STATE OF NEW YORK

5991

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

March 4, 2025

Introduced by Sen. RAMOS -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Labor

AN ACT to amend the labor law, in relation to requiring employers provide its employees with paid leave

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "let employees access vacation time easily (LEAVE) act".

§ 2. Section 196-b of the labor law, as added by section 1 of part J of chapter 56 of the laws of 2020, subdivision 2, paragraph a of subdivision 5, subdivisions 7 and 10 as amended and subdivision 4-a as added by section 1 of part M of chapter 55 of the laws of 2024, is amended to read as follows:

§ 196-b. [~~Sick~~] **Paid sick** leave **and paid leave** requirements. 1. Every employer shall be required to provide its employees with sick leave **and paid leave** as follows:

a. For employers with four or fewer employees in any calendar year, each employee shall be provided with up to forty hours of unpaid sick leave in each calendar year; provided, however, an employer that employs four or fewer employees in any calendar year and that has a net income of greater than one million dollars in the previous tax year shall provide each employee with up to forty hours of paid sick **leave and forty hours of paid** leave pursuant to this section;

b. For employers with between five and ninety-nine employees in any calendar year, each employee shall be provided with up to forty hours of paid sick leave **and forty hours of paid leave** in each calendar year; and

c. For employers with one hundred or more employees in any calendar year, each employee shall be provided with up to fifty-six hours of paid sick leave **and forty hours of paid leave** each calendar year.

For purposes of determining the number of employees pursuant to this subdivision, a calendar year shall mean the twelve-month period from January first through December thirty-first. For all other purposes, a calendar year shall either mean the twelve-month period from January

EXPLANATION--Matter in **italics** (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [-] is old law to be omitted.

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first through December thirty-first, or a regular and consecutive twelve-month period, as determined by an employer.

2. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit or prevent an employer from providing an amount of sick leave, paid or unpaid, **paid leave,** or paid prenatal personal leave which is in excess of the requirements set forth in subdivision one and subdivision four-a of this section, or from adopting a paid leave policy that provides additional benefits to employees. An employer may elect to provide its employees with the total amount of sick leave **and paid leave** required to fulfill its obligations pursuant to subdivision one of this section at the beginning of the calendar year, provided, however that no employer shall be permitted to reduce or revoke any such sick leave **or paid leave** based on the number of hours actually worked by an employee during the calendar year if such employer elects pursuant to this subdivision.

3. Employees shall accrue sick leave **and paid leave** at a rate of not less than one hour per every thirty hours worked, beginning at the commencement of employment or the effective date of this section, whichever is later, subject to the use and accrual limitations set forth in this section.

4. a. On and after January first, two thousand [~~twenty-one~~] **twenty-seven** and upon the oral or written request of an employee, an employer shall provide accrued sick leave for the following purposes:

(i) for a mental or physical illness, injury, or health condition of such employee or such employee's family member, regardless of whether such illness, injury, or health condition has been diagnosed or requires medical care at the time that such employee requests such leave;

(ii) for the diagnosis, care, or treatment of a mental or physical illness, injury or health condition of, or need for medical diagnosis of, or preventive care for, such employee or such employee's family member; or

(iii) for an absence from work due to any of the following reasons when the employee or employee's family member has been the victim of domestic violence pursuant to subdivision thirty-four of section two hundred ninety-two of the executive law, a family offense, sexual offense, stalking, or human trafficking:

(a) to obtain services from a domestic violence shelter, rape crisis center, or other services program;

(b) to participate in safety planning, temporarily or permanently relocate, or take other actions to increase the safety of the employee or employee's family members;

(c) to meet with an attorney or other social services provider to obtain information and advice on, and prepare for or participate in any criminal or civil proceeding;

(d) to file a complaint or domestic incident report with law enforcement;

(e) to meet with a district attorney's office;

(f) to enroll children in a new school; or

(g) to take any other actions necessary to ensure the health or safety of the employee or the employee's family member or to protect those who associate or work with the employee.

For purposes of this subdivision, the reasons outlined above in [~~subparagraph~~] **clauses** (a) through (g) **of this subparagraph** must be related to the domestic violence, family offense, sexual offense, stalking, or human trafficking. Provided further that a person who has committed such domestic violence, family offense, sexual offense, stalking, or human trafficking shall not be eligible for leave under this

subdivision for situations in which the person committed such offense and was not a victim, notwithstanding any family relationship.

b. For purposes of this section, "family member" shall mean an employee's child, spouse, domestic partner, parent, sibling, grandchild or grandparent; and the child or parent of an employee's spouse or domestic partner. "Parent" shall mean a biological, foster, step- or adoptive parent, or a legal guardian of an employee, or a person who stood in loco parentis when the employee was a minor child. "Child" shall mean a biological, adopted or foster child, a legal ward, or a child of an employee standing in loco parentis.

