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Mayor de Blasio, DCA Commissioner Menin,

City Council Members, And Other Elected Officials Hold 'Paid Sick Leave Day' to Bring Awareness to More Than One Million Workers About Their Right Under The Law to Use Earned Sick Leave

July 16, 2014

Nearly 1,500 volunteers, City Council members, and other elected officials canvass New York City's major subway stations to tell more than one million covered employees to get ready for July 30, the first day earned paid sick leave can be used

NEW YORK—Mayor Bill de Blasio, Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) Commissioner Julie Menin, City Council members, and other elected officials celebrated today with a massive public awareness campaign to remind more than one million New York City workers about their right to begin using earned sick leave starting July 30, 2014. This outreach effort is the first of its kind organized by a City agency and involves 1,400 business owners and leaders, community organizations, workers, unions, City employees, and everyday New Yorkers talking to their friends and neighbors at 150 subway stops and other locations around the city.

The paid sick leave law, which went into effect April 1, 2014, covers most employees who work more than 80 hours a year in New York City, including full-time employees, part-time employees, temporary employees, transitional jobs program employees, and undocumented employees. These employees are able to accrue up to 40 hours of earned sick leave each year. Employers must allow all covered employees to begin using accrued paid sick leave on July 30, 2014.

“I am grateful to all New Yorkers who came out today in support of paid sick leave. They know its importance and want their neighbors to take advantage of it. The new law gives most workers the right to take care of themselves or a sick family member without fear of losing their job—and ensures that our City’s workforce will be healthier and stronger for years to come,” said Mayor Bill de Blasio. “I also want to thank the City Council, including Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito, as well as the hardworking community leaders and activists who worked tirelessly to make this law—and the important community conversation today—a reality in New York City.”

“Paid Sick Leave Day is about telling New Yorkers to get ready for healthier workers, healthier

businesses, healthier families, and a healthier city. We have 1,400 volunteers on the ground from all different walks of life, educating people about the importance of July 30. Thanks to the leadership of Mayor de Blasio and the City Council, this historic law will now guarantee one million New Yorker City workers access to paid sick leave,” said DCA Commissioner Julie Menin.

“Giving workers the opportunity to accrue and use paid sick leave means a healthier and more productive workforce in New York City, and I’m proud of the City Council’s role in making this a reality,” said Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito. “I’m also thrilled to see that so many of my colleagues from the Council are committed to spreading the word about this new policy in their own communities today by speaking directly to their constituents about the new opportunities being offered. I thank my colleagues and the de Blasio administration for their tireless work to make New York City a better place for our workers, our businesses, and all of our residents.”

“As Chair of the Council’s Committee on Small Business, I’m proud to participate in this unprecedented, citywide effort to increase awareness of workers’ rights and employers’ responsibilities under the City’s new paid sick leave law,” said Council Member Robert E. Cornegy, Jr. “There’s no better way to share information and communicate than person-to-person. Every brief conversation that happens today will help workers and employers understand that our City is committed to supporting them in taking all the steps needed to put this new legal right into practice to improve their daily lives and the functioning of their businesses.”

“I applaud Commissioner Menin’s effort to promote information about the Paid Sick Leave Act. My office has been working with the Department of Consumer Affairs to make sure employers and employees are informed of these changes in my district. All workers now have the legal right to paid sick leave. I am proud to have advocated for this legislation along with my fellow Council members earlier this year. It is important that everyone know of their benefits,” said Council Member Rafael Espinal.

“Providing paid sick days will enhance the quality of life for workers and their families throughout New York City. But it is vital that the people who this law will impact are aware of their rights under it. That is why today we are hitting the streets for a Paid Sick Leave Day of Action. No family member should ever have to face the choice between caring for a loved one or keeping a paycheck. And it is crucial for people to know that in New York City, they will never have to make that choice,” said Council Member Daneek Miller.

“Four years ago, I came to Queens from the Dominican Republic, and now I work for a construction company,” said Make the Road-New York member Joel Martinez Delon. “Last year, when my wife was pregnant with our son, she was hospitalized—but I wasn’t able to take off from work and be by her side. Now, thanks to the paid sick leave law and Mayor de Blasio, families like mine won’t have to choose between work and caring for a family member.”

“Today is a big step forward to ensure New Yorkers can take care of their health and their families. Now, working New Yorkers will no longer have to make the choice between staying home with a sick child and putting their jobs or economic security on the line. We are pleased to join Mayor de Blasio, the Department of Consumer Affairs, the City Council, and all the advocates and volunteers in this wide-scale effort to inform workers of their rights,” said Hector Figueroa, President of 32 BJ SEIU.

“The NYC Department of Consumer Affairs and the Mayor’s Office of Community Affairs are to be commended for their huge commitment to the mass education of New Yorkers at subway stops on Wednesday to build awareness that the new paid sick days law for private sector workers will go into effect on July 30. Volunteers for the 2-hour shifts during the morning and evening rush hours come from the hundreds of organizations, unions and businesses that worked tirelessly for nearly five years for passage of the earned paid sick days law. We salute the Mayor and DCA Commissioner Menin, who understand that this law will only make a difference in workers’ lives if they are aware of its existence,” said Donna Dolan, Co-Director of the NYC Paid Sick Days Coalition, Executive Director, New York Paid Leave Coalition.

