

Principles of a Paid Sick Leave Act

The Healthy Families Act (HFA) is on track to be placed on the ballot in Ohio this fall. The position of the Strickland Administration is that any paid sick leave proposal must be written and implemented in a way that effectively balances employees' interest in the availability of paid time which can be used when they are sick with employers' need to efficiently manage their workforce. Therefore, the Strickland Administration is committed to a paid sick leave act that:

- 1) Supports continued competitiveness and economic growth in Ohio.
- 2) Acknowledges the positive effects that paid sick leave could have on employees and their families.
- 3) Clearly specifies who is covered under the act and what would be required of both the employer and employee, without imposing workplace rules to a greater extent than is necessary to establish minimum standards.
- 4) Balances the goal of employees accruing paid time which can be used when a family health issue arises with the need of employers to be able to predictably cover their staffing requirements each day.
- 5) Provides for paid sick days in a way that is the least burdensome administratively for employers while allowing employees to be able to use that leave when unexpected health issues arise with little notice.
- 6) Ensures that employers, especially those operating 24/7 facilities, can implement this policy in a way that provides for the level of workforce stability they need to safely and efficiently operate their facilities. This includes balancing the need for employees to take paid sick time in reasonable increments with the employers need to know who is going to be absent when and for how long.
- 7) Assures all employees of all but the state's smallest employers access to paid sick time without punishing those employers who already have generous sick day policies, including paid time off policies.
- 8) Protects employees from discipline for appropriate use of sick leave while ensuring that employers continue to have tools to incentivize attendance and advance notification of planned absences, including the ability to discipline employees when there is abuse of leave policy.
- 9) Ensures employee health information will be handled in a way that protects employee privacy while allowing for adequate business processing of health information submitted regarding absences. (Consistent with HIPAA.)
- 10) Is implemented in a timeframe that gives employers adequate time to assess their current leave policies and make needed changes in order to comply with the act.