

# The Healthy Families Act

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No one should face the impossible choice of caring for their health or keeping their paycheck or job. But millions of working people must make this decision every time they get sick or a family member needs care. Nearly 40 million private-sector workers are not offered a single paid sick day to recover from common, short-term illnesses.<sup>1</sup> An additional 4.2 million don't have access to paid sick days because they haven't been on the job long enough to be eligible.<sup>2</sup> And millions more lack paid sick time to care for a sick child. At a time when families' finances are stretched thin and losing a job can mean months of unemployment, working families need a paid sick days standard.

## A Basic Workplace Standard of Paid Sick Days

The Healthy Families Act (H.R. 1876, S. 984) would set an important national standard for paid sick days. Its passage would be a critical step toward meeting the health and financial needs of working families

## The Healthy Families Act Would

- ▶ Allow workers in businesses with 15 or more employees to **earn up to seven job-protected paid sick days each year** to be used to recover from their own illness, access preventive care, or provide care for a sick family member.
- ▶ Allow workers who **are victims of domestic violence, stalking, or sexual assault to use their paid sick days** to recover or seek assistance related to an incident.
- ▶ Include **a simple method for calculating accrued sick time**. Workers would earn a minimum of one hour paid sick time for every 30 hours worked, up to 56 hours (seven days) per year, unless the employer selects a higher limit.
- ▶ **Allow employers to require certification** if an employee uses more than three paid sick days in a row. For victims of domestic violence, the certification may be from a law enforcement officer or victim advocate.

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2010, March). Employee Benefits in the United States: Selected paid leave benefits: Access, National Compensation Survey (Table 6). Retrieved 9 December 2010, from <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/ebs2.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Institute for Women's Policy Research. (2010, December). Fact Sheet: 44 Million U.S. Workers Lacked Paid Sick Days in 2010. Institute for Women's Policy Research Publication. Retrieved 7 January 2011, from <http://www.iwpr.org/pdf/B293PSD.pdf>

The National Partnership for Women & Families is a nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy group dedicated to promoting fairness in the workplace, access to quality health care and policies that help women and men meet the dual demands of work and family. More information is available at [www.NationalPartnership.org](http://www.NationalPartnership.org).

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