

INSTITUTE FOR
WOMEN'S POLICY RESEARCH

San Francisco's Paid Sick Leave Ordinance: Outcomes for Employers and Employees

Robert Drago and Vicky Lovell



About This Report

This study examines the effects of San Francisco's recent paid sick days legislation on employees and employers. New survey evidence is presented on how paid sick days are being used, the costs and benefits for employees and employers, and rates of employer compliance. The research represents part of a broader body of work undertaken by the Institute for Women's Policy Research on the costs and benefits of proposed paid sick days legislation. The research was made possible by grants from the Public Welfare Foundation, the Ford Foundation, and the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

About the Institute for Women's Policy Research

The Institute for Women's Policy Research (IWPR) conducts rigorous research and disseminates its findings to address the needs of women, promote public dialogue, and strengthen families, communities, and societies. The Institute works with policymakers, scholars, and public interest groups to design, execute, and disseminate research that illuminates economic and social policy issues affecting women and their families, and to build a network of individuals and organizations that conduct and use women-oriented policy research. IWPR's work is supported by foundation grants, government grants and contracts, donations from individuals, and contributions from organizations and corporations. IWPR is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization that also works in affiliation with the women's studies and public policy programs at George Washington University.

Acknowledgments

The authors would like to thank the many individuals who contributed their time and effort to make this report possible. Deborah Leff, former President of the Public Welfare Foundation, provided core funding for this project, as well as ongoing support and encouragement. Anna Wadia and Helen Neuborne of the Ford Foundation provided additional grant support and valuable guidance on the report and its release. IWPR Senior Research Associate Jeff Hayes and Research Analyst Claudia Williams conducted the data analysis, and Senior Research Associate Kevin Miller provided helpful comments on the draft report.

The authors thank the members of the project's advisory group: Dr. Jennifer Greene of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Dr. William H. Dow of the University of California at Berkeley's School of Public Health, Mr. Greg Asay of the San Francisco Office of Labor Standards Enforcement, Dr. Rajiv Bhatia of the San Francisco Department of Public Health, Mr. Rael Silva of Young Workers United, Ms. Sasha Hammad of Public Interest Projects, Ms. Shelley Waters Boots of SWB Strategic Solutions LLC, Dr. Gregory Acs of the Urban Institute, Ms. Sara Flocks of the California Labor Federation, and Dr. Jonathan Heller of Human Impact Partners.

The following individuals collaborated with IWPR in writing the employer survey questions: Dr. William H. Dow of the University of California at Berkeley Population Center and School of Public Health, Dr. Arindrajit Dube of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, and Dr. Carrie Hoverman Colla of the Dartmouth University Center for Health Policy Research. The authors also thank Randy Albelda of the University of Massachusetts at Boston, Ellen Bravo of Family Values @ Work, Vicki Shabo of the National Partnership for Women and Families, and Melissa Josephs of Women Employed for their valuable comments on the draft report.

Heidi Hartmann, IWPR President, and Barbara Gault, IWPR Executive Director, provided guidance and feedback throughout the course of the project. Vicky Lovell, former IWPR Acting Director of Research, initiated the project during her time at IWPR.

IWPR D494, February 2011

ISBN 978-1-933161-03-7

\$10.00

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Printed in the United States of America.

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Executive Summary

The nation's first policy allowing all workers to earn and use paid sick days was implemented in San Francisco in 2007. In general, surveys of workers and employers suggest that the law is functioning well. Most employers support the law and relatively few report adverse effects. Among employees, 59,000 or 17 percent of San Francisco's workforce, worked in firms that offered no paid sick days in the past, but are now covered, and more than half of all San Francisco employees who now have paid sick days report some benefit due to the law. Evidence suggests that it is rare for employees to misuse paid sick days. More education and enforcement may be needed to address remaining instances of employer non-compliance.

This report provides results from recent surveys of 727 employers and 1,194 employees working in San Francisco regarding the effects of the Paid Sick Leave Ordinance (PSLO). For workers, survey results find:

- Despite the availability of either five or nine sick days under the PSLO, the typical worker with access used only three paid sick days during the previous year, and one-quarter of employees with access used zero paid sick days.
- More than half of San Francisco employees with access reported benefitting from the PSLO either because their employer became more supportive of usage, the number of sick days provided increased, or they were better able to care for themselves or family members.
- Black, Latino, and low-wage workers were those who most often benefitted from the law, but were also those most likely to report employer non-compliance.
- Parents with paid sick days were more than 20 percent less likely to send a child with a contagious disease to school than parents who did not have paid sick days.

For employers, survey results show:

- Employer profitability did not suffer. Six out of seven employers did not report any negative effect on profitability as a result of the PSLO.
- Most employers reported no difficulty providing sick days to their employees under the ordinance. Approximately one-third of employers reported any difficulties implementing the PSLO, and only one-sixth needed to introduce an entirely new paid sick days policy because of the law. However, some employers (also around one-sixth) are in violation of the law and still did not offer paid sick days at the time of the survey.
- Employers are supportive. Two-thirds of employers support the PSLO and one-third are "very supportive."

Rates of utilization well below the caps of five and nine days suggest that employees view paid sick days as a form of insurance—a valuable benefit when illness strikes, but saved until then and only used as needed. For employers, the findings imply that they will never pay for many paid sick days earned under the PSLO.

The findings that many employees benefitted from the PSLO, and were more often able to keep ill children at home, as well as high levels of employer support, imply that the PSLO generated health benefits. Health care costs for employers and the public should have declined both because sick individuals and their children could get low-cost preventive care, and by reducing the spread of contagious illnesses in workplaces and schools.

Introduction

As of mid-2010, paid sick days policies had been considered in nearly half the states, several cities, and in Congress,¹ but in only one case had a universal policy been enacted. In November 2006, San Francisco voters approved an ordinance allowing any and all workers to earn and use paid sick days (PSD) (Exhibit 1).² The Paid Sick Leave Ordinance (PSLO) allows workers to earn paid sick days after three months on the job, to earn up to a maximum of five days per year in small firms and nine days per year in larger firms, and to use those days for their own health needs, as well as those of other family members (including a “designated person”).

Exhibit I:

Key Provisions of the San Francisco Paid Sick Leave Ordinance

- Workers begin to accrue leave 90 calendar days after the date of hire.
- Workers earn one hour of paid leave for every 30 hours of paid work, accumulating a maximum of nine days in firms with 10 or more employees and five days in smaller firms.
- Leave may be used for workers’ own illness, injury, health conditions, and medical appointments, and to care for family members or a “designated person.”
- Unused leave (up to the maximum of five or nine days) carries over from one year to the next.
- It is unlawful for employers to retaliate against workers for requesting or using leave under the PSLO.
- Employers are required to post information about the PSLO and maintain records on hours worked and PSD used.
- The San Francisco Office of Labor Standards Enforcement has authority to enforce the PSLO and levy penalties.³

Under the PSLO, the number of paid sick days that can be carried over from year to year is capped at nine days for large and five days for small employers. The PSLO cap minimizes employer costs while encouraging workers to use paid sick days when needed.

Both San Francisco city officials and San Francisco employer groups have characterized the PSLO as having a low impact on employers and being relatively easy to implement, but to date no empirical research has been available to guide policy development elsewhere.⁴ This report provides evidence from workers and benefits managers about the effect of San Francisco’s policy. These data can instruct businesses, employees, and decision leaders in other areas who are considering similar policies.

