

**City of Pittsburgh**  
**COVID-19 Emergency Paid Sick Leave Frequently Asked Questions**

**1. What is the COVID-19 Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act?**

The COVID-19 Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act is a temporary ordinance effective for the City of Pittsburgh that gives employees emergency paid time off when that employee has been directly impacted by the novel coronavirus COVID-19.

**2. When is the Act effective?**

The Act was voted in by Pittsburgh City Council on Tuesday, December 8, 2020. It was immediately signed into effect by the Mayor of Pittsburgh with full enforcement purposes. The Act will automatically terminate one (1) week after the expiration of the Declaration of Emergency by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania or the City of Pittsburgh, whichever is sooner.

**3. Who may collect paid time off under the Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act?**

Employees of a company with fifty (50) or more employees may collect time under this Act. Employees may collect paid time under this Act in four (4) specific instances:

- i) If a healthcare provider or public health authority or employer determines that an employee would be a health risk to others due to exposure to COVID-19, or due to that employee exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19.
- ii) If an employee must care for a family member due to that family member being determined as a health risk to others due to exposure to COVID-19, or due to that family member showing symptoms of COVID-19.
- iii) If an employee needs to quarantine due to being diagnosed with COVID-19, showing symptoms of COVID-19, or needs to seek diagnosis or other care for COVID-19.
- iv) If an employee must care for a family member who needs to quarantine or otherwise seek treatment/diagnosis under item iii) above.

NOTE: The most definitive example of who would qualify as a “public health authority” for purposes of this Act would be a contact tracer who contacts the employee by phone.

**4. How much time off can I collect under this Act?**

Employees who work forty (40) or more hours per week are allowed eighty (80) hours of Emergency Paid Sick Time. Employees who work less than forty hours per week shall be allowed an amount of time equal to the average hours worked by that employee in a 14-day period.

**5. Do I need to work a certain amount before this time is available?**

No. Other than satisfying one of the criteria set out in Question 3 above, an employee shall be allowed emergency time off after being employed for the employer for ninety (90) days.

**6. I have previously allowed employees to use (X) hours of paid time off via the Federal FFCRA Act, do I need to provide additional time off?**

Under Section M of the City's Emergency Act, "Employers may substitute leave under the federal or state law for its obligations under this Ordinance." The Families First Federal Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) is an applicable Federal law under the City's Act, and may be used to satisfy the requirements of this Act up to eighty (80) hours of time off. If an Employer has allowed less than eighty hours of paid time off under the FFCRA, they are still responsible for making available the remainder of the mandatory time under the City's Emergency Act.

**7. If an Employer has a Coronavirus-related Paid Sick Leave policy that meets or exceeds the requirements of this Act, must it provide additional time off under this Act?**

No. According to Section N of the City's Emergency Act, an Employer may substitute time off as provided by their own internal policy, as long as that policy was enacted after March 13, 2020, and that policy provides for additional time off due specifically to COVID related instances. The Employer is responsible for making available any remaining time up to the mandatory 80 hours under this Act.

**8. How should I tell my employees that this is available to them?**

While the new Emergency Act remains silent on notice requirements, it would be best practice for employers to develop their own internal policy for advising their workers of their rights under this Act. Employers may use the same guidance as set out in Chapter 626 of the City Code, which may be found here:

[https://library.municode.com/pa/pittsburgh/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances?nodeId=COOR\\_TITSIXCO\\_CH619MUWARE\\_CH626PASIDAAC](https://library.municode.com/pa/pittsburgh/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=COOR_TITSIXCO_CH619MUWARE_CH626PASIDAAC)

**9. How is the Act enforced?**

The Act is enforced and monitored by the Mayor's Office of Equity (MOE). The MOE will use the same investigation and enforcement procedures as set out in Chapter 626 of the City Code.

**10. Who should I contact if I have any questions, or if I would like to file a complaint?**

Anyone with questions, needing more info, or with complaints should contact the MOE at the following email: [paidsickleave@pittsburghpa.gov](mailto:paidsickleave@pittsburghpa.gov)