



the work and family legal center

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A Better Balance Applauds New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio and Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito on Their Plan to Strengthen and Expand the Earned Sick Time Act

Proposed Legislation Will Extend Critical Rights to Hundreds of Thousands of Workers in New York City on April 1, 2014

New York, NY — This afternoon, A Better Balance stood with New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio and New York City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito outside Esmeralda's Restaurant in Bushwick, Brooklyn as the Mayor announced legislation to strengthen the New York City Earned Sick Time Act and extend paid sick time to hundreds of thousands of workers in NYC who would not otherwise receive paid sick time when the Earned Sick Time Act goes into effect on April 1, 2014.

At his press conference today, Mayor de Blasio thanked the "A Better Balance and Paid Sick Days Coalition" for its leadership on this issue. For nearly five years, A Better Balance has been working to make paid sick time a reality for all working families in New York City. In addition to providing assistance to the Mayor's office on this legislation and engaging in outreach throughout New York City to educate workers about their sick time rights, A Better Balance is working with city officials on the development of administrative rules and regulations that will facilitate the law's implementation in April.

"No New Yorkers should be forced to choose between their jobs and their personal or family health," said Sherry Leiwant, Co-Founder and Co-President of A Better Balance. "Although the New York City Earned Sick Time Act that passed last year guarantees paid sick time to one million workers in New York City who currently receive no paid time off when they or their loved ones are ill, the law is not perfect. A Better Balance commends the Mayor and City Council Speaker for their commitment to strengthening the Earned Sick Time Act and ensuring that hundreds of thousands of additional workers will be able to earn paid sick time as of April 1, 2014."

Under the version of the New York City Earned Sick Time Act that passed last year, workers in businesses with 20 or more employees would be able to earn up to 5 days of paid sick time as of April 1, 2014, with this threshold for paid sick time dropping in October 2015, to cover workers employed by businesses with 15 or more employees. Manufacturing workers were also excluded from the law. The Mayor's proposal greatly simplifies and expands the law, ensuring that manufacturing workers and all workers in businesses with 5 or more employees will be able to earn up to 5 days of paid sick time on April 1st of this year when the law goes into effect. Any worker in a smaller business not covered by the paid sick time requirement will be entitled to up to 5 days of unpaid sick time to care for themselves or an ill loved one.

The Mayor's bill will also increase the time in which workers can file complaints, expand the definition of "family" in the law to cover grandparents, grandchildren, and siblings, and empower the city to proactively enforce the Earned Sick Time Act by initiating its own investigations.

"As the City Council considers the Mayor's legislation and weighs other potential changes to the Earned Sick Time Act, A Better Balance looks forward to working toward passage and implementation of the strongest law possible," said Sherry Leiwant.

A Better Balance is a New York City-based legal advocacy organization dedicated to promoting fairness



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in the workplace and helping workers across the economic spectrum care for their families without risking their economic security.

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