The IWPR survey of employees was conducted by telephone in January and February 2010. The sample frame was based on zip codes inside and outside San Francisco and included both land-line and cell phone numbers. Survey respondents were at least 18 years old and had worked an average of at least 10 hours per week for at least three months for a private-sector San Francisco firm at some time after February 2007. Interviews were completed with 1,194 workers.

The IWPR survey of employers was conducted by telephone by National Research LLC in July through December 2009. The sample was stratified by non-profit status and firm size, and was targeted at benefits managers. Interviews were completed with 727 San Francisco firms, and the overall response rate was 19 percent among eligible phone numbers attempted.

Appendices A and B describe the surveys and methodology of this report in detail.

Background

Research suggests that paid sick days policies could create various benefits and costs for workers, employers, and the general public.

Paid Sick Days Promote Health at Low Cost for Employees and Their Families

Paid sick days reduce the prevalence of employees attending work when they or a family member are ill. Workers recover from health problems faster when they can take time to recuperate.⁵ As such these policies are like insurance: Many people do not become ill in a given month or even year, but if they work long enough, at some point they will need paid sick days, and use them if they are available.

One criticism of paid sick days legislation is that it is unnecessary because workers already stay home when they or other family members are ill. But in many employment situations, workers face the pressures of “presenteeism,” or the practice of workers being on the job when they have a contagious illness.⁶ Research indicates that paid sick days policies reduce presenteeism.⁷ Some workers report going to work while sick because they can’t afford to take unpaid time off, which should also occur less frequently under paid sick days policies because employees do not lose earnings while they are out sick.⁸

Policies that support employees’ health needs may also reduce stress, increase loyalty, and improve morale,⁹ thereby improving the quality of employees’ lives and improving their performance on the job.

Sending children to school or child care when they have a contagious illness is equivalent to presenteeism for workers: It spreads disease to other children and their families, as well as to teachers.¹⁰ Having paid leave is the primary factor in parents’ decisions about staying home when their children are sick,¹¹ and research suggests that having paid sick days is more effective than vacation leave in allowing parents to stay home with sick children.¹² These effects may exist because some vacation leave policies are not flexible enough to be used when children become sick.

The paid sick days legislation in San Francisco might involve costs for employees. For example, employers could legally reduce all employees’ wages,¹³ or require that all employees work harder to make up for paid sick days. However, if employers obstruct paid sick days policies by requiring individual employees to make up for lost time, or requiring medical certification of illness when it is not legally permitted, or docking employee wages for time out of work that is supposed to be paid, they are out of compliance with the law.

Paid Sick Days Provide Benefits at Low Cost to Employers

Some employers are concerned about the possible implementation costs and increased paperwork of paid sick days legislation. For employers paying workers on an hourly basis, existing work hours tracking systems may need to be expanded to count earned paid sick days. Additionally, payroll costs can increase directly among employers who provided unpaid sick days in the past and need to switch to a paid sick days approach, or if the employer needs to hire replacement workers when employees are out sick. Some people fear that an increase in payroll costs due to paid sick days legislation will lead employers, and particularly small businesses, to engage in less hiring or to lay-off existing employees.¹⁴

Employers also enjoy benefits from paid sick days. Personnel experts note that the costs of presenteeism include not just lost productivity—sick workers are paid their full salary, but can’t perform at their peak—but also a greater likelihood of injuries and mistakes.¹⁵ Employers can experience “an even greater reduction in productivity” if an illness spreads through a workplace because of presenteeism.¹⁶ Research following the 2009 H1N1 pandemic in the United States suggested that more than one-quarter of private sector employees who contracted the disease did so because of others coming to work while infected,¹⁷ causing unnecessary suffering, deaths, and productivity losses. Paid sick days may allow workers to address their health needs more quickly and miss less work overall.

Paid sick days are likely to improve job satisfaction. Higher job satisfaction is in turn associated with higher business profitability, and employment benefits affect job satisfaction.¹⁸

Paid sick days offer an additional benefit to employers in terms of scheduling. Absences that are not planned in advance are more difficult and costly for employers to deal with than scheduled time off—and are nearly half again as expensive in terms of lost productivity.¹⁹ Workers with the right to use paid sick days may be more likely to let their managers know in advance about time needed for family health care or medical appointments, rather than calling in at the last minute.

Finally, workers with paid sick days are less likely than others to switch jobs, and workers with paid leave are more likely to return to work after serious health problems.²⁰ Turnover is costly to employers, involving expenses for advertising, interviewing, testing, and training new workers.²¹

Some employers may respond to paid sick days by trying to contain costs or expand revenues. For example, an employer might lay employees off, reduce employee compensation or other benefits (e.g., vacation days), require that employees work harder in order to cover for any lost but paid working time, or raise prices.

Paid Sick Days Improve Public Health

Public health may improve due to paid sick days. As mentioned earlier, presenteeism leads employees to attend work while contagious, needlessly spreading disease and adversely affecting public health. Sending children to school or child care when they have a contagious illness spreads disease to children, teachers, and their families.²²

Some researchers expect that paid sick days policies will have longer-term positive effects by increasing preventive care, reducing emergency room visits by allowing people to go to the doctor during working hours, and improving the management of chronic diseases, such as diabetes. These effects could reduce health care costs for workers and their families, employers, and the public, but it is difficult to calculate a dollar value for these effects with available data.

