



# New State Law Gives All Workers Five Days of Paid Time Off for Illness or Any Reason

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**SPRINGFIELD** – Women Employed, which has been creating fundamental, systemic change for working women for nearly 50 years, today applauded the passage of SB208, the Paid Leave for All Workers Act, which provides up to 40 hours, or five days, of paid time off for all Illinois workers for any reason, including for an employee’s illness, to care for a sick family member, or for medical appointments. Women Employed led a [broad-based coalition of advocates](#) fighting for a statewide law providing paid time off for all workers.



Until now, about 1.5 million workers in Illinois did not have access to a single paid sick day. The new law, sponsored by Rep. Gordon-Booth and Sen. Lightford and championed by workers' rights advocates and labor leaders, makes Illinois the 17<sup>th</sup> state to secure paid sick time for its workers.

“No one should fear losing income or their job because they or their loved ones are sick,” Women Employed’s Associate Director of Policy Sarah Labadie said. “Thanks to the championship of Leaders Gordon-Booth and Lightford and the commitment of Women Employed staff and our statewide coalition, Illinois can stand proud as a state where all of its workers are ensured paid time off.”

The Paid Leave for All Workers Act ensures all workers, including essential workers, have a set amount of paid time off. The bill provides:

- Full- and part-time workers can earn up to 40 hours of leave per year.
- Employees can use leave for any reason, including: recovering from their own illness, caring for a sick family member, school closures, reasons related to domestic or sexual violence, visiting a family member in jail or prison and other court-related reasons, and COVID-19 related reasons such as the need to quarantine or get vaccinated.

“Paid leave for all Illinois workers is long overdue,” Leader Jehan Gordon-Booth said. “I’m honored to have worked alongside Women Employed, the Shriver Center, labor leaders and so many other fierce advocates of workers’ rights who made this day possible.”

“Many low-paid workers face impossible choices when it comes to needing time off and keeping a job, and it shouldn’t be that way,” Sen. Lightford said. “In Illinois, we stand with our workers and I’m proud we worked together to make paid sick time a reality for workers who need it most.”

Dozens of Illinois cities and local governments, including Chicago, already offer paid sick days to their workers. The Paid Leave for All Workers Act ensures Illinois workers – no matter where they live – have access to the same right.

“Every day, workers are forced to choose between job security and caring for themselves or family members,” said Tim Drea, President of the IL AFL-CIO. “We’ve fought hard to ensure that millions of Illinoisans have access to paid leave, and are grateful to Rep. Gordon-Booth, Sen. Lightford, Women Employed and the deep bench of advocates for listening to the needs of working families in our state.”

The bill passed 78-30 in the House and 38-16 in the Senate and now heads to Gov. Pritzker’s desk for his signature.

“This is a great day for Illinois workers and their families,” Wendy Pollack, founder and director of the Women's Law and Policy Initiative at the Shriver Center, said. “We couldn’t have made this possible without the outstanding support and leadership of our legislative sponsors and our dedicated coalition of advocates.”

More information on the Paid Leave for All Workers Act and a full list of coalition partners can be found [here](#).

**Women Employed** (WE) is a 50-year-old advocacy organization that pursues equity for women in the workforce by effecting policy change, expanding access to educational opportunities, and advocating for fair and inclusive workplaces so that all women, families, and communities can thrive. Our mission is to improve the economic status of women and remove barriers to economic equity, and we are working towards closing the wealth gap at the intersection of gender and race. For more information, visit [womenemployed.org](https://womenemployed.org), or follow @WomenEmployed on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), or [Instagram](#).