



New Jersey Time to Care Coalition  
Email: [info@njtimetocare.org](mailto:info@njtimetocare.org)  
Website: [www.njtimetocare.org](http://www.njtimetocare.org)

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Contact: Phyllis Salowe-Kaye, Executive Director, New Jersey Citizen Action, 973-220-3823 cell **or**  
Jon Whiten, Deputy Director, New Jersey Policy Perspective, 609.393.1145 ext 15

## **Earned Sick Days: A Win-Win for New Jersey**

New Jersey has an opportunity to help its families and businesses by enacting earned sick days legislation introduced today (A4125) by Assemblywoman Pamela Lampitt. This common-sense policy, which would provide a minimum standard of earned sick days for all New Jersey's workers, would boost New Jersey's economy and make the state a healthier place to live and to work.

Over 1.2 million New Jersey workers – 38 percent of the state's private-sector workforce – lack earned sick days. These workers are more likely to go to work sick, putting the health of their co-workers and public at risk while dragging down business productivity. Those who do follow doctor's orders have to worry about having enough money to keep the lights on or put gas in the car; their loss of income is also a loss of spending for New Jersey's economy.

"Every day, New Jersey's working families are faced with difficult choices," said Phyllis Salowe-Kaye, Executive Director of NJ Citizen Action and Co-chair of the NJ Time to Care Coalition, a diverse group of over 80 organizations that came together in support of policies like earned sick days. "Providing earned sick days would ensure that no one has to choose between a paycheck and caring for their own health or that of a sick family member. The Legislature should move quickly to pass the bill so families across the state can take time to care when they need it without fear of losing critical income – or even their job." She noted that nearly one quarter of adults in the US have [been fired or threatened with job loss](#) for taking time off to recover from illness or care for a sick loved one.

Those most in need of earned sick days are the least likely to have them. Only 1 in 4 low-income workers, who are least able to afford a day without pay, have access to earned sick days. About 4 of 5 New Jersey food service and hotel workers don't have a single earned sick day; neither do the majority of those who staff child care centers, retail stores and nursing homes. These workers know that going to work sick can also jeopardize the health of those they serve – yet losing pay or employment can mean serious economic hardship.

*"Providing families with time to care means strong families, strong workplaces, and strong communities."*



New Jersey's bill comes at a time of growing momentum across the U.S. to provide earned sick days for workers -- a number of states and cities have already adopted earned sick days policy for their workers, and many more are exploring options. A survey of business owners in San Francisco, where they have had an earned sick days policy since 2006, found that two-thirds of business owners support the policy and [six in seven employers](#) report no negative impact on profitability.

The legislation would enable New Jersey workers to earn one hour of sick time for every one for every 30 hours worked. This minimum standard will promote a healthier workforce, stronger businesses and a more prosperous New Jersey.

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