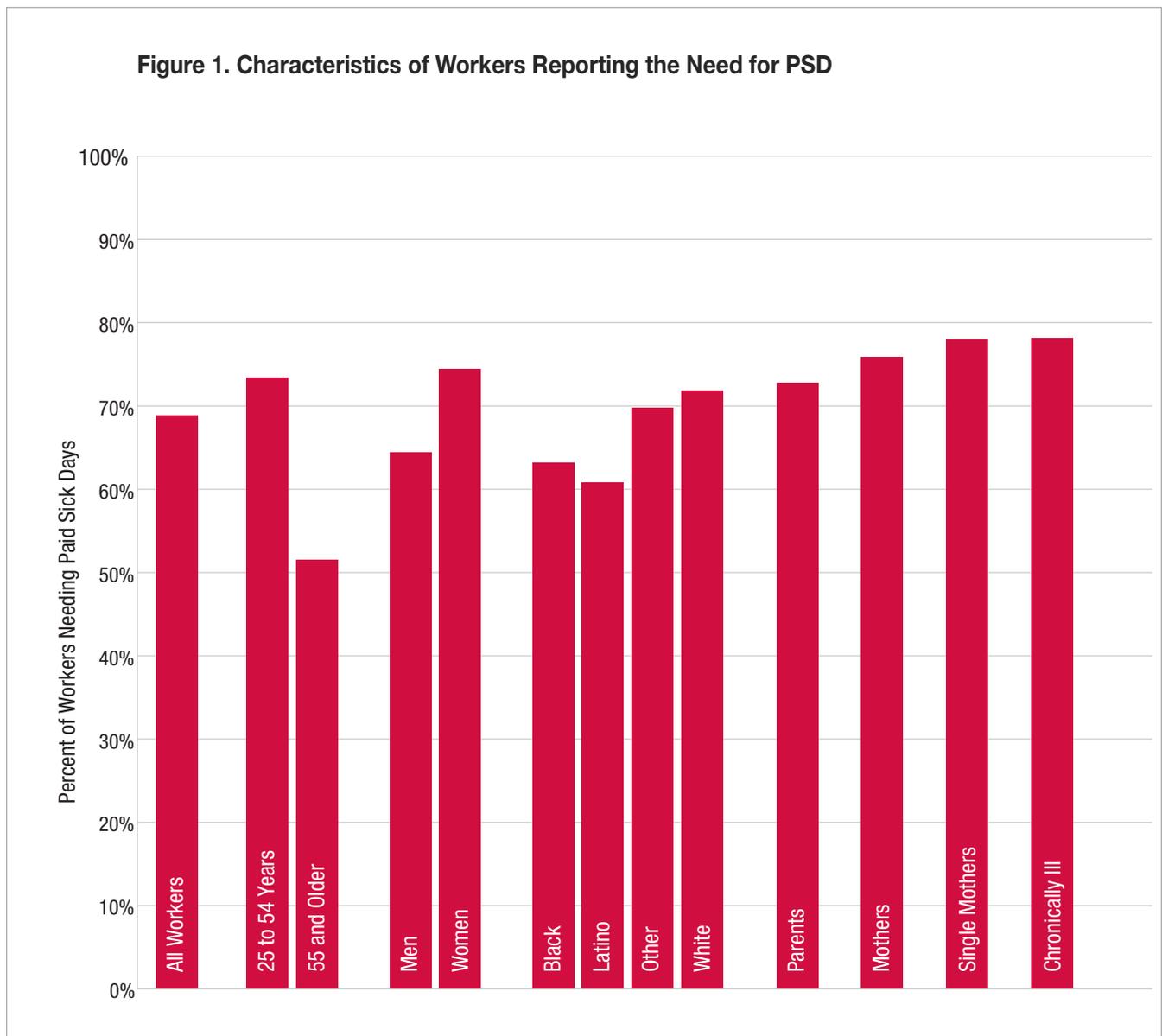
Findings: Workers and the Paid Sick Leave Ordinance

Paid Sick Days Are Important for Workers

The IWPR employee survey asked whether employees needed paid sick days, and found that **more than two-thirds of all workers had wanted to stay home in the previous year either because they were sick or they needed to care for a sick family member** (Figure 1 and Table 1). Some workers were more likely to need paid sick days than others:

- Single mothers and workers with chronic health conditions were the most likely to report needing paid sick days;²³
- Women and workers in the prime working years (ages 25 to 54 years old) were somewhat more likely than the average worker to need paid sick days; and
- Latino workers were less likely than white, black, or “other” workers to report needing paid sick days.

Clearly, the need for paid sick days is common among employees, even though many do not need paid sick days during a given year.



Source: IWPR analysis of employee survey data.

Table 1. Percentage and Characteristics of Workers Reporting the Need for PSD

	Needed PSD	Didn't Need PSD	Total	N
All Workers	68.9%	31.1%	100.0%	1,176
Age				
25 to 54 Years	73.4%	26.6%	100.0%	723
55 or Over	51.5%	48.5%	100.0%	347
Sex				
Men	64.4%	35.6%	100.0%	630
Women	74.4%	25.6%	100.0%	546
Race and Ethnicity				
Black	63.2%	36.8%	100.0%	84
Latino	60.8%	39.2%	100.0%	108
Other	69.8%	30.2%	100.0%	196
White	71.8%	28.2%	100.0%	747
Parents				
With Children	72.8%	27.2%	100.0%	302
No Children	67.3%	32.7%	100.0%	874
Mothers				
Mother	75.9%	24.1%	100.0%	146
Not a Mother	67.7%	32.3%	100.0%	1,030
Single Mothers				
Single Mother	78.0%	22.0%	100.0%	35
Not a Single Mother	68.5%	31.5%	100.0%	1,141
Workers with Chronic Health Conditions				
With Chronic Health Condition	78.1%	21.9%	100.0%	277
No Chronic Health Condition	66.5%	33.5%	100.0%	888
Wage Quartiles				
Bottom Wage Quartile	63.1%	36.9%	100.0%	188
Second Wage Quartile	68.1%	31.9%	100.0%	294
Third Wage Quartile	75.2%	24.8%	100.0%	363
Top Wage Quartile	69.9%	30.1%	100.0%	331
Union Member				
Union	66.9%	33.1%	100.0%	217
Non-Union	69.0%	31.0%	100.0%	948

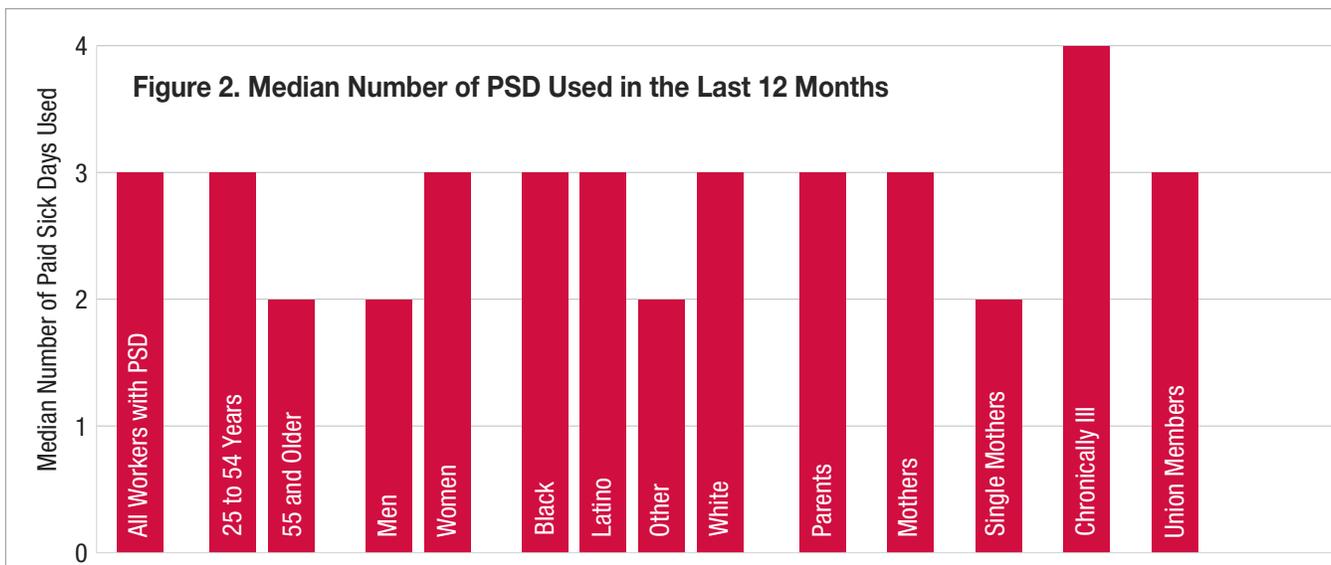
Source: IWPR analysis of employee survey data.

How Was the PSLO Used?

