

9to5 Milwaukee

9to5 is a non-profit, membership organization working to improve the status and conditions of working women across the nation.

Lack of health insurance presents a serious barrier to self-sufficiency for women and their families. 9to5 does education and advocacy about the need for affordable, quality health care for all. This resource guide is one part of our efforts.

JOIN 9to5. Join the organization that works around the clock for your rights as a working woman. As a 9to5 member, you will receive moneysaving benefits, discounts on your publications, plus the 9to5 Newslite. Send a check for Membership: \$25 for Working Women, \$15 low-wage:

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**PAID
SICK DAYS
MILWAUKEE**

www.9to5.org | 414.274.0925



All illustrations by Marta Weber

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10 out of 10 Milwaukeeans deserve paid sick days

1. Generations of care

SHALANDA GREER

Right now, I'm working sick. I work for a child care center caring for toddlers on up. I do not have any sick time but I care for my own children and my mother. I am responsible for three generations of care, but have to lose pay or risk my job if anyone, including myself, gets sick.

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2. Placed in jobs without sick time

LISA CRAIG

I remember when I was sick and my mom didn't have the time to care for me. Almost every job I've held, I didn't have sick time. W-2 placements haven't had the basic benefits that make work possible for working women. This is exceedingly hard to manage a job and three kids, who can get sick like any other kids. I hope the next generation will have sick time, and we make this a basic right during my working life.

3. Picking up a sick child

MARIA SCOTT

When my two-year old got sick at daycare, they called me to come get her. I did not have paid sick time to go pick her up and couldn't jeopardize my job, so I had a friend go get her. But the next day she wasn't better and as her mom, I had to take some time to help her recover. I faced written discipline for a sick two-year

Public Health Benefits of Paid Sick Days

Over 80% of workers in the restaurant and hotel industry don't have paid sick time across our nation. That means workers in the service industry could pass illness, and workers themselves get sicker without treatment.

The public health of Milwaukee will benefit if sick residents stay home. Presenteeism, or working while sick, spreads virus like the flu. Help workers stay home if they're sick, by guaranteeing a minimum right to paid sick time. The Center for Disease Control recommends staying home when you're sick*, and this is exactly the policy Moms have advised for generations!

Issue of public health

STEVE OHLY, RN, Walkers Point Clinic Manager, Milwaukee

As a manager of a Milwaukee clinic, we see many immigrant families trying to balance work and the needs of their families. Often, their own health comes last. In one instance, a recent immigrant worker was suspended for a week to either get better or lose his job. He had to make it by for a week without pay, just so he could address a treatable illness. If all workers had the time to take, they may seek treatment sooner and recover faster. We should help workers address health problems and give workers a guaranteed minimum of paid sick time.

Education Experts Know the Difference

Milwaukee Teachers Education Association is part of the Paid Sick Day movement, because they understand that sick days are critical. Children

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on paid leave, and three-fourths of low-wage workers have no paid sick leave.

A new Milwaukee ballot initiative would allow workers to earn a minimum of one hour of paid sick time for every 30 hours worked (9 days a year for full-time workers). Similar initiatives for paid sick days and bills are being introduced in several cities, states across the nation, and at the federal level (as the Healthy Families Act).

Which employees will be covered?

- All employees who work in the City of Milwaukee
- Workers who work full-time or part-time, on a pro-rated basis

Which employers would provide sick leave?

- All employers in the City of Milwaukee
- Small business with 10 or fewer employees may be pro-rated

What health needs would be covered?

- All needs including medical treatment, preventive care, diagnosis, caregiving of a family member with short-term or long-term illness.
- All safety needs related to those experiencing domestic violence or sexual assault (ex. use accrued time to flee to safety)

What is the definition of "family"?

