

SUPPORT SENATE BILLS 886 & 1101 - PAID SICK DAYS & PAID MEDICAL LEAVE PROGRAM

Nearly all workers will need to take time away to deal with a serious personal or family illness, or to care for a new child or an aging parent. These life stages shouldn't mean economic insecurity for Virginia's workforce. Providing access to paid sick days for Virginia's workers would allow them to maintain economic security and ensure a healthier, more productive workforce in the Commonwealth.

Anyone who works hard should be able to raise and care for a family with dignity. But too many workers don't see their hard work honored with the ability to take paid time off to care for a sick family member or take care of a health emergency.

The Lack of Paid Medical and Family Leave Is an Urgent Problem

Even before the coronavirus crisis, an estimated 41% or 1.2 working adults in Virginia had no paid sick days or paid time off. Paid sick leave would help keep family caregivers from having to make impossible choices between their families' financial security and their health.

More than 80 percent of food industry workers and 75 percent of childcare workers have no paid sick days. More than half of all Norovirus outbreaks can be traced back to sick food service workers who were forced to choose between working sick and losing pay or their job.

During the pandemic and now with a re-emerging surge in covid-19 variant that is even more transmissible, state and local health officials believe by providing paid sick time to workers "we would see a drastic reduction in exposure."

Paid Sick Days Benefit Workers, Families, Businesses, Public Health & the Economy

When sick workers are able to stay home, the spread of disease slows, and workplaces are both healthier and more productive. Plus, workers recover faster from illness and obtain timely medical care –enabling them to get back to work sooner and holding down health care costs. Providing paid sick days would protect hard working families and level the playing field for small companies.

A [new report from The Brookings Institution](#) shows that long COVID is keeping as many as 4 million people out of work. The report recommends at least five critical government interventions that can reduce the economic burden of long COVID - including expanded paid sick leave. It is no surprise that 85% of Virginia voters say employers should offer paid sick days, including the Virginians for Paid Sick Days Coalition: an alliance of 25 statewide organizations:

www.vapaid sick days.org

What the Bills Do:

SB 886 Surovell (Status: Commerce and Labor)

- Establishes paid sick leave for health care providers & grocery store workers capped at 40 hours/year
- Allows healthcare providers to waive sick leave accrual

SB 1101 Boysko (Status: Commerce and Labor)

- Establishes a VEC-administered paid family and medical leave program
- Provides eligible employees paid leave including time off for personal medical treatment or to care for a sick family member
- Safeguards working Virginians through job-protected leave capped at 12 weeks per year
- Funded through premiums assessed to employers and employees and provides a benefit worth 80% of the employee's average weekly wage