The median worker – the one who took more paid sick days than one half of all workers but fewer than the other half – reported using just three days of paid sick days in the previous year (Table 2 and Figure 2). This is far fewer days than the PSLO provides.²⁴ If this pattern holds in future years, the law’s restriction on days that can be carried over from year to year implies that **employees will never use and employers will never pay for many paid sick days earned under the PSLO**. This finding makes sense if the PSLO is functioning as a form of insurance: for example, many individuals pay for but do not use health insurance in a given year and, among those who use it, it is rare for an individual to use each and every benefit provided in a given plan. The finding also fits national estimates, which find covered workers in small firms use an average of 2.2 days per year, and those in large firms use 3.1 days per year.²⁵

Some workers were more or less likely than others to use paid sick days (Figure 3). Worker groups that were the least likely to use paid sick days included:

- Workers age 55 and older;
- Men;
- Latinos; and
- Single mothers.



Note: For subsample of workers reporting access to paid sick days.

Source: IWPR analysis of employee survey data.

All in all, more than **one-quarter of all workers with access did not use PSD during the last year.**

Among the workers who used some paid sick days:

- Workers with chronic health conditions used one more paid sick day than other workers, for an average of five days;²⁶ and
- Single mothers used just three days.

These results suggest that in general the PSLO is effective in providing sick days to those who need them most. There appears to be an exception for the single mothers who report a greater need for but actually use fewer days, perhaps due to fears of (illegal) employer penalties for missing too many days or a more urgent need to save days in case a child becomes sick, or because they tend to change jobs frequently so will not have accumulated as many sick days as other employees.²⁷

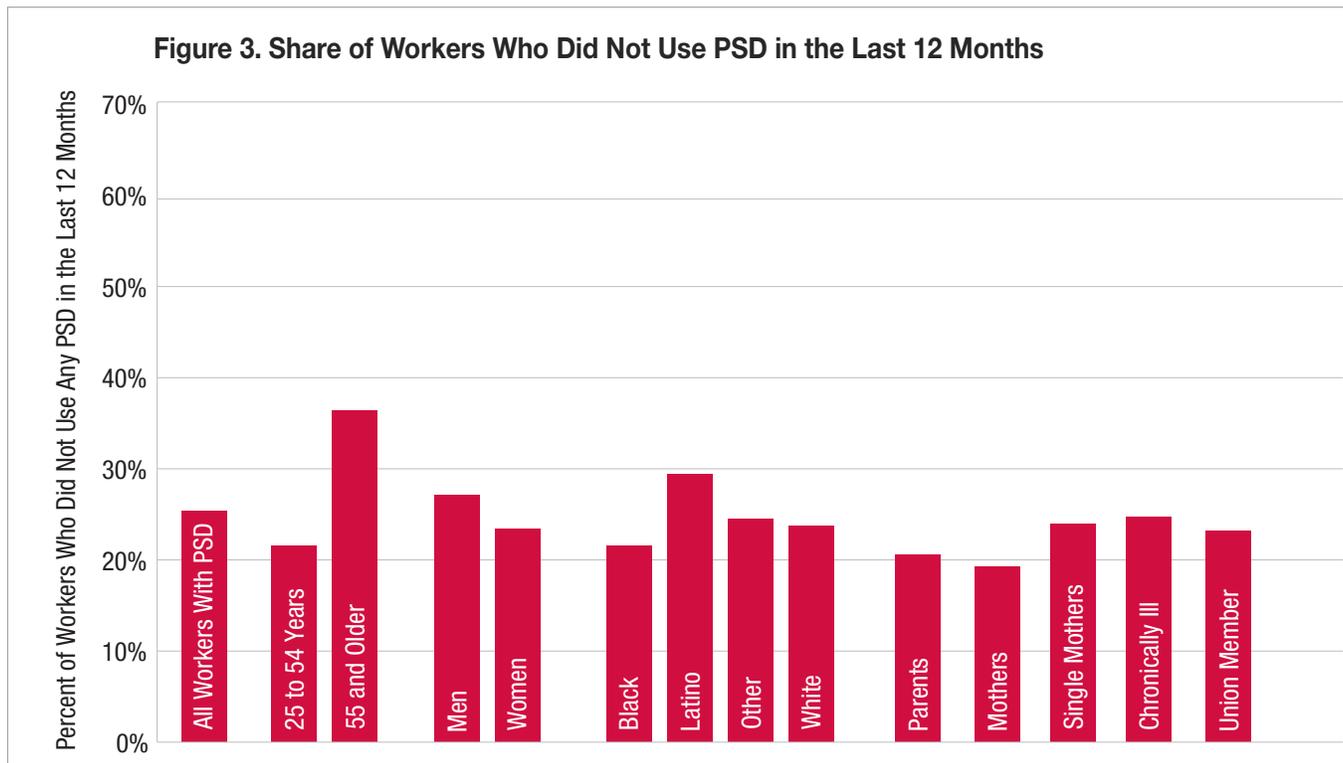
The survey also asked workers to list reasons for using paid sick days during the previous year, and permitted multiple answers. Workers responded that the primary reason for using paid sick days was due to their own health: More than

Table 2. Median Number of PSD Used and Share of Workers Not Using PSD in the Last 12 Months

	ALL WORKERS		WORKERS WHO USED PSD IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS	
	Median Number of PSD Used	Share Not Using PSD	Median Number of PSD USED	N
All Workers	3.0	25.4%	4.0	624
Age				
25 to 54 Years	3.0	21.6%	4.0	425
55 and Older	2.0	36.4%	4.0	148
Sex				
Men	2.0	27.1%	4.0	314
Women	3.0	23.4%	4.0	310
Race and Ethnicity				
Black	3.0	21.5%	4.0	49
Latino	3.0	29.4%	4.0	53
Other	2.0	24.5%	3.0	113
White	3.0	23.7%	4.0	394
Parents	3.0	20.6%	4.0	164
Mothers	3.0	19.3%	4.0	82
Single Mothers	2.0	23.9%	3.0	17
Chronically Ill	4.0	24.7%	5.0	146
Union Member	3.0	23.2%	4.0	136

Note: For subsample of workers reporting access to paid sick days.
Source: IWPR analysis of employee survey data.

Figure 3. Share of Workers Who Did Not Use PSD in the Last 12 Months



Note: For subsample of workers reporting access to paid sick days.
Source: IWPR analysis of employee survey data.

four out of five workers who took paid sick days reported using it for their own health needs (Table 3).²⁸ In addition:

- One-third used paid sick days to visit a doctor or dentist;²⁹
- One out of five workers used the time to care for a sick child;
- One out of six used paid sick days to care for an adult relative; and
- One out of 10 workers used the time for another purpose, such as a mental health day, a family reason including death, or a vacation.³⁰

Workers who used paid sick days varied by their family circumstances and other demographic characteristics. Specifically:

- Older workers who took paid sick days were somewhat less likely than prime-working-age individuals to use paid sick days for their own health needs. They were more likely to care for an adult relative while taking paid sick days, and more often used paid sick days for doctor visits;