4-a. In addition to the sick leave **and paid leave** provided for in this section, on and after January first, two thousand twenty-five, every employer shall be required to provide to its employees twenty hours of paid prenatal personal leave during any fifty-two week calendar period. Paid prenatal personal leave shall mean leave taken for the health care services received by an employee during their pregnancy or related to such pregnancy, including physical examinations, medical procedures, monitoring and testing, and discussions with a health care provider related to the pregnancy. Paid prenatal personal leave may be taken in hourly increments. Benefits for paid prenatal personal leave shall be paid in hourly installments. Employees shall receive compensation at the employee's regular rate of pay, or the applicable minimum wage established pursuant to section six hundred fifty-two of this chapter, whichever is greater, for the use of paid prenatal personal leave. Nothing in this section shall be construed to require an employer to pay an employee for unused paid prenatal leave upon such employee's termination, resignation, retirement, or other separation from employment.

5. a. An employer may not require the disclosure of confidential information relating to a mental or physical illness, injury, or health condition of such employee or such employee's family member, or information relating to absence from work due to domestic violence, a sexual offense, stalking, or human trafficking, as a condition of providing sick leave**, paid leave,** or paid prenatal personal leave pursuant to this section.

b. An employer may set a reasonable minimum increment [~~**for the use of sick leave which shall**~~] not **to** exceed four hours **of paid leave per day or paid sick leave per day. If a covered employee's scheduled workday is less than the minimum increments above, the minimum increment of time shall not exceed the covered employee's regular scheduled workday**. Employees shall receive compensation at [~~**his or her**~~] **such employee's** regular rate of pay, or the applicable minimum wage established pursuant to section six hundred fifty-two of this chapter, whichever is greater, for the use of paid sick leave **or paid leave**.

6. An employee's unused sick leave **and paid leave** shall be carried over to the following calendar year, provided, however, that: (i) an employer with fewer than one hundred employees may limit the use of sick leave to forty hours per calendar year **and up to forty hours of paid leave**; and (ii) an employer with one hundred or more employees may limit the use of sick leave to fifty-six hours per calendar year **and forty hours of paid leave per calendar year**. Nothing in this section shall be construed to require an employer to pay an employee for unused sick leave **or paid leave** upon such employee's termination, resignation, retirement, or other separation from employment.

7. No employer or their agent, or the officer or agent of any corporation, partnership, or limited liability company, or any other person, shall discharge, threaten, penalize, or in any other manner discriminate

or retaliate against any employee because such employee has exercised their rights afforded under this section, including, but not limited to, requesting sick leave**, paid leave,** or paid prenatal leave and using sick leave**, paid leave,** or paid prenatal leave, consistent with the provisions of section two hundred fifteen of this chapter.

8. An employer shall not be required to provide any additional sick leave **or paid leave** pursuant to this section if the employer has adopted a sick leave policy or **paid** time off policy that provides employees with an amount of leave which meets or exceeds the requirements set forth in subdivision one of this section and satisfies the accrual, carryover, and use requirements of this section.

9. Nothing in this section shall be construed to: a. prohibit a collective bargaining agreement entered into, on or after the effective date of this section from, in lieu of the leave provided for in this section, providing a comparable benefit for the employees covered by such agreement in the form of paid days off; such paid days off shall be in the form of leave, compensation, other employee benefits, or some combination thereof; or

b. impede, infringe, or diminish the ability of a certified collective bargaining agent to negotiate the terms and conditions of sick leave different from the provisions of this section.

Provided, however, that in the case of either paragraph a or b of this subdivision, the agreement must specifically acknowledge the provisions of this section.

10. Upon return to work following any sick leave**, paid leave,** or paid prenatal leave taken pursuant to this section, an employee shall be restored by their employer to the position of employment held by such employee prior to any sick leave or paid prenatal leave taken pursuant to this section with the same pay and other terms and conditions of employment.

11. Upon the oral or written request of an employee, an employer shall provide a summary of the amounts of sick leave **and paid leave** accrued and used by such employee in the current calendar year and/or any previous calendar year. The employer shall provide such information to the employee within three business days of such request.

12. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent a city with a population of one million or more from enacting and enforcing local laws or ordinances which meet or exceed the standard or requirements for minimum hour and use set forth in this section, as determined by the commissioner. Any paid sick leave **or paid leave** benefits provided by a sick leave **or paid leave** program enforced by a municipal corporation in effect as of the effective date of this section shall not be diminished or limited as a result of the enactment of this section.

13. The commissioner shall have authority to adopt regulations and issue guidance to effectuate any of the provisions of this section. Employers shall comply with regulations and guidance promulgated by the commissioner for this purpose which may include but are not limited to standards for the accrual, use, payment, and employee eligibility of sick leave.

14. The department shall conduct a public awareness outreach campaign which shall include making information available on its website and otherwise informing employers and employees of the provisions of this section.

§ 3. This act shall take effect immediately.