



Emergency Paid Sick Time

COVID-19 Protection for Working People

In order to ensure that all those who feel sick or may have been exposed to COVID-19 stay home and avoid exposing others to the virus, **all workers must have the ability to miss work to care for themselves or their family, without losing the pay they need to make ends meet.**

Low-wage workers are our first line of defense against COVID-19, but they are feeling the greatest economic impact of the outbreak. Healthcare and long-term care workers, janitorial workers, food service workers, child care workers, municipal workers, adjunct faculty, gig workers, and others on the front lines are critical to supporting our communities during the outbreak. Women, people of color, and immigrants are all overrepresented in frontline occupations and industries.

But **many front-line workers are struggling economically and lack basic economic protections including adequate paid sick time.** In 2014, Raise Up Massachusetts led the campaign to create Massachusetts' Earned Sick Time Law, but the 40 hours of sick time it provides workers each year doesn't meet the scale of this major public health crisis. The federal government has provided additional paid sick time for many workers through the federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA), but it has big coverage gaps that leave millions of front-line workers without paid sick time, including workers at companies with more than 500 employees, and many employees of health care and residential facilities. The Center for American Progress estimates that at least 1.8 million workers in Massachusetts are not covered by the FFCRA's paid sick time protections.

No worker should face a choice between going to work sick or losing the pay they desperately need to make ends meet. **Massachusetts will not be able to safely reopen our economy if tens of thousands of workers feel the need to go to work even when they might be sick.**

To protect the public health of our communities, Massachusetts needs to pass Emergency Paid Sick Time legislation to ensure that all workers can take paid sick time during this crisis.

Emergency Paid Sick Time

(H.4700 - Rep. Donato / S.2701 - Sen. Lewis)

Our Emergency Paid Sick Time legislation would provide **ten additional work-days (80 hours) of job-protected paid sick time** for immediate use during the COVID-19 outbreak. This Emergency Paid Sick Time would be available to employees not covered by the federal *Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA)*'s paid sick time provisions:

- a) **Employees working for a private employer with more than 500 employees;** and
- b) **Employees working at health care or residential facilities** that have the option to exempt themselves from the FFCRA.

Workers taking Emergency Paid Sick Time would be paid by their employers at their regular rate of pay, up to a maximum of \$850/week. Employers would then be fully reimbursed by the state. The legislation creates a COVID-19 emergency paid leave time fund with an initial deposit of \$55 million.

Emergency Paid Sick Time would be available, with no waiting period, for use:

- a) **For a worker to care for themselves** if they are diagnosed with COVID-19, experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and awaiting a diagnosis, quarantined or self-quarantined, or reasonably believes their health is at risk; or
- b) **For a worker to take care of a family member**, including a domestic partner or someone with whom the worker resides, who is diagnosed with COVID-19, experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and awaiting a diagnosis, quarantined or self-quarantined, or reasonably believes their health is at risk.

Visit raiseupma.org/EmergencyPST to learn more and take action!

About Raise Up Massachusetts

Raise Up Massachusetts is a coalition of community organizations, faith-based groups, and labor unions committed to building an economy that invests in families, gives everyone the opportunity to succeed, and creates broadly shared prosperity. Since our coalition came together in 2013, we have nearly doubled wages for hundreds of thousands of working people by winning two increases in the state's minimum wage, won best-in-the-nation earned sick time and paid family and medical leave benefits for workers and their families, led the campaign for the Fair Share Amendment to invest in transportation and public education, and started to build an economy that works for all of us, not just those at the top. Learn more at raiseupma.org.