- Those related by "blood or affinity"



For more information, please contact

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Organizations that Support the Healthy Families Act:

- NAACP Milwaukee Health Committee
- New Hope Project
- One Wisconsin Now (OWN)
- Peace Action of Wisconsin
- Planned Parenthood of WI
- Riverwest Neighborhood Association
- SEIU WI State Council
- SEIU Local 150
- SEIU Local 1199
- Students for a Democratic Society Milwaukee (SDS)
- Task Force on Family Violence
- Voces De La Frontera
- Wisconsin Alliance of Retired Americans
- Wisconsin Citizen Action
- Wisconsin Committee on Occupational Safety and Health (WisCOSH)
- UNITE Here!



Organizations that Support the Healthy Families Act:

Milwaukee Paid Sick Days Coalition Partners

- 9to5, National Association of Working Women
- ACORN Milwaukee
- AFSCME DC 48
- Amalgamated Transit Union
- Black Health Coalition, Milwaukee
- Campaign Against Violence (CAV)
- Center Advocates
- Core El Centro
- Democracy Matters Milwaukee
- Faith Community for Worker Justice
- Good Jobs and Livable Neighborhoods (GJLN)
- Hmong American Women's Association (HAWA)
- Metcalfe Park Neighborhood Association
- Milwaukee Central Labor Council
- Milwaukee Network for Social Change (MNSC)
- Milwaukee Teacher's Education Association (MTEA)
- Milwaukee Muslim Women's Coalition



A number of studies have found that businesses that provide flexible leave policies for workers benefit from higher morale, reduced absenteeism, and lower turnover and training costs. A 2002 study by economists from the University of Chicago estimated that employers in California would save \$89 million a year in turnover costs through a paid family leave program.

Benefits for Children

Children are healthier and more successful in school when a parent is able to attend school meetings and stay home when the child is sick. Jody Heymann found that half of the parents of children scoring in the bottom quartile on math and reading tests were or had recently been in jobs without any paid leave. A number of medical studies have found that children recover more quickly when a parent is present, thus saving on health care costs.

Benefits for the Community

Regular medical care saves money by preventing illness and injury and decreasing the need for emergency care. These savings benefit public and private payers of health insurance, including private businesses.

ORGANIZATIONS THAT SUPPORT THE HEALTHY FAMILIES ACT

Paid Sick Days: A Guaranteed Minimum Standard

Milwaukee workers without paid sick days are forced to make impossible choices between vital income and jobs on one hand, and caring for their own health or family health on the other hand. Yet the majority of middle-income workers cannot rely

recover faster under parental care. Everyday in Milwaukee, kids need to get picked up from schools and daycares when they are sick. Middle school and high school students may be held back to care for younger siblings. Research also shows that kids who have parents, with time off, perform better on math and reading tests.

DONNA MAZYCK, RN, President of the National Association of School Nurses

School nurses hear many legitimate excuses from parents as to why their children are not up-to-date with immunizations and other essential healthcare. Often parents report that they are unable to take time off of work to attend to the required healthcare of their children. Not only are the non-immunized children at risk, but all of their schoolmates are also at risk in these situations. Parents need paid sick days to meet their state's requirements for keeping children healthy.

Schools know the math

Principal ROBIN KITZROW, Fritsche Middle School, Milwaukee

When kids get sick, parents also need time to help kids recover. Fritsche offers a clinic in our school. It's so easy, but we require parents accompany their kids. I hope workplaces recognize children's health needs, especially immunization needs.

Don't Make Us Choose Between Our Families and a Paycheck

THE FACTS:

Almost half (47%) of full-time, private-sector workers have NO paid sick days. Only one in six part-time workers has paid sick days. Workers who do have paid days can't always use it to take care of a sick child or elderly relative.

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old child, but if she's too sick to be at day care, I had no other choice.

4. Asthmatic child

LAWRENCE GRIFFIN

I faced written warnings after caring for my asthmatic son. He was in and out of the hospital. As a responsible father, I had to be there. Although I worked at a grocery store for three years, I didn't have the sick time I needed to care for my son.

