

Act No. 69 (H.187). Labor; employment practices; paid absence from work

An act relating to absence from work for health care and safety

This act creates a new subchapter, 21 V.S.A. chapter 5, subchapter 4b, entitled “Earned Sick Time.” The act requires employers to provide employees with earned sick time that may be used for the following reasons:

- the employee is ill or injured
- the employee is obtaining health care
- the employee is caring for a sick or injured family member, including helping a family member obtain health care or accompanying a parent, grandparent, spouse, or parent-in-law to an appointment related to his or her long-term care
- the employee is arranging for social or legal services or obtaining medical care or counseling for him- or herself, or for a family member who is a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking
- the employee is caring for a family member because the school or business where the family member is normally located during the employee’s workday is closed for public health or safety reasons

The act includes provisions related to the accrual and use of earned sick time, and to compliance by employers. It grants the Commissioner of Labor authority to enforce the subchapter governing earned sick time. It also provides a new employer with an exemption from the provisions of the subchapter governing earned sick time for a period of one year after the employer hires its first employee.

The act amends the statute governing requirements for State construction projects to require that bids on State construction projects comply with all applicable provisions of Title 21.

The act directs the Department of Labor and the Agency of Commerce and Community Development to develop and implement a program to provide certain small employers with assistance related to the development of time off policies and business plans necessary to implement the act’s requirements. It requires the Department of Labor to report on the number of inquiries, complaints, investigations, and enforcement actions related to the act during the first two years after its effective date. It also requires the Department of Labor and the Agency of Commerce and Community Development to provide the General Assembly with an estimate of the additional cost to certain small employers of providing earned sick time as required by the act.

Multiple effective dates, beginning on July 1, 2016