“We applaud the de Blasio administration and Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito for addressing the needs of all workers in New York City,” said President of the Brooklyn Chambers of Commerce Carlo A. Scissura. “By providing guidance and support ahead of when regulations take effect, and implementing the law in stages, the Department of Consumer Affairs has shown that this law can balance the needs of workers and small businesses—the engine of job growth throughout the five boroughs.”

“A Better Balance is thrilled at the outpouring of support for the new paid sick days law, which will mean a healthy New York City, where all workers can take care of themselves and their families. We applaud the Mayor, the Department of Consumer Affairs, and all the volunteers throughout the city for working so hard to make the Day of Action a success, ensuring that all New Yorkers know about their new rights to paid sick time,” said Sherry Leiwant, A Better Co-President and Co-Founder, Balance: The Work & Family Legal Center.

“The paid sick days law is common sense. No one should have to choose between their health and their job.” said La Fuente Executive Director Lucia Gomez. “New York City’s paid sick days law will allow more than 1.5 million New Yorkers the opportunity to take care of themselves and/or their family member when they become sick, without fear of losing their jobs. This is not only a win for workers and businesses—it’s a win for the whole city.”

DCA’s paid sick leave campaign includes advertisements in the city’s subway cars, stations, and buses. The campaign will continue through July and into the summer with advertisements on television, radio,

online and in daily, community, and foreign language newspapers, as well as training events, webinars and other outreach activities for working New Yorkers, businesses, and families.

DCA's paid sick leave campaign has reached out to more than 400,000 small businesses and thousands of workers at more than 150 town hall meetings and events throughout the five boroughs. The agency also advertised on subways and buses, as well as translated informational material into 25 languages, going well beyond the City's Executive Order languages. Through September, DCA will intensify its activities through television and radio ads, and community and ethnic newspapers. The City will continue to expand community outreach efforts through partnerships and targeted educational and outreach for workers and businesses.

Under the law, employers with five or more employees who are hired to work more than 80 hours per calendar year in New York City must provide paid sick leave. Employers with fewer than five employees must provide unpaid sick leave. No employer can retaliate against a worker for requesting and using sick leave or for filing a complaint for alleged violations of the law with DCA. Retaliation includes any threat, discipline, firing, demotion, suspension or reduction in hours or pay. The accrual rate is one hour for every 30 hours worked, up to a maximum of 40 hours of sick leave per calendar year. Accrual began April 1, 2014, or on an employee's first day of employment, whichever came later. An employer can require documentation from the employee's licensed health care provider if more than three consecutive workdays are taken as sick leave. Up to 40 hours can be carried over to the next calendar year; however, only 40 hours per calendar year may be used.

Employers and employees can visit nyc.gov/PaidSickLeave or call 311 (212-NEW-YORK outside NYC) for more information, including upcoming [events](#) and webinars, the required [Notice of Employee Rights](#), one-page overviews for [employers](#) and [employees](#), [FAQs](#), DCA's paid sick leave [training presentation](#) in multiple languages, the [complaint form](#), and [legal interpretations](#). New Yorkers can also follow DCA on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#) and [Instagram](#) using the hashtag #paysickleave, and employers can ask questions online on DCA's Live Chat for Business platform Monday – Friday from 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Employers must provide the paid sick leave notice to employees in English and, if available on the DCA website, their primary language. The one-page overviews for employers and employees and Notice of Employee Rights are now available in 25 languages: English, Spanish, Chinese (traditional), French Creole (Haitian Kreyol), Italian, Korean, Russian (already available), as well as Chinese (simplified), Bengali, Arabic, Hebrew, Hindi, Polish, Yiddish, French, Urdu, German, Portuguese, Albanian, Serbian, Croatian, Tagalog, Greek, Punjabi (Gurmukhi), Japanese, and Yoruba.

[Key Facts about New York City's Paid Sick Leave Law:](#)

New York City's new paid sick leave law is now in effect.

If you work in New York City for more than 80 hours a year, you can:

- Earn up to 40 hours of sick leave each year to care for yourself or a family member.
- Start using earning leave on July 30, 2014.

If you are an employer, including a not-for-profit or small business, you must provide:

- **Paid** sick leave, if you have five or more employees who work in New York City; or **unpaid** sick leave, if you have fewer than five employees.
- Two days of **paid** sick leave to domestic workers who have worked for you for more than one year. This leave is in addition to the three days of paid rest to which domestic workers are entitled under New York State Labor Law.

The following City Council members participated in today's first-ever Paid Sick Leave Day in New York City: Council Member Inez Barron, Council Member Andrew Cohen, Council Member Robert Cornegy, Council Member Elizabeth Crowley, Council Member Laurie Cumbo, Council Member Inez Dickens, Council Member Raphael Espinal, Council Member Mathieu Eugene, Council Member Vincent Gentile, Council Member Rory Lancman, Council Member Brad Lander, Council Member Rosie Mendez, Council Member Anabel Palma, Council Member Debi Rose, Council Member Helen Rosenthal, Council Member Mark Treyger, Council Member Jumaane Williams, Council Member Chaim Deutsch, Council Member Carlos Menchaca, Council Member Elizabeth Crowley, Council Member Corey Johnson, Council Member Andy King, Council Member Peter Koo, Council Member Karen Koslowitz, Council Member Mark Levine, Council Member Daneek Miller, Council Member Antonio Reynoso, Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez, and Council Member Jimmy Van Bramer.

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