Table 3. Reasons for Using Leave, of Workers Using PSD in the Last 12 Months

	Own Health	Visit their Doctor	Care for a Child	Care for an Adult	Other	N
All Workers	82.8%	32.8%	19.9%	16.1%	10.7%	656
Age						
25 to 54 Years	83.7%	31.0%	23.7%	13.7%	10.3%	446
55 or Over	82.6%	40.5%	8.1%	19.2%	11.2%	154
Sex						
Men	85.3%	34.2%	16.3%	18.7%	11.4%	330
Women	80.0%	31.3%	24.1%	13.0%	9.9%	326
Race and Ethnicity						
Black	72.8%	43.9%	33.7%	14.0%	9.1%	52
Latino	76.9%	39.6%	26.5%	23.3%	9.7%	56
Other	72.7%	27.4%	26.1%	14.4%	8.9%	121
White	89.8%	32.4%	13.8%	13.3%	11.5%	412
Parents						
With Children	66.7%	31.2%	60.0%	19.1%	9.7%	181
No Children	89.9%	33.6%	2.2%	14.7%	11.1%	475
Mothers						
Mother	60.9%	29.9%	67.6%	11.3%	6.0%	93
Not a Mother	87.0%	33.4%	10.8%	17.0%	11.6%	563
Single Mothers						
Single Mother	58.5%	32.1%	86.3%	3.6%	2.6%	21
Not a Single Mother	83.7%	32.9%	17.5%	16.5%	11.0%	635
Workers with Chronic Health Conditions						
With Chronic Health Conditions	87.7%	37.6%	14.6%	16.7%	12.7%	153
No Chronic Health Conditions	81.7%	31.9%	21.5%	15.4%	10.0%	498
Wage Quartiles						
Bottom Wage Quartile	79.7%	29.6%	18.7%	12.9%	7.0%	82
Second Wage Quartile	74.5%	40.4%	24.0%	14.6%	13.9%	171
Third Wage Quartile	89.4%	32.4%	16.2%	16.1%	12.2%	223
Top Wage Quartile	87.4%	28.3%	20.6%	20.3%	9.0%	180
Union Member						
Union	77.4%	40.3%	28.5%	9.9%	12.5%	137
Non-Union	83.9%	31.3%	18.1%	16.9%	10.4%	517

Source: IWPR analysis of employee survey data.

- Men who used paid sick days were more likely than women to use paid sick days for their own health needs or to care for an adult family member, while women were more likely to use paid sick days to care for a child;
- Parents who used paid sick days were much less likely than other workers to use it for their own health, with more than half taking time to care for their children. Mothers were particularly likely to use paid sick days to care for their children³¹ and particularly unlikely to use it for their own health needs. Parents were also slightly more likely than other workers to take paid sick days to care for an adult relative. In fact, one in ten parents reported using PSD to care for both a child and an older relative;
- Workers with chronic health conditions who took paid sick days were more likely than other workers to use paid sick days for their own health needs and were more likely than other workers to use PSD to visit a doctor; and

- Of all racial/ethnic groups, black workers who took paid sick days were the least likely to use it for their own health, but the most likely to take it to visit a doctor or to care for a child. Latino workers who used paid sick days were the most likely of all race/ethnic groups to use the leave to care for an adult and were more likely than workers overall to use PSD to see a doctor.

These findings suggest that many employees make trade-offs when using paid sick days. Workers with caregiving commitments, whether for children or other adults in need, tend to use paid sick days to care for others, perhaps using less time for their own health needs. The PSLO is designed to permit this sort of flexibility, so it supports families in ways that traditional sick days systems—permitting absence only for one’s own illness or injury—formally do not.³² Further, much of the caregiving for others and many of the doctor visits are likely preventive in nature, indicating that access to paid sick days is likely to improve health over time, improve job performance, and reduce future absences.³³

Workers and Their Families Benefited from the PSLO

Most employees had access to paid sick days before the PSLO went into effect.³⁴ The employer survey found that two-thirds of employers offered paid sick days prior to the PSLO (see below). These employees (and their employers) might have expected little change in sick days policies under the law. Seen in this light, it is surprising that, among employees who had the same employer before and after the PSLO went into effect and who report access to paid sick days, **more than half of workers (53.9 percent) reported one or more of the following benefits of the PSLO:** their employer became more supportive of using PSD, they gained additional PSD, or they were better able to care for their own or their families’ health needs (Table 4). In addition:

- More than one-quarter of workers noted that their employer became more supportive of their taking PSD because of the PSLO;
- Black, Latino, older, and low-wage workers were among those reporting stronger employer support of paid sick days following implementation of the PSLO;
- One out of four workers (25.1 percent) reported that they were better able to care for their own and their families’ health needs because the PSLO was adopted;
- Workers of color, including 29.1 percent of black workers and 31.2 percent of Latino workers; older workers (34.0 percent); mothers (27.3 percent); and union members (33.8 percent) were more likely to report better management of health needs; and
- One out of 10 workers said that they had more days of paid sick leave after the PSLO was implemented than before. Latino and low-wage workers were the most likely to report this, and mothers were the least likely.

Table 4. Workers’ Reported Benefits from PSD

	Employer More Supportive	More Days	Better Able to Care for Own or Families’ Health Needs	At Least One Benefit	N
All Workers	28.2%	11.4%	25.1%	53.9%	671
Age					
25 to 54 Years	26.7%	10.1%	21.1%	57.5%	391
55 or Over	34.1%	13.6%	34.0%	43.5%	230
Sex					
Men	28.4%	11.2%	23.1%	53.8%	349
Women	28.1%	11.8%	27.5%	54.0%	322
Race/Ethnicity					
Black	41.0%	12.3%	29.1%	45.4%	51
Latino	31.0%	18.6%	31.2%	40.8%	60
Other	32.7%	9.3%	30.6%	49.8%	113
White	25.8%	10.3%	21.9%	57.7%	425
Parents	28.9%	11.1%	26.3%	53.6%	164
Mothers	29.7%	6.6%	27.3%	53.9%	83
Chronically Ill	26.6%	8.2%	24.8%	52.0%	168
Union Members	27.9%	12.1%	33.8%	47.0%	153
Low-Wage Workers	32.2%	19.5%	29.6%	44.5%	73

Note: Data are for workers employed by the same firm before and after the PSLO was implemented.
Source: IWPR analysis of employee survey data.

This evidence regarding gains from the PSLO suggests the law is generally functioning as intended to level the playing field across employers and spread the insurance benefits of paid sick days to many employees who needed, but did not have, paid sick days prior to the PSLO.

The PSLO had a positive effect on parents’ ability to care for their children. Parents who had paid sick days were much less likely to report sending a sick child to school in the last year because the parent could not stay home with the child. This experience was very common among parents—two-thirds (66.4 percent) reported their child had gone to school while sick:

- Most parents who lacked paid sick days (75.9 percent) had sent a sick child to school; while
- Half of parents who had paid sick days had done so (53.8 percent). The reduction in the behavior is **over 20 full percentage points**.

