



PAID SICK DAYS ***Public Health Benefits***

Paid sick leave is an important public health policy:

1. **Workers regain their health** more quickly.
2. **Workers avoid spreading disease** to their co-workers
3. **Children get well faster.** Most family responsibilities fall to women, who make up a substantial portion of the workforce.
 - a. Four out of five mothers of school-aged children are in the workforce.
 - b. Two-thirds of mothers with children under 6 work are in the workforce.
 - c. More than half of mothers of infants are working full-time.However, women are the least likely to have paid sick days.
4. **Children get better preventive care.**
 - a. Seven well-baby check-ups per year recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics.
5. **Elderly get cared for better**, but nearly half of those caring for a loved one are working full time.
6. **The risk of spreading disease is greatest in low-wage hospitality industries;** yet, only 8% of the lowest-wage workers in accommodation and food service businesses have sick leave.
7. **Public health officials are urging individuals to stay home when they or their children are sick.** In fact, child care centers often require children to be symptom-free for 24 hours. (One day of fever equals 2 days of missed work for a parent.)
 - a. Influenza, for example, is a highly contagious disease that spreads quickly and can have serious health consequences for children, the elderly, and others.
 - b. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, each year more than 200,000 people are hospitalized from flu complications and about 36,000 people die from the flu.
 - c. Sick children in child care or school have the same effect of having sick adults at work: contagion and overall higher rates of infection for all the children in care.
 - d. It is not healthy or wise for a sick child to be left home alone.

Paid sick leave is a valuable public health measure,

but more than 1 million workers in Washington have no sick leave to care for their own illness or for a sick child or parent.