



Healthy Families Act

Background Information

Workers shouldn't have to choose between their family and a paycheck. Yet the majority of middle-income workers cannot rely on paid leave, and 3 out of 4 low-wage workers have no paid sick leave. Introduced by Sen. Tom Harkin and Rep. Rosa DeLauro, the Healthy Families Act would allow eligible employees to earn a minimum of seven paid sick days each year.

Eligible Employee:

- ❖ Employees who work at least 20 hours per week or 1000 hours annually.

Covered Employer:

- ❖ All employers (public and private) with at least 15 employees.

Specifics of Benefit:

- ❖ Provide 7 paid sick days a year for employees working more than 30 hours, pro-rated for employees working between 20 and 30 hours.
- ❖ Employees would earn one hour of paid sick time for every 30 hours worked.
- ❖ Employees who request at least 3 consecutive days may need doctor's certification.

Paid Sick Leave Can Be Used:

- ❖ To care for your own illness or physical or mental condition.
- ❖ To obtain a medical diagnosis, a related treatment, or preventive care.
- ❖ To care for a family member for any of the above reasons

Employer Requirements:

- ❖ Employers must post notice of the availability of paid sick leave and how to file enforcement action.
- ❖ Employers may not interfere with or deny the exercise of the employee's right to paid sick leave. They also may not discriminate against an employee for taking or requesting leave.
- ❖ Employers must make, keep, and preserve records on compliance with HFA.
- ❖ Employers must keep health information confidential and separate from personnel files.

Current Leave Policies:

- ❖ Employer policies with comparable or better paid leave comply.
- ❖ Expressly preserves state or local laws providing greater paid sick leave benefits and encourages employers to provide greater leave benefits.

For more information about 9to5's **Work/Family Campaigns** or for membership information on 9to5, contact us at **1-800-522-0925** or on our **website: www.9to5.org**

TAKE ACTION -- Call, e-mail, or fax your legislator today!

- **WRITE** a letter to your Senators and Representatives. See the sample below and add any of your own personal experience and words.
- **CALL** the capitol Switchboard 202-224-3121 and ask to be connected with your Senators and Representative.
- **VISIT** www.vote-smart.org or www.senate.gov and www.house.gov to find the names and contact information for your US Senators and US Representative.

Sample Letter

Date _____

Senator/ Representative _____

US Senate/ House of Representatives

Washington DC 20510

Dear Senator/Representative _____,

I am writing in support of **The Healthy Families Act**. This legislation would provide employees with the opportunity to earn a minimum of seven paid sick days in firms of 15 or more, making it possible for families across the nation to keep their jobs and care for their families.

Almost half (47%) of full-time, private sector workers have NO paid sick days. According to a Harvard researcher, Jody Heymann, 3 out of 4 low-wage workers have not paid sick time. Only 1 in 6 part-time workers has paid sick days. A recent Cornell study states that presenteeism - employees coming to work sick - costs \$180 billion annually in lost productivity and may cost employers more than absenteeism due to illness.

Add your own experience of caring for your own family's health, or that of family, friends, and co-workers here.

The Healthy Families Act would 1) allow full-time employees in firms of 15 or more to take up to seven paid sick days per year (pro-rated for part-timers); 2) allow employees to use their paid sick time to care for themselves or a family member, such as a sick child; and 3) help keep families, workplaces, and communities across the nation healthy.

I urge you to co-sponsor the Healthy Families Act and to work actively for its passage. I would appreciate knowing your position on this important piece of legislation. I am a registered voter and a member of 9to5, National Association of Working Women.

Sincerely,
Your name
Address