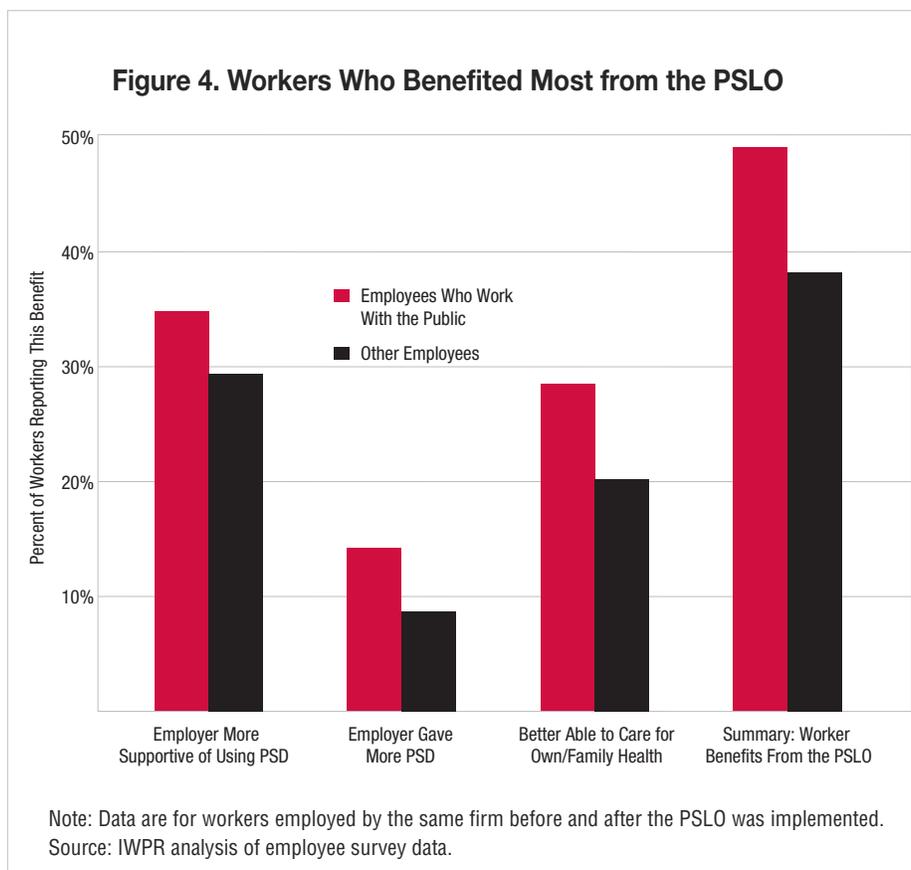
It should be noted that those who believe they lack paid sick days are in fact covered by the law. Although knowledge of paid sick days coverage dramatically reduces the rates of sick children being sent to school, the rates of parents sending a contagious child to school remain high even among those who know they have access to the PSLO. This may reflect a pressure that workers feel not to take many sick days even when they are available, or parents whose children became ill after all available paid sick days were used up.

One of the major reasons for passing the PSLO was the hope that it would particularly benefit employees who interact with the public. Anecdotal evidence suggested that, before the PSLO was adopted, many workers in low-wage occupations that involve public contact—food service, for instance—were not able to stay home when they were sick.³⁵ Presenteeism among these workers could lead to the spread of disease among the general public.

Evidence from the employee survey suggests the PSLO had precisely this intended effect (Figure 4). Specifically:

- More than one-third (34.8 percent) of workers who dealt directly with the public—in food service, health care, or retail situations, for example—reported that their employers were more supportive of workers’ use of paid sick days because of the PSLO.³⁶
- One out of eight workers with public contact (13.2 percent) reported that the PSLO reduced the level of presenteeism—sick workers on the job—in their workplace.

At the same time, however, workers who had direct contact with the public were more than half again as likely to go to work when they were sick, even after the PSLO was adopted (24.3 percent), compared to other workers (14.1 percent).³⁷



Few Workers Were Negatively Affected by the PSLO

Six out of seven workers reported that their employer did not reduce raises, bonuses, or other benefits to implement the PSLO (Table 5). Specifically:

- Four out five workers (78.3 percent) reported that there were no increased work demands in their workplace because of the PSLO; and
- Overall, two-thirds of workers (67.8 percent) reported that their employer did not increase work demands, reduce work hours, or reduce compensation in response to the PSLO.

Low-wage workers were more likely than higher-wage workers to report that their employers took action to reduce costs in implementing the PSLO;³⁸ however, many low-wage workers also reported having benefited from the PSLO (see Table 4).

Table 5. Possible Negative Effects of Increased PSD

	Layoffs, Total Hours Reduced	Fewer Raises/ Bonuses, Other Benefits Reduced	Increased Work Work Demands	Workers Paid in at Least One Way	N
All Workers	15.2%	14.1%	21.7%	32.2%	784
Firm Size					
Less Than 10	18.1%	17.8%	19.4%	34.9%	202
10 to 24	18.7%	19.6%	24.9%	41.0%	127
25 to 99	8.4%	10.1%	19.4%	23.8%	152
100 or More	13.2%	11.2%	19.1%	28.3%	303
Industry					
Information and Professional and Business Services	14.6%	11.5%	17.9%	27.5%	211
Financial Activities	9.3%	5.8%	17.7%	24.8%	96
Educational and Health Services	16.5%	11.3%	25.0%	38.6%	158
Leisure and Hospitality	18.7%	24.3%	25.3%	38.3%	79
Other Services	13.4%	20.6%	26.6%	36.2%	106
Other	18.8%	16.7%	22.0%	32.3%	120
Wage Quartile					
Bottom Wage Quartile	28.4%	23.1%	32.0%	51.1%	101
Second Wage Quartile	20.5%	17.9%	24.8%	36.7%	192
Third Wage Quartile	8.8%	11.4%	18.9%	27.6%	254
Top Wage Quartile	5.4%	6.0%	13.3%	16.6%	237
Union Member	14.7%	17.4%	33.1%	37.0%	167
Part-Time	25.4%	16.0%	24.5%	36.3%	177
Temporary or Seasonal Worker	23.2%	20.0%	18.2%	35.3%	91
College Graduate	9.4%	11.5%	14.2%	23.4%	545
Has Paid Vacation Days or PTO	14.3%	14.7%	23.1%	32.1%	615
Has Health Insurance	13.2%	12.4%	21.8%	30.0%	696
Has Paid Sick Days	8.5%	12.5%	16.9%	24.5%	374
No PSD/Not All Uses/Not Enough	27.5%	18.6%	28.1%	43.8%	209
Don't Know	14.9%	12.9%	25.8%	35.3%	189

Note: Data are for workers employed by the same firm before and after the PSLO was implemented.

Source: IWPR analysis of employer survey data.

Employees Report That Most Employers Are Compliant

Most workers reported that their employers were implementing the PSLO (Table 6). Relatively small shares of workers who had used paid sick days reported the following violations:

- Having to “make up” paid sick days (one out of 10) or find a replacement for their time off (one out of eight);
- Being threatened with loss of wages for using paid sick days (one out of 13) or actually losing wages (one out of 38); and
- Being assigned fewer or less desirable work hours or worse tasks because they used paid sick days (one out of 20).

