

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS: Massachusetts Paid Sick Time

1) What does the Massachusetts Paid Sick Time law do?

Massachusetts' permanent paid sick time law gives workers up to 40 hours of sick time a year, which can be used to recover from physical/mental illness or injury; to seek medical diagnosis, treatment, or preventative care; to care for a family member who is ill or needs medical diagnosis, treatment, or preventative care; to attend the worker's or a family member's routine medical appointment; or to address needs that may arise if the worker or the worker's dependent child is a victim of domestic violence.

Additionally, the State released [administrative guidance](#) clarifying that sick time under Massachusetts's sick time law can also be used for certain COVID-19 related reasons, such as if the worker or a family member is required by public health officials or a healthcare provider to quarantine.

From June 7, 2021 to March 15, 2022 the COVID-19 emergency paid sick time law may have provided certain workers with additional sick time rights in relation to COVID-19. For more information from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, click [here](#).

2) Am I covered?

If you work as an employee in Massachusetts, you are probably covered, whether you are a **full-time, part-time, or temporary** worker. However, the law does not cover federal employees and employees of certain municipalities unless the municipality has opted into the law.

3) How much sick time can I earn?

You earn **1 hour** of sick time for **every 30 hours worked**, up to a maximum of **40 hours** per year. If your workplace has **11 or more workers**, that time must be paid. If your workplace has **fewer than 11 workers**, your sick time may be unpaid—but you can't be fired or punished for taking it.

All covered employees are protected against being fired or punished for using or requesting their sick time (including threats, discipline, demotion, reduction in hours, termination, etc.).

4) What if my work or my child's school or daycare is closed for a health emergency?

You cannot use your sick time because your work or your child's school or day care is closed, unless you would otherwise be able to use your sick time (for example, if you are sick or caring for a sick family member).



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5) Which of my family members are covered by the law?

You can take sick time to care for yourself or a child, spouse, parent, or parent of a spouse.

6) What if I already have paid leave or paid time off?

If you already get any paid leave (vacation, paid time off, etc.) that you can use as sick time *and* it's **at least** the same amount you would earn under this law, the law does **not** give you any additional paid time off.

7) When can I begin using my sick time?

You start earning sick time immediately but cannot use it until 90 days after the start of your employment.

8) Do I need a doctor's note?

Only after an absence of more than 24 consecutively scheduled work hours (and the note does not have to specify your illness).

The Massachusetts Attorney General is in charge of enforcing this law.

All covered workers are protected against being fired or punished for using or requesting sick or safe time. If you have a problem—or want more information—call A Better Balance's free legal clinic at **1-833-NEED-ABB**.

Please note that this fact sheet does not represent an exhaustive overview of the paid sick time law described, and it does not constitute legal advice. It is possible that additional provisions not described in this fact sheet may apply to a worker's specific circumstances or category of employment.