Harvard Business Review*, "Presenteeism: At Work – But Out of It, Paul Hemp, Oct. 2004)