

BUSINESS VOICES

ON WHY PAID SICK DAYS ARE A WINNING BUSINESS STRATEGY

**Susan J., Owner, Law Firm
Albuquerque, NM**

I own a small business and provide my employees with paid sick and family leave. It's a win-win for them and me - fewer concerns about spreading illness in the workplace, happier employees with higher morale and loyalty, more productive workers who aren't sick or worrying about family members. Lawmakers should know that paid sick days will benefit businesses too.

**Eric and Tess K.
Garrison House Books
Medina, OH**

As small business owners, we have given paid sick days for 43 years and will continue to do so. There is no reason not to – it's about respect and appreciation of our employees and their families.

**Tedd Saunders
CEO, EcoLogical Solutions Inc.
& CSO, The Saunders Hotel Group
Boston, MA**

I am a father and businessman who provides these basic rights, like paid sick days, to all of my employees. To not do so is unthinkable!

**Audrey L., Small Business Owner
Atlanta, GA**

I am a small business owner and I feel strongly that giving employees paid sick days is the right thing to do from both a moral and an economic perspective. Especially given that I am a

mother of two young children myself, I recognize the importance of paid sick days. Children should not have to go to school sick and parents should not be forced to make a choice between sending a sick child to school and being able to pay their rent.

Forcing your employees to make such choices leaves you with unhappy employees who will not be committed to the success of the company, and will not hesitate to move on if they have another job opportunity. And, even if you do not care about the moral aspect of all of this, replacing a good employee is certainly more expensive than giving them a paid sick day!

**Sharon G.
Small Business Owner
Round Rock, TX**

I was the owner of two successive small businesses, employing 100+ people. Our policy was, 'If you feel ill, stay home and get better without worrying about missing a day's pay.' As a result, we had a low rate of illness at work, and saved money. Requiring employees to come to work sick – or go without pay when they're sick – is shortsighted, poor economic planning, and mean spirited.

Smarter, longterm thinkers are able to see that keeping people home when ill, or when they are needed to care for ill family members, prevents the spread of illness nationwide, thus increasing productivity – and morale – for all.



Melanie C.
Owner, Home Childcare Center
Falmouth, ME

As an RN and childcare business owner and operator, my employees and I care for the children of many nurses, doctors and other health professionals. All of us are supportive of paid sick days and of raising the minimum wage. When I used to work as a hospital nurse, we were all forced to work while sick. One day, while starting an IV, my runny nose, from a fresh cold, unexpectedly dripped onto the patient's arm! I was mortified. I had to disinfect the arm and start over.

My groceries were just bagged by a 55 year old woman who was forced to work while sick with the Norovirus! My sister works at Target and said a whole bunch of employees have been working while throwing up lately. With paid sick days, employers would have a tough time forcing people to work while sick and making you sick too!

Janet McDonagh
Owner, Virginia Hardward & Supply, Inc
North Tazewell, VA

If a business can't afford to give employees 5 paid sick and vacation days a year they shouldn't be in business. This should be a minimum standard. My husband and I have a business where this is the norm. I wouldn't shortchange employees with anything less.

Gia M.
Retired Corporate Manager
Talent, OR

As a retired corporate manager, I am very much in favor of instituting paid sick time. I can speak from experience about numerous times where an ill employee came to work because they couldn't afford to stay home. Their productivity is decreased by their illness and it would have been better for them to stay home – especially when they expose coworkers to the illness.

Then I would have even more staff missing, my productivity numbers were down and I wasn't meeting my commitments to customers and the company. It would have been far smarter (and less expensive) to provide paid sick days than risk a budgetary fiasco down the road.

**HAVING EMPLOYEES WORK SICK
COSTS THE NATIONAL ECONOMY
\$160 MILLION
ANNUALLY IN LOST PRODUCTIVITY**

Stewart, W. et al. (2003, December). Lost Productive Health Time Costs from Health Conditions in the United States: Results from the American Productivity Audit. Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine, 45.

