



# Healthy Families Act

## S. 984/ H.R. 1876

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### Background Information:

You shouldn't have to risk your job to take care of your or your family's health, and you shouldn't have to put your family at risk to keep your job. Yet millions of Americans are forced to make these choices every day. Nearly half of all private sector workers, and 4 out of 5 low-wage workers, have no paid sick days. Introduced by Sen. Tom Harkin and Rep. Rosa DeLauro, the Healthy Families Act would allow eligible employees to earn up to seven paid sick days each year.

### The Healthy Families Act would:

- Allow workers in businesses with 15 or more employees to earn up to seven job-protected paid sick days each year to be used to recover from their own illness, access preventive care, or provide care for a sick family member.
- Allow workers who are victims of domestic violence, stalking, or sexual assault to use their paid sick days to recover or seek assistance related to an incident.
- Include a simple method for calculating accrued sick time. Workers would earn a minimum of one hour of paid sick time for every 30 hours worked, up to 56 hours (seven days) per year, unless the employer selects a higher limit.
- Prohibit employers from interfering with or denying the exercise of the employee's right to paid sick leave. They also may not discriminate against an employee for taking or requesting leave.
- Allow employers to require certification if an employee uses more than three paid sick days in a row. For victims of domestic violence, the certification may be from a law enforcement officer or victim advocate.
- Allow employers to continue using their existing policies, as long as they meet the minimum standards set forth in the Healthy Families Act (for time, types of use, and method of use).
- Encourage employers to adopt or retain more generous leave policies.



Winning  
Justice *for*  
Working  
Women

# Take Action on the Healthy Families Act

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### **TAKE ACTION -- Call, e-mail, or fax your legislator today!**

1. Write a letter to your Senators and Representatives. See the sample below and add any of your own personal experience and words.
2. Call the capitol Switchboard 202-224-3121 and ask to be connected with your Senators and Representative.
3. Visit [www.vote-smart.org](http://www.vote-smart.org) or [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov) and [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov) to find the names and contact information for your US Senators and US Representative.

### **Sample Letter**

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Senator/ Representative \_\_\_\_\_  
US Senate/ House of Representatives  
Washington DC 20510

Dear Senator/Representative \_\_\_\_\_,

I am writing in support of **The Healthy Families Act**. This legislation would allow workers in firms of 15 or more to earn up to seven paid sick days annually, making it possible for families across the nation to keep their jobs and care for their families.

Almost half (48%) of full-time, private sector workers have NO paid sick days. 4 out of 5 low-wage workers have no paid sick time. Studies show that presenteeism – employees coming to work sick – costs \$180 billion annually in lost productivity and may cost employers more than absenteeism due to illness.

### **Add your own experience of caring for your own family's health, or that of family, friends, and co-workers here.**

The Healthy Families Act would 1) allow workers in firms of 15 or more to earn up to seven paid sick days annually; 2) allow workers to use their paid sick time to recover from their own illness, access preventive care, or provide care for a sick family member; 3) allow workers who are victims of domestic violence, stalking, or sexual assault to use their paid sick days to recover or seek assistance; and 4) help keep families, workplaces, and communities across the nation healthy.

I urge you to co-sponsor the Healthy Families Act and to work actively for its passage. I would appreciate knowing your position on this important piece of legislation. I am a registered voter and a member of 9to5, National Association of Working Women.

Sincerely,  
Your name  
Address

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*9to5 is building a movement to achieve economic justice, by engaging directly affected women to improve working conditions. For more information about your rights on the job, contact the 9to5 Job Survival Helpline at **1-800-522-0925** or [helpline@9to5.org](mailto:helpline@9to5.org) or go to [9to5.org](http://9to5.org). Follow 9to5 on [facebook.com/9to5.org](https://www.facebook.com/9to5.org) and [twitter.com/#!/9to5.org](https://twitter.com/#!/9to5.org) for updates and action alerts.*