

# THE HEALTHY FAMILIES ACT: AT A GLANCE

THE HEALTHY FAMILIES ACT WOULD GIVE AMERICANS THE **RIGHT TO EARN PAID SICK TIME** TO USE WHEN THEY OR THEIR LOVED ONES ARE SICK, HURT, OR GETTING TREATMENT—MEANING **HEALTHIER FAMILIES, HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES, AND A HEALTHIER ECONOMY.**

HERE'S WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW.

## WHY DO WE NEED THE HEALTHY FAMILIES ACT?

Everyone deserves the time they need to recover from illness, care for a sick loved one, or get the medical care they need—but today, far too many Americans can't take that time, compromising their health, the health of our communities, and our economy. The Healthy Families Act would give essentially all employees the right to earn and use paid sick time to care for themselves and their families when they need it.



## DOESN'T EVERYONE ALREADY HAVE PAID SICK TIME?

More than 26 million Americans don't have access to even a single paid sick day. In the private sector, roughly one in five employees have no paid sick time, disproportionately low-income workers. In some industries, access is even rarer: for example, nearly half of all food service and accommodations workers have no paid sick time.

## WHAT WOULD THE HEALTHY FAMILIES ACT DO?

The law would guarantee employees the right to earn one hour of paid sick time for every 30 hours they work, up to 56 hours per year (or seven 8-hour days). This time could be used when workers or their loved ones are sick, hurt, or receiving health care, as well as to address the impacts of sexual and domestic violence. By law, employers would not be allowed to fire, write up, or otherwise punish employees for taking this time.

## WHAT WOULD THE HEALTHY FAMILIES ACT MEAN FOR THE HEALTH OF WORKERS AND THEIR FAMILIES?

Access to paid sick time means better health. Workers without paid sick time are three times more likely to forgo health care for themselves and 1.6 times more likely to forgo health care for a loved one than those with paid sick time. Those with paid sick time are also more likely to get vaccinations like flu or COVID shots and more likely to receive preventive health care, like cancer screenings. And because people are more able to access care when they need it, paid sick time laws reduce costly emergency room visits.

## WHAT WOULD THE HEALTHY FAMILIES ACT MEAN FOR PUBLIC HEALTH?

When people don't have paid sick time, they are much more likely to go to work sick or send a sick child to school or child care—endangering their own health while also spreading illness to others. By enabling those who are ill to stay home, paid sick time combats the spread of disease: for example, state paid sick leave laws reduced doctor-certified cases of flu-like illnesses by 11% in just the first year. Similarly, when the U.S. guaranteed paid sick time for COVID to many workers, this temporary protection prevented an estimated 15,000 cases of COVID per day even with major limitations, millions of cases prevented in total.

## WHAT WOULD THE HEALTHY FAMILIES ACT MEAN FOR BUSINESSES AND THE ECONOMY?

Today, employers and our economy are paying the price for our country's failure to guarantee paid sick time. Showing up to work sick reduces productivity and drags down the economy by an estimated \$273 billion per year. Moreover, people working with contagious illnesses like the flu spread those diseases around the workplace and cause additional expensive absences. Paid sick time combats these harms by making workers less likely to come to work sick. In the long term, paid sick time saves businesses even more money by reducing costly turnover. Where states and cities have required paid sick time, businesses saw increased productivity and higher returns on assets.

