

City Clerk File No. Ord. 15.135

Agenda No. 3.D 1st Reading

Agenda No. 2nd Reading & Final Passage



ORDINANCE OF JERSEY CITY, N.J.

COUNCIL AS A WHOLE
offered and moved adoption of the following ordinance:

CITY ORDINANCE 15.135

TITLE: **AN ORDINANCE AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING CHAPTER
4 (PAID SICK TIME) OF THE JERSEY CITY MUNICIPAL CODE**

COUNCIL offered and moved adoption of the following Ordinance:

WHEREAS, on September 25, 2013, Jersey City became the first city in New Jersey to mandate that employers provide paid sick leave to their employees; and

WHEREAS; the example set by Jersey City has been copied by numerous municipalities throughout the State; and

WHEREAS; some of these municipalities have adopted ordinances which provide more generous paid sick benefits than those provided for in Jersey City's Paid Sick Time Ordinance; and

WHEREAS, in an effort to ensure consistency throughout the State regarding paid sick benefits, Jersey City wishes to amend its Paid Sick Time Ordinance to align it with the other Paid Sick Time Ordinances throughout the State; and

WHEREAS, Jersey City also wishes to clarify and supplement some of language contained in its Paid Sick Time Ordinance so as to make it clearer to prospective employers and employees how the policy applies.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED, by the Municipal Council of the City of Jersey City that Chapter 4 (Paid Sick Time) be amended to read:

CHAPTER 4 - PAID SICK TIME

§ 4-1. - Definitions.

For the purposes of this chapter, the following terms shall have the meanings indicated:

CALENDAR YEAR - A regular and consecutive twelve-month period, as determined by an employer.

DEPARTMENT - The Department of Health and Human Services.

EMPLOYEE(S) - ~~Employee(s) as defined in N.J.S.A. 34:11-56a1(h) including an employee of a franchise(s) or business(s) owner located in Jersey City, including part-time and temporary employees, who works in Jersey City for at least eighty (80) hours in a calendar year.~~
Employee(s) for purposes of this Chapter includes any individual engaged in work activity that would be considered "employment" under the federal Fair Labor Standards Act, 29 U.S.C. §201 et seq., and any applicable U.S. Department of Labor Guidelines but does not include any person employed by any governmental entity or instrumentality of the State of New Jersey or any political subdivision thereof, including any New Jersey school district or Board of Education, and including Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, and or any subdivisions of Rutgers University, employees subject to a collective bargaining agreement such as those enrolled in a trade or construction union, or anyone participating in a registered apprenticeship program.

EMPLOYER - Any entity as defined by N.J.S.A. 34:11-56a1(g) except that Employer does not include the United States government or any Federal agency, entity or instrumentality of the Federal government, the State of New Jersey, including the legislature, the judiciary or any agency, entity or instrumentality of the State of New Jersey, any political subdivision of the State of New Jersey, including any school district or Board of Education, or Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, or any subdivisions of Rutgers University.

FAMILY MEMBER:

- (1) A biological, adopted or foster child, stepchild or legal ward, a child of a domestic partner, a child of a civil union partner, or a child to whom the employee stands in loco parentis;
- (2) A biological, foster, stepparent or adoptive parent or legal guardian of an employee or an employee's spouse, domestic partner or civil union partner or a person who stood in loco parentis when the employee was a minor child;
- (3) A person to whom the employee is legally married under the laws of New Jersey or any other state or with whom the employee has entered into a civil union;
- (4) A grandparent or spouse, civil union partner or domestic partner of a grandparent;
- (5) A grandchild;
- (6) A sibling; or
- (7) A domestic partner of an employee as defined in N.J.S.A. 26:8A-3 et seq.

HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL - Any person licensed under Federal or New Jersey law to provide medical or emergency services, including but not limited to doctors, nurses and emergency room personnel.

CONSTRUCTION UNION - means an organization that represents, for purposes of collective bargaining, employees involved in the performance of construction, reconstruction, demolition, alteration, custom fabrication, or repair work and who are enrolled or have graduated from a registered apprenticeship program.

PAID SICK TIME - Time that is compensated at the same hourly rate and with the same benefits, including health care benefits, as the employee normally earns during hours worked and is provided by an employer to an employee for the purposes described in Subsections 4-3.A(1)-(11) of this chapter, but in no case shall the hourly wage be less than that provided under N.J.S.A. 34:11-56a.

REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM - means an apprenticeship program that is registered with and approved by the United States Department of Labor and which meets not less than two of the following requirements: (A) has active, employed, registered apprentices; (B) has graduated apprentices to journey worker status during a majority of the years that the program has been in operation; or (C) has graduated apprentices to journey worker status during three of the immediately preceding five years, provides each trainee with combined classroom and on-the-job training under the direct and close supervision of a highly skilled worker in an occupation recognized as an apprenticeable trade and meets the program performance standards of enrollment and graduation under 29 C.F.R. Part 29, section 29.63.1.

RETALIATION - The denial of any right guaranteed under this chapter and any threat, discipline, discharge, suspension, demotion, reduction of hours, or any other adverse action against an employee for the exercise of any right guaranteed herein.

~~UNPAID SICK TIME~~ Time that is allowed and accrued in the same manner as paid sick time however, but for which leave an employee is neither penalized nor compensated.

§ 4-2. - Purpose.

Purposes of this chapter are:

- (1) To diminish public and private health care costs and promote preventive health services in Jersey City by enabling workers to seek early and routine medical care for themselves and their family members;
- (2) To protect the public's health in Jersey City by reducing the spread of contagious diseases;
- (3) To promote the economic security and stability of workers and their families;
- (4) To protect employees in Jersey City from losing their jobs or facing workplace discipline while they use paid sick time to care for themselves or their families;
- (5) To safeguard the public welfare, health, safety and prosperity of the people of Jersey City; and
- (6) To accomplish the purposes described in paragraphs (1)—(5) in a manner that is feasible for employers.

§ 4-3. - Application.

This chapter requires all those employed within the City of Jersey City to accrue either paid or unpaid sick time from their employer as mandated by this chapter utilizing the formula applied herein.

Individuals who work for employers who employ ten (10) or more employees shall accrue compensated sick time up to a maximum of forty (40) hours per year.

Individuals who work for employers who employ less than ten (10) employees shall accrue compensated sick time up to a maximum of twenty-four (24) hours per year. In addition, once such individuals have accrued twenty-four (24) hours of compensated sick time, they shall accrue unpaid sick time up to a maximum of sixteen (16) hours per year. However, this sick time need not be compensated.

Taking of sick time, whether compensated or not shall not be the basis of an adverse employment action.

A. Accrual of Paid Sick Time.

- (1) Employees shall accrue a minimum of one (1) hour of paid or unpaid sick time for every thirty (30) hours worked subject to the limits set forth below in A(2) and A(3).
- (2) Employers who employ ten (10) or more employees for compensation are not required to provide more than forty (40) hours of paid sick time in a calendar year. In determining the number of employees performing work for an employer, all employees performing work for compensation on a full-time, part-time, or temporary basis shall be counted, provided that where the number of employees who work for an employer for compensation fluctuates, the number of employees may be determined for the current calendar year based upon the average number of employees who worked for compensation during the preceding calendar year.

Employers who employ less than ten (10) employees for compensation are not required to provide more than twenty-four (24) hours of paid sick time and more than sixteen (16) hours of unpaid sick time in a calendar year except for Employees who are child care workers, home health care workers and food service workers. For child care workers, health care workers and food service workers, Employers are required to provide up to 40 hours of paid sick time, so long as the hours are accrued in a calendar year as set forth elsewhere in this Section.

In determining the number of employees performing work for an employer, all employees performing work for compensation, whether on a full-time, part-time, or temporary basis shall be counted, provided that where the number of employees who work for an employer for compensation fluctuates, the number of employees may be determined for the current calendar year based upon the average number of employees who worked for compensation during the preceding calendar year.