5. Years of service, but no time

SHERRY JOHNSON

I had worked at a plant in Milwaukee for seven years. I needed eye surgery and the day I left everyone was really nice to me. When I tried to return to work, they said I was fired the day I had surgery. I believe everyone needs paid sick time.

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6. Serving up sickness

JOEY ZAMARIPPA

I had to open a restaurant and prepare sandwiches, when I had a bad cold.. Unless I could recruit someone to cover for me, I could not be out sick. I now work somewhere with sick time, and can take the time to recover.

7. From minor injury to no job

REGINA CROCKETT

I was working at a restaurant and broke my leg when I wasn't at work, but I didn't have paid sick time. I knew they may adjust my location because the kitchen was slippery with crutches, but after they moved me to the drive-up window, they reduced my hours. After I asked why, they fired me.

8. Change our priorities

JULIA PERKINS

I drove school buses full-time for a few years, but I never had paid sick time. When you got sick to your stomach, you literally kept a bucket under the driver's seat because you didn't have the time to stop and

Lower wage workers are particularly vulnerable. More than three in four (76%) workers in the bottom quarter in earnings have no paid sick days. More than 4 in 10 (41%) of working parents with incomes below 200% of the federal poverty line have no paid leave of any kind. Low-wage workers with more than two years job tenure are no more likely to receive paid leave than those who worked less than a year. Recent welfare recipients fare the worst.

This is not just an issue for families with children. Nearly 4 in 10 employees already report that they have missed work due to elder care responsibilities. This number is likely to grow higher, as nearly two-thirds of Americans under age 60 expect to be responsible for the care of an elderly relative by 2008.

The problem is particularly acute for working women, who are still predominantly responsible for meeting family caregiving needs. Almost half (49%) of working mothers report that they must miss work when a child is sick. Of these mothers, 49% do not get paid when that happens. According to a recent study by the Institute for Women's Policy Research, employers have been reducing their sick leave programs.



The Consequences:

Lack of paid sick days means more than a loss of pay – it often means discipline, up to and including termination. That can affect workers long-term, making it harder to get another job, causing a wait for needed benefits, hurting the development of assets and retirement security.

Other consequences of inadequate coverage include adverse health effects for workers, contagion among co-workers, reduced productivity, higher costs of turnover, worse health outcomes for children, and increased use of health care resources.

Paid Sick Days will Help Solve Ailments of Workplaces and the Community

Benefits for Business

A minimum amount of paid sick leave levels the playing field for covered employers and will have no impact on companies that already provide paid sick leave. According to a 2001 study published in the Journal of Managerial Issues, offering workers the option of taking time off when a family member is sick affects profits positively. Studies show that welfare leavers and other low-income workers have high rates of job churning, often because of family care responsibilities. The costs of losing an employee (advertising for, interviewing and training a replacement) are far greater than the cost of providing short-term leave to retain existing employees. Deloitte and Touche LLP, for

example, estimate savings of \$41.5 million a year in such costs as a result of their flexibility programs. This holds true for low-income employees as well as highly paid and skilled professionals.

44% of HR executives say that “presenteeism” – employees coming to work even though they are ill, which poses potential problems of contagion and lower productivity – is a problem. A recent Cornell study states that presenteeism costs \$180 billion annually in lost productivity and may cost employers more than absenteeism due to illness.

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pull-over. If we care about the people who serve our children, we would make sure they had sick time.

9. A day's pay

SHEILA THOMPSON

I'm a crossing guard and I don't have sick time. I can't afford to lose a day's pay because if I do I might not make my rent, gas, or food bills. Once I had a bad cold and had difficulty breathing. I couldn't even talk to the kids, but I worked anyways. Paid sick days would help me make my budget. I love coming to my job, but I don't want my health to come last.

10. Make success possible for every family

PAT ERVING

Having a disabled child, you have to go on a dime when the school calls you. It has been difficult to find employers that can understand the care of a special needs child. Paid sick time would make our working lives easier.