Table 6. Employees Reporting Improper Implementation of the PSLO

	Had to Make Up Hours	Had to Find Replacement	Had to Make up Hours or Find Replacement	Threatened With wage Loss or Was Written Up	Lost Wages	Given Fewer/Worse Hours or Worse Tasks	Employer Retaliates for Use of PSD	Not in Compliance With the PSLO	N
All Workers	11.3%	13.9%	20.3%	6.3%	2.6%	4.5%	9.7%	23.7%	477
Age									
Age 25 to 54 Years	12.8%	14.2%	21.3%	6.2%	2.4%	4.8%	10.1%	25.2%	331
Age 55 or Over	7.0%	9.3%	14.8%	8.1%	2.9%	4.3%	9.2%	16.6%	133
Sex									
Men	7.7%	10.6%	15.7%	3.9%	1.8%	3.6%	7.6%	18.6%	234
Women	15.4%	17.5%	25.5%	8.9%	3.4%	5.5%	12.1%	29.3%	243
Race/Ethnicity									
Black	19.2%	32.0%	34.9%	21.5%	13.7%	10.4%	26.0%	40.6%	37
Latino	32.8%	16.9%	38.6%	10.4%	5.0%	3.9%	16.7%	44.9%	30
Other	12.7%	15.0%	23.5%	11.6%	1.3%	7.4%	14.9%	27.3%	85
White	6.2%	11.2%	14.7%	1.6%	1.7%	2.6%	4.4%	17.3%	315
Parents	14.9%	10.8%	23.3%	5.7%	3.1%	6.1%	9.5%	27.1%	131
Mothers	16.4%	13.9%	28.1%	8.8%	4.3%	4.3%	9.3%	30.1%	66
Chronically Ill	8.7%	15.0%	20.0%	4.0%	3.9%	5.0%	10.0%	26.2%	115
Union Members	7.1%	19.4%	24.5%	12.1%	0.0%	7.0%	17.0%	29.4%	99
Firm Size									
Less Than 10	8.2%	18.2%	23.8%	4.4%	3.6%	7.8%	8.6%	27.5%	86
10 to 24	22.0%	22.2%	33.6%	8.1%	0.5%	5.8%	13.4%	38.9%	77
25 to 99	12.4%	11.9%	17.5%	6.8%	2.1%	3.6%	8.0%	18.0%	109
100 or More	7.6%	9.5%	14.6%	6.0%	3.3%	2.8%	9.6%	18.5%	205
Industry									
Information and Professional and Business Services	14.4%	13.8%	20.7%	6.5%	2.5%	4.2%	9.6%	22.8%	169
Financial Activities	6.9%	6.0%	10.2%	0.0%	1.5%	0.0%	1.5%	11.7%	53
Educational and Health Services	12.3%	12.3%	22.2%	7.4%	3.7%	8.6%	18.8%	34.1%	101
Leisure and Hospitality	1.2%	22.6%	23.8%	0.0%	0.0%	3.5%	3.5%	27.4%	37
Other Services	13.1%	16.3%	22.0%	9.7%	4.1%	1.6%	9.7%	23.4%	64
Other	14.7%	17.6%	26.0%	14.4%	3.8%	8.7%	14.2%	26.0%	48
Wage Quartiles									
Bottom Wage Quartile	20.0%	35.7%	39.9%	20.0%	2.6%	7.0%	26.9%	44.2%	45
Second Wage Quartile	8.8%	16.8%	21.7%	7.3%	4.3%	7.2%	10.1%	25.4%	118
Third Wage Quartile	8.5%	10.7%	15.7%	3.3%	2.1%	3.5%	6.0%	19.5%	172
Top Wage Quartile	11.4%	3.3%	13.3%	0.9%	1.7%	2.0%	3.7%	15.3%	142

Note: Data are for workers who used PSD in the last 12 months.
 Source: IWPR analysis of employee survey data.

Women, black, and Latino workers; parents; and low-wage workers were more likely to report having to “make up” their PSD or find a worker to fill in for their leave. Workers in the leisure and hospitality industry and “other” industries were the most likely to report one of these situations.

The PSLO allows employers to require confirmation from a health care practitioner when workers use paid sick days for more than three consecutive days, but workers’ reports suggest that some employers request documentation for shorter leaves. For instance, two-fifths of low-wage workers who took paid sick days reported that they had been asked to show that they needed the time off—but only one-fourth had taken a total of more than three days (Table 7).

Although half of workers benefited from the PSLO, and most employers implemented paid sick days, implementation was not always perfect. Most workers reported that they could use paid sick days when they were ill themselves, and two-thirds reported that they could use paid sick days to care for family member or to see a doctor (see Appendix Table 1). Similarly, around two-thirds of workers accrued paid sick days at the required rate of one hour for every 30 hours of work. However, 29.0 percent of workers reported either not having all uses available or not accruing sick days at the required rate, and an additional 26.9 percent were not certain whether they were covered by paid sick days as required by the PSLO. In particular:

- Men were less likely than women, and older workers less likely than younger workers, to report that they could use PSD to care for a family member;
- Latino and black workers were less likely to report having full PSLO benefits;
- Parents, and particularly single mothers, were less likely than other workers to report that they could use PSD for their own health needs, and relatively few single mothers (29.9 percent) report having all the required elements of the PSLO.

Table 7. Characteristics of Workers Who Were Asked for Documentation for Using PSD

	Yes	No	N
All Workers	23.9%	76.1%	709
Firm Size			
Less Than 10	21.3%	78.7%	145
10 to 24	31.8%	68.2%	114
25 to 99	24.3%	75.7%	159
100 or More	21.5%	78.5%	291
Industry			
Information and Professional and Business Services	17.4%	82.6%	234
Financial Activities	15.5%	84.5%	77
Educational and Health Services	23.8%	76.2%	145
Leisure and Hospitality	30.9%	69.1%	58
Other Services	29.0%	71.0%	103
Other	34.5%	65.5%	82
Wage Quartiles			
Bottom Wage Quartile	38.6%	61.4%	91
Second Wage Quartile	29.4%	70.6%	189
Third Wage Quartile	17.7%	82.3%	242
Top Wage Quartile	10.3%	89.7%	187
Union Member			
Union	41.0%	59.0%	140
Non-Union	20.3%	79.7%	565
Part-Time			
Part-Time	39.8%	60.2%	114
Full-Time	22.1%	77.9%	595
Temporary or Seasonal Worker			
Temporary/Seasonal	37.2%	62.8%	66
Not Temporary/Seasonal	22.7%	77.3%	629
College Graduate			
College Graduate	11.7%	88.3%	523
Not College Graduate	39.5%	60.5%	181
Has Paid Vacation or PTO			
Has Paid Vacation/PTO	23.2%	76.8%	629
No Paid Vacation/PTO	28.8%	71.2%	70
Has Health Insurance			
Has Health Insurance	22.0%	78.0%	655
No Health Insurance	44.0%	56.0%	51

Note: Data are for workers who used PSD in the last 12 months.
Source: IWPR analysis of employer survey data.

Employers and the Paid Sick Leave Ordinance

Few Employers Had to Change Policies for the PSLO

Patterns of employer sick leave provision and compliance reflected in the employer survey are consistent with reports from employees. As was found in the employee survey results, it should be the case that most employers already offered paid sick days policies. Other employers should have responded to the ordinance with a new or expanded paid sick days policy. The employee survey results also suggest that non-compliance will be concentrated among small businesses. The employer survey results fit these expectations.

