

Paid Sick Leave is Good for Business!

A worker who can't afford to take a sick day can spread their illness to other co-workers, clients and customers, and other people in the community. This prolongs outbreaks and creates more in spinoff costs in the long run than what a few days of wages to stay home would have cost their employer in the first place.

But even when risk of contagion is lower, taking time to rest and recuperate properly helps employees return to the workplace at the top of their game faster.ⁱ

It's part of creating workplaces with healthy workers AND healthy bottom lines!

- Providing paid sick leave can reduce turnover.ⁱⁱ Businesses retain their knowledgeable, dedicated and well-trained staff who provide the kind of quality service that keep customers coming back.
 - Turnover costs are on average at least 20% of a worker's wagesⁱⁱⁱ and can be up to 200%.^{iv} It takes time to recruit, train and let an employee work their way up the learning curve to full productivity. If positions are turning over frequently, those costs become pretty steep.
- Businesses that provide paid sick leave find that their employees are more productive, have higher morale, and provide better service to clients or customers.^v That's a win-win for everyone!
 - Presenteeism, or the phenomenon of reporting to work even when ill or unwell, often leads to lost productivity costs that are higher than the cost of the employee's wages themselves.^{vi} We've all been there – and we know we don't turn in our best work when we've got a pounding headache.
 - Studies suggest that workers with paid sick leave are 28% less likely to be injured on the job than those without.^{vii} This is just another way that paid sick leave keeps everyone safe!
- When people have more stable and predictable incomes, like knowing their paycheque will be the same that week even if they have to take a sick day, they are also able to participate in the economy as both workers and consumers, keeping the engines turning.

For better business outcomes, healthier communities, and for better individual worker's health and wellbeing, it just makes sense to provide people with the financial ability to stay home when they need to!

Paid sick days are the right thing to do and good for the economy!

- Small businesses contribute to the vibrancy and the economy of their communities in many ways. It's important for all businesses to play a leadership role in showing how decent work practices, like paid sick leave, sustain those communities and promote health and wellbeing.
- And contrary to the opponents' dire warnings, employment in New York City, Seattle and San Francisco actually grew in the two years following implementation of paid sick leave.^{viii} 86% of businesses surveyed indicated approval.^{ix}
- Meanwhile, 85% of the businesses in New York reported no increase to their costs, without needing to raise prices or reduce wages or hours. In San Francisco, six out of seven businesses reported no adverse effects on profitability and in Seattle, employers estimated that paid sick leave amounted to only 0.4% of their total revenue for the year.^x

Paid Sick Leave is Good for Business!

Paid sick days level the playing field.

- A clear, standard minimum legislated requirement levels the playing field and makes it easier for business owners to know if they are in compliance with the law and to create their own staffing policies.
- And increasingly, clients and customers are looking to the businesses they frequent to uphold community values. Two thirds of consumers have said they want the companies they do business with to provide fair employment practices and treat their staff well. About half of consumers say they will avoid a brand that doesn't.^{xi}

But I hear big companies on Twitter and in the news saying businesses don't want it?

- The real problem is that there is no clear, minimum requirement in the Employment Standards Act. Many large corporations don't provide them, while a growing number of small businesses, with much smaller profit margins, do.
- This creates an unfairness and makes it even harder for small businesses to compete with big companies than it already is. And it reduces the effectiveness of sick days as public health measures. Meaning we all pay the price!

Employer experience shows workers don't abuse paid sick days

- When New York City mandated paid sick days, 98% of employers reported no known cases of abuse and small businesses (with fewer than 50 employees) reported no abuse at all.^{xii} Similarly, in Seattle, nine out of ten employers reported no cases of abuse of paid sick days after their mandatory sick leave ordinance was put in place.^{xiii}
- Employers in New York reported that most workers used three days or fewer and that they saw them as insurance, to be used carefully when ill or caring for a sick family member.
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Paid sick leave is unquestionably the right thing to do for employees from a public and personal health perspective. But it turns out they are also good for business and for local economies!

ⁱ <https://cepr.net/documents/publications/paid-sick-days-2009-05.pdf>

ⁱⁱ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5649342/>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/economy/reports/2012/11/16/44464/there-are-significant-business-costs-to-replacing-employees/>

^{iv} <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5649342/>

^v https://www.asbcouncil.org/sites/main/files/file-attachments/panorama_report_-_business_impacts_of_paid_leave.pdf

^{vi} <https://www.racgp.org.au/afp/2013/april/presenteeism/>

^{vii} <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3482022/>

^{viii} Ibid.

^{ix} Ibid.

^x Ibid.

^{xi} https://www.accenture.com/_acnmedia/Thought-Leadership-Assets/PDF/Accenture-CompetitiveAgility-GCPR-POV.pdf#zoom=50

^{xii} <https://cepr.net/images/stories/reports/nyc-paid-sick-days-2016-09.pdf>

^{xiii} <http://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/CityAuditor/auditreports/PSSTOUWReportwAppendices.pdf>

^{xiv} Ibid.

^{xv} Ibid.

^{xvi} Ibid.