

# OREGON SICK TIME LAW



## REQUIREMENTS OF OREGON'S SICK TIME LAW



Brad Avakian, Commissioner

Effective January 1, 2016, employers that employ employees in the state of Oregon are required to implement sick time policies and provide sick time to employees. Employers are also required to provide employees with a notice of the law's provisions. This notice is intended to summarize the major provisions of the law, but should not be relied upon as a full and complete summary of the law. The full text of the law and administrative rules adopted by the bureau are available at [www.oregon.gov/boli](http://www.oregon.gov/boli).

**How much sick time does the law require?** Employees begin accruing sick time on the first day of employment and earn one (1) hour of sick time for every 30 hours worked or 1 1/3 hours for every 40 hours worked. Employees may use accrued sick time on the 91st calendar day of employment and may use sick time as it is accrued.

Employers may choose to simply give employees ("front load") 40 hours of sick time at the beginning of the year rather than track the number of sick time hours accrued. Employers may also select the 12-month period to be used as the designated "year", e.g., calendar year, fiscal year, employee anniversary date, etc.

Employees may carry over up to 40 hours of unused sick time from one year to the next; however, employers may adopt policies that limit employees to accruing no more than 80 hours of sick time or using no more than 40 hours of sick time in a year.

Paid time off (PTO) policies that include time off for other purposes (such as vacation and other personal time off) comply with the sick time law as long as the policy is substantially equivalent to or more generous than the requirements of the law. "Substantially equivalent" means that employees are allowed to use at least the same number of hours for the same purposes under the same or more generous rules as outlined in this notice.

Employees must use accrued sick time in hourly increments unless to do so would pose an undue hardship to the employer, in which case the employer may require sick time to be taken in minimum increments of four hours if the employer allows employees to use at least 56 hours of paid leave per year for absences covered by this law.

**When must sick time be paid?** Employers with 10 or more employees in the state (6 or more if the employer maintains a location in Portland) must pay employees for sick time taken at the employee's regular rate of pay. All other employers must provide unpaid sick time.

The number of all employees employed by the employer in Oregon must be counted – including full-time, part-time and temporary employees.

**Notices and Verification:** In addition to providing a notice to employees of the requirements of the law, employers are required to provide **quarterly notifications** to employees of the amounts of accrued and unused sick time.

Employers may require employees to provide notices, verifications and certifications for using sick time under certain circumstances. For example, if the need for sick time is foreseeable, employers may require employees to provide up to 10 days' notice of the need to use sick time. Refer to the law and rules for more information.

**Discrimination/Retaliation Prohibited:** It is unlawful for an employer to deny, interfere with, restrain or fail to pay for sick time to which an employee is entitled; or retaliate or in any way discriminate against an employee because the employee has inquired about the provisions of the law, submitted a request for or taken sick time. Complaints may be filed with the Bureau of Labor and Industries.

**Collective Bargaining Agreement Exception:** The sick time law does not apply to certain employees who are covered by a collective bargaining agreement, employed through a hiring hall and whose benefits are provided by a joint multi-employer-employee trust or benefit plan.

### For what purposes may sick time be used?

Employees are entitled to use sick time for the following purposes:

- For an employee's or family member's mental or physical illness, injury or health condition or need for medical diagnosis of these conditions or need for preventive medical care.
- To care for an infant or newly adopted child under 18, or for a newly placed foster child under 18, or for a child over 18 if the child is incapable of self-care because of mental or physical disability.
- To care for a family member with a serious health condition.
- To recover from or seek treatment for a serious health condition that renders the employee unable to perform at least one of the essential functions of the employee's job.
- To care for a child of the employee who is suffering from a non-serious illness, injury or condition.
- To deal with the death of a family member by attending the funeral or alternative, making arrangements necessitated by the death of a family member, or grieving the death of a family member.
- To seek medical treatment, legal or law enforcement assistance, remedies to ensure health and safety, or to obtain other services related to domestic violence, sexual assault, harassment or stalking incidents to the employee or employee's minor child or dependent.
- To donate sick time to another employee for qualifying purposes if the employer has a policy allowing such donations.
- For certain public health emergencies including closure by a public official of the employee's place of business, school or place of care of the employee's child, or a determination by a public health authority or health care provider that the presence of the employee or a family member presents a health risk to others.

Provision of this notice to employees complies with the requirement in the sick time law for employers to provide written notice of the requirements of the law to employees. For more information, visit our website at [www.oregon.gov/boli](http://www.oregon.gov/boli), or contact us at 971-673-0761 or [mailb@boli.state.or.us](mailto:mailb@boli.state.or.us).

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