



Overview of Paid Sick Time Laws in the United States

Updated on October 26, 2018

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>	Seattle, WA
Who is covered?	Workers who work in Seattle are covered. Independent contractors and government workers other than those employed by the City of Seattle are exempted.
Can sick time be used to care for loved ones?	Yes: children; parents; parents-in-law; 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, the worker's family member (for safe time purposes: a child, spouse, parent, parent-in-law, grandparent, or person with whom the employee has a dating relationship) or certain members of the worker's household (defined under Washington State law) 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 public health reason (not only public health emergencies).
Rate at which workers earn paid sick time?	In businesses with 250 or more employees, at least 1 hour for every 30 hours worked. In businesses with fewer than 250 employees, at least 1 hour for every 40 hours worked.

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Do workers have different sick time-related rights based on the size of their employer? If so, based on what employer-size threshold(s)?	Yes. As described above, the rate at which workers earn paid sick time differs according to whether an employee has 1-250 full-time workers/equivalents or 250 or more full-time workers/equivalents. As described below, the amount of earned sick time that a worker can carry forward to the subsequent calendar year differs according to whether the employer has 1-49 workers, 50-249 workers, or 250 or more workers.
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 may cap the amount of unused sick time workers may carry over to the subsequent year.
When do workers begin to earn paid sick time?	At the commencement of employment, but workers aren't entitled to use paid sick time until the 90th calendar day after employment commenced.
Does unused sick time carry forward to the subsequent year?	Workers are entitled to carry forward the following amount of unused paid sick time: for businesses with at least one and fewer than 50 employees: up to 40 hours; for businesses with at least 50 and fewer than 250 employees: up to 56 hours; for businesses with 250 or more employees: up to 72 hours.
Private Right of Action to go to Court?	Yes
Are there waivers/ exemptions for workers covered by a valid Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA)?	Workers covered by a valid CBA may waive the law's requirements that are more generous than Washington's statewide paid sick time law (such as accrual and carry over rates). Such requirements must be expressly waived in clear and unambiguous terms in the CBA, or in an addendum to an existing CBA including an agreement that is open for negotiation. This limited waiver is only allowed for agreements ratified or expiring by December 31, 2018. CBA waivers are not permitted on the later of January 1, 2019, or the expiration date of a CBA in existence on December 31, 2018.
What Agency or Official Enforces the Law?	Seattle Office of Labor Standards
For the statewide paid sick time laws: can cities in the state pass paid sick time laws that are broader than the state law?	N/A
Statutory Citation(s)	Seattle Code § 14.16.010 et seq.



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Seattle, WA

Additional Notes

On December 11, 2017, the Seattle City Council approved legislation containing amendments to Seattle's sick time ordinance that incorporate the more generous requirements of Washington's statewide paid sick time law. Mayor Jenny A. Durkan signed this legislation on December 15, 2017. These amendments took effect on January 14, 2018. For more information, see <http://www.seattle.gov/laborstandards/paid-sick-and-safe-time>.