- (3) Employees who are exempt from overtime requirements under 29 U.S.C. § 201 et seq. of the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act are assumed to work forty (40) hours in each work week for purposes of paid sick time accrual unless their normal work week is less than forty (40) hours, in which case paid sick time accrues based upon that normal work week.
- (4) Paid sick time as provided in this section begins to accrue at the commencement of employment.
- (5) Employees begin to accrue paid sick time on the first day of employment. Employees are entitled to use accrued paid sick time beginning on the ninetieth calendar day of their employment. After the ninetieth calendar day of employment, employees may use paid sick time as it is accrued.
- (6) Paid sick time is carried over to the following calendar year except that no employer is required to carry over more than forty (40) hours of paid sick time from one (1) calendar year to the next and nothing in this section entitles an employee to use more than forty (40) hours of paid sick time in a calendar year.
- (7) Any employer with a paid leave policy, such as a paid time off policy, that provides an amount of paid leave sufficient to meet the total annual accrual requirements of this section that may be used for the same purposes and under the same conditions as paid sick time under this chapter is not required to provide additional paid sick time.
- (8) Nothing in this section shall be construed as requiring financial or other reimbursement to an employee from an employer upon the employee's termination, resignation, retirement, or other separation from employment for accrued paid sick time that has not been used.
- (9) If an employee is transferred to a separate division, entity, or location, but remains employed by the same employer, the employee is entitled to all paid sick time accrued at the prior division, entity, or location and is entitled to use all paid sick time as provided in this section. If there is a separation from employment and the employee is rehired within six (6) months of separation, previously accrued paid sick time that had not been used shall be reinstated. Further, the employee is entitled to use accrued paid sick time and accrue additional paid sick time at the re-commencement of employment.
- (10) When a different employer succeeds or takes the place of an existing employer, all employees of the original employer who remain employed by the successor employer are entitled to all paid sick time accrued when employed by the original employer and are entitled to use all paid sick leave previously accrued.
- (11) At its discretion, an employer may loan sick time to an employee in advance of accrual by such employee.
- (12) The requirements of this Ordinance shall not apply to employees covered by a collective bargaining agreement (CBA) to the extent that such requirements are expressly waived in the collective bargaining agreement in clear and unambiguous terms. With respect to Employees covered by a collective bargaining agreement in effect at the time of the effective date of this Ordinance, no provision of this Ordinance shall apply until the expiration of the collective bargaining agreement; however, if the terms of an expired collective bargaining agreement provide paid sick leave that is more generous than provided by this Ordinance, those terms of the expired collective bargaining agreement shall govern.

B. Accrual of Unpaid Sick Time.

- ~~(1) Employees who are not entitled to paid sick time under this ordinance, shall accrue a minimum of one (1) hour of unpaid sick time for every thirty (30) hours worked.~~
- ~~(2) Employers who employ less than ten (10) employees for compensation are not required to provide more than forty (40) hours of unpaid sick time in a calendar year. In determining the number of employees performing work for an employer, all employees performing work for compensation on a full-time, part-time, or temporary basis shall be counted, provided that where the number of employees who work for an employer for compensation fluctuates, business size may be determined for the current calendar year based upon the average number of employees who worked for compensation during the preceding calendar year.~~
- ~~(3) Employees who are exempt from overtime requirements under 29 U.S.C. § 201 et seq. of the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act are assumed to work forty (40) hours in each work week for purposes of unpaid sick time accrual unless their normal work week is less than forty (40) hours, in which case unpaid sick time accrues based upon that normal work week.~~
- ~~(4) Unpaid sick time as provided in this section begins to accrue at the commencement of employment.~~
- ~~(5) Employees begin to accrue unpaid sick time on the first day of employment. Employees are entitled to use accrued unpaid sick time beginning on the ninetieth calendar day of their employment. After the ninetieth calendar day of employment, employees may use unpaid sick time as it is accrued.~~
- ~~(6) Unpaid sick time is carried over to the following calendar year except that no employer is required to carry over more than forty (40) hours of unpaid sick time from one (1) calendar year to the next and nothing in this section entitles an employee to use more than forty (40) hours of unpaid sick time in a calendar year.~~
- ~~(7) Any employer with a sick leave policy, such as a time off policy, that provides an amount of sick leave sufficient to meet the total annual accrual requirements of this section that may be used for the same purposes and under the same conditions as sick time under this chapter is not required to provide additional sick time.~~
- ~~(8) Nothing in this section shall be construed as requiring financial or other reimbursement to an employee from an employer upon the employee's termination, resignation, retirement, or other separation from employment for accrued sick time that has not been used.~~
- ~~(9) If an employee is transferred to a separate division, entity, or location, but remains employed by the same employer, the employee is entitled to all unpaid sick time accrued at the prior division, entity, or location and is entitled to use all unpaid sick time as provided in this section. If there is a separation from employment and the employee is rehired within six (6) months of separation, previously accrued unpaid sick time that had not been used shall be reinstated. Further, the employee is entitled to use accrued unpaid sick time and accrue additional unpaid sick time at the re-commencement of employment.~~
- ~~(10) When a different employer succeeds or takes the place of an existing employer, all employees of the original employer who remain employed by the successor employer are entitled to all unpaid sick time accrued when employed by the original employer and are entitled to use all unpaid sick leave previously accrued.~~
- ~~(11) At its discretion, an employer may loan sick time to an employee in advance of accrual by such employee.~~

CB. Use of Sick Time.