**Replacing an employee
can cost anywhere from
25 to 200% of their
annual compensation**



➔ **Paid sick days result in reduced turnover, which leads to reduced costs**

Sasha Corporation. (2007, January). Compilation of Turnover Cost Studies. Retrieved 9 May 2012, from <http://www.sashacorp.com/turnframe.html>

Lilly G.
**Chair, Pennsylvania Federation of Business &
Professional Women – Legislation Committee**
Mehoopany, PA

The Pennsylvania Federation of Business & Professional Women has long supported paid sick days. Our membership across the Commonwealth has supported paid sick leave for many years. Swift action is absolutely necessary.

Duke W.
Small Business Owner, Software Development
Durham, NC

I have run small businesses for 34 years. We have always offered paid sick days and it never hurt our business in the least. It just makes sense.

Sarah W.
Small Business Owner, Real Estate
Santa Barbara, CA

I am the owner of a small business. Even though 7 paid sick days a year for each of our 15 employees will be an additional cost, it's the right thing to do.

Marianne Robin-Tani
President, Robin/Tani Media Factory, Inc.
Venice, CA

I've owned a very small company since 1991 and we've always offered each employee five paid sick days. Whatever happened to the Golden Rule?

Dr. Adrian VM.
Dentist & Small Business Owner
Bountiful, UT

I am an employer and I think paid sick days make for better employees. I believe employers should at the LEAST offer paid sick days.

Luis L.
Former Small Business Owner
Long Beach, CA

As a former employer, the welfare of my employees was one of my top priorities. Happy, healthy workers are good workers. Paid sick days are part of this.

Kathleen G.
Small Business Owner,
Early Childhood Education
Davis, CA

Having been an employee and an employer, I know how important it is to stay home when you're sick or when your child is sick. No one can do good work when unwell, and it affects anyone with whom the sick person comes in contact.

Dr. John S.
Dentist & Small Business Owner
Phillips, WI

For all 38 years that I was in business, my staff received paid sick days and personal days.

Catherine R.
Human Resources Professional
Manassas, VA

As an HR professional, I can say from experience that one's employees stay healthier when sick employees can choose to stay home when ill and not suffer financially. That helps the bottom line of any business, no matter the number of total employees.

Anita M.
Former Small Business Owner, City Gardeners
Beaverton, OR

I owned a small business for over 30 years and I always provided paid sick leave. I feel it is the right thing to do for employees.

Lisa M.
CEO, Non-Profit Organization
Salt Lake City, UT

We need to take care of our workers and their families. This builds stability and loyalty within a company. And I know, I'm a CEO and I fully support paid sick days.

Ken S.
Small Business Owner, Engineering
Salem, OR

I'm an employer of 9 people and I am all for offering earned sick days to employees. It is the right thing to do.

Victoria S.
Human Resources Professional
San Francisco, CA

In addition to being a mother, I am a human resources professional and it is rare when people abuse sick leave. If anything, I see the opposite where people are afraid to stay home so they come to work sick or bring their sick children to work! Paid sick days help support our workforce by encouraging wellness and a healthy work environment!

Thomas T.
Former Small Business Owner
Kailua, HI

When I had a sick staff, I insisted that they go home and use paid sick days. It's bad enough to have one less staff member – I couldn't function with TEN less because of germs spreading!

Nan Warshaw
Owner, Bloodshot Records
Chicago, IL

I am a small business owner and I support paid sick days!

Elizabeth B
Owner, Tune In (Educational Software Training)
Jarrell, TX

Paid sick leave is not just good for employees. It benefits the public who will not have to be exposed to every illness and employers who will not have all employees sick and some under severe stress over their health, their children's health, their financial well-being, and the security of their jobs. As a business owner, I am fully aware that it is much more efficient to have a healthy workforce than an ailing one and to temporarily fill in for an absent worker than to hire and train a new one.