


Overview of Paid Sick Time Laws in the United States

Please note that these paid sick time materials do not represent an exhaustive overview of the state, county, and city paid sick time laws described, and it does not constitute legal advice. It is possible that additional provisions not described in these materials may apply to a worker's specific circumstances or category of employment.

 <p>For more information visit A Better Balance (abetterbalance.org)</p>	Washington
Who is covered? Note: City/county paid sick time laws cannot cover state government workers, and city, county, and state paid sick time laws cannot cover federal government workers.	Workers employed by an employer in Washington are covered. Workers exempt from the state minimum wage law are also exempt from the paid sick time law. See http://www.lni.wa.gov/workers-rights/_docs/esa1.pdf for a detailed list of exemptions.
Can sick time be used to care for loved ones?	Yes: children; parents; parents of a spouse or registered domestic partner; spouses; registered domestic partners; grandparents; grandchildren; and siblings
How is "child" defined?	Biological, adopted, or foster children, stepchildren, or a child to whom the employee stands in loco parentis, is a legal guardian, or is a de facto parent, regardless of age or dependency status.
Can sick time be used for specific "safe time" purposes (related to domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking)?	Yes, when the worker or the worker's family member (for safe time purposes: a child, spouse, parent, parent of a spouse or registered domestic partner, grandparent, or person with whom the worker has a dating relationship) is the victim.
Can sick time be used under the law to bond with a new child and/or deal with a family member's death? Note: It is possible that other laws, such as the Family and Medical Leave Act or a state equivalent, could provide eligible workers with unpaid leave for these purposes.	No
Can sick time be used when a worker's place of work or child's school/place of care is closed by public health officials for a public health emergency?	Yes, when closed for any health-related reasons (not only public health emergencies).
Rate at which workers earn paid sick time?	1 hour for every 40 hours worked
Do workers have different sick time-related rights based on the size of their employer? If so, based on what employer-size threshold(s)?	No
Amount of paid sick time that can be earned under the law per year? (Note: All of these paid sick time laws make it clear that these laws establish a minimum requirement, and employers can provide greater or more generous paid sick time benefits to their workers.)	No explicit cap on how much sick time can be earned or used in a year. However, as described below, employers are not required to allow a worker to carry over more than 40 hours of unused paid sick time a year.

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When do workers begin to earn paid sick time?	Although not specified, reads as if accrual begins at the commencement of employment. Workers are entitled to use accrued paid sick time beginning on the 90th calendar day after the commencement of employment.
Does unused sick time carry forward to the subsequent year?	Workers are entitled to carry forward unused paid sick time, except that an employer is not required to allow a worker to carry over paid sick time in excess of 40 hours.
Private Right of Action to go to Court?	Yes
Are there waivers/ exemptions for workers covered by a valid Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA)?	The law does not apply to construction workers covered by a CBA if: the union signatory to the CBA is an approved referral union program authorized under Washington law; the CBA establishes sick time provisions that are equivalent to the sick time law and rules adopted by the Department of Labor and Industries; and the CBA expressly waives the requirements of the sick time law in clear and unambiguous terms or in an addendum to an existing agreement.
What Agency or Official Enforces the Law?	Washington Department of Labor and Industries
For the statewide paid sick time laws: can cities in the state pass paid sick time laws that are broader than the state law?	Yes. Therefore, the local paid sick time laws in Seattle, Tacoma (and a law only applying to certain industries in SeaTac) remain in effect, and other localities in Washington may continue to pass broader paid sick time laws. Note that following passage of the statewide sick time law, the City of Spokane amended its sick time law, passed by the Spokane City Council in January 2016, to sunset on December 31, 2017.
Statutory Citation(s)	Wash. Rev. Code § 49.46.005 et seq.
Additional Notes	For more on Washington's paid sick time law, see https://lni.wa.gov/workers-rights/leave/paid-sick-leave/