- (1) Sick time shall be provided to an employee by an employer for:
 - a. An employee's mental or physical illness, injury, or health condition; an employee's need for medical diagnosis, care, or treatment of a mental or physical illness, injury, or health condition; an employee's need for preventive medical care;
 - b. Care of a family member with a mental or physical illness, injury, or health condition; care of a family member who needs medical diagnosis, care, or

treatment of a mental or physical illness, injury, or health condition; care of a family member who needs preventive medical care; and

- c. Closure of the employee's place of business by order of a public official due to a public health emergency or an employee's need to care for a child whose school or place of care has been closed by order of a public official due to a public health emergency, or care for a family member when it has been determined by the health authorities having jurisdiction or by a health care provider that the family member's presence in the community would jeopardize the health of others because of the family member's exposure to a communicable disease, whether or not the family member has actually contracted the communicable disease.
- (2) Sick time shall be provided upon the oral request of an employee.
 - (3) An employee shall give an employer notice of the need to use sick time as soon as practicable.
 - (4) An employer may not require, as a condition of an employee's taking sick time, that the employee search for or find a replacement worker to cover the hours during which the employee is absent.
 - (5) Accrued sick time may be used in the smaller of hourly increments or the smallest increment that the employer's payroll system uses to account for absences or use of other time.
 - (6) For sick time of more than three (3) consecutive days, an employer may require reasonable documentation that the paid sick time has been used for a purpose covered by Section 4-2 of this chapter. Reasonable documentation includes: documentation signed by a health care professional indicating that paid sick time is necessary. An employer may not require that the documentation explain the nature of the illness.
 - (7) Individuals who work for employers who employ less than ten (10) employees and who have accrued both compensated and unpaid sick time shall not be required by his or her employer to exhaust unpaid sick time before using compensated sick time.

§ 4-4. - Exercise of rights protected; retaliation prohibited.

- A. No person shall interfere with, restrain, or deny the exercise of, or the attempt to exercise, any right protected under this chapter.
- B. No person shall retaliate against an employee because the employee has exercised rights protected under this chapter.
- C. The rights protected under this chapter include but are not limited to the right to request and use paid sick time pursuant to this chapter; the right to file a complaint or inform any person about any employer's alleged violation of this chapter; the right to cooperate with the Agency in its investigations of alleged violations of this chapter; the right to participate in any administrative or judicial action regarding an alleged violation of this chapter; and the right to inform any person of his or her potential rights under this chapter.
- D. It is unlawful for an employer's absence control policy to count paid sick time taken under this chapter as an absence that may lead to or result in discipline, discharge, demotion, suspension, or any other adverse action.
- E. Protections of this section apply to any person who mistakenly but in good faith alleges violations of this chapter.
- F. There is a rebuttable presumption of unlawful retaliation under this section whenever an employer takes adverse action against a person within ninety (90) days of when that person:
 - (1) Files a complaint with the Agency or a court alleging a violation of any provision of this chapter;
 - (2) Informs any person about an employer's alleged violation of this chapter;

- (3) Cooperates with the Agency or other persons in the investigation or prosecution of any alleged violation of this chapter;
- (4) Opposes any policy, practice, or ordinance that is unlawful under this chapter; or
- (5) Informs any person of his or her potential rights under this chapter.

§ 4-5. - Notice and posting.

- A. All employers shall give individual written notice to each of their employees at the commencement of the employee's employment (or as soon as practicable if the employee is already employed on the effective date of this law) regarding employee's rights under this chapter. Such notice shall describe the right to paid sick time, the accrual rate and the amount of paid sick time, and the terms of its use guaranteed under this chapter; the right to be free from retaliation for requesting use of paid sick time; and the right to file a complaint or bring a civil action if paid sick time is denied by the employer or the employee is retaliated against for requesting or taking paid sick time. Such notice shall be in English and the primary language spoken by that employee provided that the Department has made available a translation of such notice into such language.
- B. Employers shall also display a poster in a conspicuous and accessible place in each establishment where employees are employed containing notice of this chapter. The poster shall be in English and in any language that is the first language of at least ten percent (10%) of the employer's workforce provided that the Department has made available a translation of such notice into such language.
- C. The Department shall create and make available to employers individual notices and posters. Notices and posters shall be provided in English, Spanish, Italian, Chinese, Polish, Portuguese, Tagalog, and any other languages selected by the Agency.
- D. An employer who violates the notice and posting requirements of this section is subject to a civil fine in an amount not to exceed one hundred dollars (\$100.00) for each employee who was not given appropriate notice pursuant to this section and five hundred dollars (\$500.00) for each establishment in which a poster was not displayed.

§ 4-6. - Employer records.

Employers shall retain for three (3) years records documenting hours worked by employees and paid sick time taken by employees and shall allow the Department reasonable access to such records, to monitor compliance with the requirements of this chapter. An employer's failure to maintain or retain adequate records documenting hours worked by an employee and paid sick time taken by an employee create a rebuttable presumption that the employer has violated this chapter, absent clear and convincing evidence otherwise.

§ 4-7. - Enforcement and regulations.

- A. The Department shall coordinate implementation and enforcement of this chapter and shall promulgate appropriate guidelines or regulations for such purposes.
- B. The Department shall coordinate implementation and enforcement of this chapter, including, but not limited to:
 1. establishing a system to receive complaints, in writing and by telephone, in English, Spanish, and any other language deemed appropriate by the Department regarding the employers non-compliance with this chapter;
 2. investigate and resolve complaints received by the Department in a timely manner and keep complainants notified regarding the status of the investigation;
 3. engage in pro-active enforcement of this chapter through the use of audits, on-site investigations, or other measures to ensure employer's compliance. Investigators from the Department shall be empowered to interview employees and former employees in private outside the presence of the employer, and the power to determine whether or not employers have complied with this chapter. The Department shall also have the power to inform residents of the City of their rights under this chapter.

- C. The Department shall maintain confidential the identity of any complaining person unless disclosure of the identity is necessary for resolution of the investigation. The Department shall, to the extent practicable, notify a complaining person that the Department will be disclosing his or her identity prior to such a disclosure.
- D. The Department shall establish a system for reviewing and adjudicating complaints by employees. Employers deemed by the Department to be in violation of this chapter shall be subject to the penalty prescribed in § 1-25 of the Municipal Code: the maximum penalty for violating this chapter shall be, in the discretion of the Court, a fine of up to ~~one thousand two hundred fifty dollars (\$1,250.00)~~ two thousand dollars (\$2,000) and/or a period of community service not exceeding ninety (90) days. This penalty shall apply to each individual infraction of this chapter. This section shall not affect any mandatory minimum penalty established by any section of the Code or ordinance.
- E. Any person claiming to be aggrieved by the violation of this chapter may bring a cause of action in any court of competent jurisdiction. Submitting a complaint to the Department is neither a prerequisite nor a bar to bringing private action.

§ 4-8. - Confidentiality and non-disclosure.

An employer may not require disclosure of details relating to an employee's or an employee's family member's medical condition as a condition of providing paid sick time under this chapter. If an employer possesses health information about an employee or employee's family member, such information shall be treated as confidential and not disclosed except to the affected employee or with the permission of the affected employee.

§ 4-9. - Encouragement of more generous paid sick time policies; no effect on more generous policies.

- A. Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to discourage or prohibit an employer from the adoption or retention of a paid sick time policy more generous than the one required herein.
- B. Nothing in this chapter shall be construed as diminishing the obligation of an employer to comply with any contract, collective bargaining agreement, employment benefit plan, or other agreement providing more generous paid sick time to an employee than required herein.
- C. Nothing in this chapter shall be construed as diminishing the rights of public employees regarding paid sick time or use of paid sick time as provided in the laws of the State of New Jersey pertaining to public employees.

~~§ 4-10. - Research.~~

~~The City shall contract to have a research study undertaken to measure and evaluate the economic impact on businesses and the impact on the health of residents as a result of this chapter. This study shall begin one (1) year from the effective date of this chapter, and the City shall engage the services of a competent research institution to conduct this study.~~

~~§ 4-11. § 4-10. - Severability.~~

~~If any provision of this chapter or application thereof to any person or circumstance is judged invalid, the invalidity shall not affect other provisions or applications of this chapter that can be given effect without the invalid provision or application, and to this end the provisions of this chapter are declared severable.~~

~~§ 4-12. - Effective date.~~

~~This chapter will take effect one hundred twenty (120) days following enactment except that in the case of employees covered by a collective bargaining agreement in effect on the effective date prescribed herein, this chapter shall apply on the date of the termination of such agreement.~~

- I. All Ordinances and parts of Ordinances inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed.
- II. This Ordinance shall be part of the Jersey City Code as though codified and fully set forth therein. The City shall have this Ordinance codified and incorporated in the official copies of the Jersey City Code.
- III. This Ordinance shall take effect sixty (60) days after enactment.
- IV. The City Clerk and the Corporation Counsel be and hereby are authorized and directed to change any chapter numbers, article numbers and section numbers in the event the codification of this Ordinance reveals that there is conflict between those numbers and the existing code.

NOTE: All new material is underlined; words ~~struck through~~ are omitted.

For purposes of advertising only, new matter is boldface and repealed by *italics*.

APPROVED AS TO LEGAL FORM

APPROVED: _____

Corporation Counsel

APPROVED: _____
Business Administrator

Certification Required

Not Required