Two-thirds of San Francisco’s employers offered paid sick days before the PSLO went into effect, according to employer reports (Table 8). In response to the PSLO:

- Approximately one out of six firms enacted a new paid sick days policy. A similar share increased their existing PSD accrual rate, and one-sixth of employers expanded the share of their workforce covered by paid sick days (Appendix Table 2); and
- Overall, one-third of employers made at least one of these three changes, and **most employers (two out of three) were unaffected by the PSLO.**

Table 8. Firms Providing PSD Before and After the PSLO

Firm Characteristics	Provided PSD Before the PSLO	Provides PSD Now
All Firms	65.1%	82.1%
Number of Employees		
1 to 9	63.3%	78.4%
10 to 24	66.1%	92.0%
25 to 49	74.3%	97.5%
50 or More	83.6%	99.4%
Industry		
Accommodation and Food Service	23.6%	62.1%
Construction	29.8%	69.3%
Education, Health Care, and Social Services	67.7%	89.2%
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	87.0%	93.2%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	79.9%	85.3%
Retail and Wholesale Trade	61.5%	77.9%
Other Services	54.5%	78.5%
Other	79.6%	91.6%
Wage Levels		
Low-Wage Firms	51.1%	69.7%
High-Wage Firms	71.4%	87.1%
Firms Work-Hours		
Low-Hours Firms	52.6%	73.7%
High-Hours Firms	78.6%	88.7%
Female Workforce		
More Than 80 Percent of Employees Are Women	67.7%	82.3%
Other Firms	56.8%	80.8%
Diverse Workforce		
50% or More of Employees Are Non-White	72.9%	84.5%
Other Firms	48.7%	76.1%
Has Unionized Workers		
Some Employees Are Union Members	80.4%	91.8%
No Union Members	64.4%	81.7%

Note: At least one worker in “low-wage firms” earns less than \$10 per hour; all employees in “high-wage firms” earn more than \$15 per hour. More than 30 percent of employees in “low-hours firms” work less than 10 hours per week; in “high-hours firms,” all employees work at least 30 hours per week. Source: IWPR analysis of employee and employer survey data.

According to the employer survey, the PSLO expanded paid sick days coverage to more than 59,000 San Francisco workers, or 17 percent of all San Francisco employees; although it is important to recall (see Table 4, above) that half of all employees reported some benefit from the ordinance.³⁹

San Francisco’s smallest firms were the least responsive to the PSLO. Among employers with fewer than 10 workers, one-quarter implemented or expanded a paid sick days policy in response, but one-third did not have a paid sick days policy at the time of the survey. On the other hand, nearly all firms with 10 or more workers offered paid sick days at the time of the survey, and more than half had enacted one or more changes in response to the PSLO.

Firms that enacted a new paid sick days policy in response to the PSLO tended to be:

- In the construction and accommodation and food service industries;
- Low-wage firms; and
- Firms with low work hours.

Employers Had Little Difficulty Implementing the PSLO

As discussed earlier, employers may report costs around implementing the PSLO or increased benefits costs, particularly if they need to hire replacements for employees using paid sick days. The employer survey asked about implementation issues and hiring replacements, with benefits costs implicitly accounted for in a question regarding profitability (see following page).

San Francisco employers reported little to moderate difficulty in implementing the PSLO (Table 9). Specifically:

- Half reported that it was “not difficult” or “not too difficult” to understand the requirements of the PSLO, and another one out of seven did not know;
- Half reported that it was “not difficult” or “not too difficult” to administer the PSLO, and another one out of seven did not know; and
- Half reported that it was “not difficult” or “not too difficult” to reassign or delay work while workers used paid sick days, and another one out of 10 did not know.

Table 9. Firms’ Reports of Difficulty Implementing the PSLO

Firm Characteristics	SHARE OF FIRMS REPORTING:								
	Understanding the Requirements of the PSLO			Administering the PSLO			Reassigning or Delaying Work		
	“Not too Difficult” or “Not Difficult”	“Somewhat Difficult” or “Very Difficult”	“Don’t Know”	“Not too Difficult” or “Not Difficult”	“Somewhat Difficult” or “Very Difficult”	Don’t Know”	“Not too Difficult” or “Not Difficult”	“Somewhat Difficult” or “Very Difficult”	Don’t Know”
All Firms	52.0%	34.6%	13.4%	53.9%	31.4%	14.7%	48.2%	42.7%	9.0%
Number of Employees									
1 to 9	49.3%	34.1%	16.6%	53.7%	28.3%	18.0%	45.0%	44.2%	10.8%
10 to 24	57.4%	39.9%	2.7%	53.8%	41.0%	5.2%	57.5%	39.6%	2.8%
25 to 49	66.6%	29.4%	3.9%	53.7%	42.5%	3.9%	61.6%	34.8%	3.6%
50 or More	65.4%	30.9%	3.6%	56.5%	39.8%	3.7%	59.2%	36.5%	4.4%
Industry									
Accommodation and Food Service	44.4%	50.0%	5.5%	36.6%	57.9%	5.5%	40.7%	59.0%	0.3%
Construction	53.0%	46.1%	0.9%	41.0%	53.2%	5.8%	53.7%	40.5%	5.8%
Education, Health Care, and Social Services	60.6%	23.2%	16.2%	69.9%	12.6%	17.5%	51.1%	39.7%	9.3%
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	51.5%	27.9%	20.6%	68.1%	17.1%	14.8%	58.7%	33.7%	7.7%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	63.7%	30.8%	5.5%	55.3%	33.8%	10.9%	49.8%	40.1%	10.0%
Retail and Wholesale Trade	44.8%	39.8%	15.4%	55.8%	26.3%	17.9%	54.6%	29.9%	15.5%
Other Services	55.2%	34.2%	10.6%	56.2%	31.4%	12.4%	34.0%	55.8%	10.2%
Other	41.8%	32.2%	26.0%	40.5%	33.1%	26.4%	41.0%	50.8%	8.2%
Wage Levels									
Low-Wage Firms	55.5%	37.5%	7.0%	57.0%	30.7%	12.3%	52.7%	38.7%	8.6%
High-Wage Firms	57.6%	22.0%	20.4%	58.1%	20.7%	21.2%	50.9%	36.3%	12.8%
Firms Work-Hours									
Low-Hours Firms	56.5%	30.3%	13.1%	56.7%	28.4%	14.9%	49.1%	42.7%	8.2%
High-Hours Firms	47.9%	34.3%	17.8%	47.7%	32.7%	19.6%	46.8%	41.9%	11.3%
Female Workforce									
More Than 80 Percent of Employees Are Women	52.1%	36.6%	11.3%	54.6%	34.0%	11.4%	45.8%	45.0%	9.3%
Other Firms	53.0%	27.3%	19.6%	53.5%	22.3%	24.2%	56.6%	35.0%	8.4%
Diverse Workforce									
50 Percent or More of Employees Are Non-White	54.8%	28.8%	16.4%	58.9%	22.6%	18.5%	46.0%	42.5%	11.6%
Other Firms	47.7%	43.5%	8.9%	45.9%	44.8%	9.3%	51.7%	43.6%	4.6%
Union Workforce									
Some Employees Are Union Members	47.2%	49.5%	3.3%	47.8%	48.9%	3.3%	46.2%	51.0%	2.8%
No Union Members	52.2%	33.8%	13.9%	54.2%	30.5%	15.3%	48.3%	42.3%	9.3%

Note: At least one worker in “low-wage firms” earns less than \$10 per hour; all employees in “high-wage firms” earn more than \$15 per hour. More than 30 percent of employees in “low-hour firms” work less than 10 hours per week; in “high-hours firms,” all employees work at least 30 hours per week.

Source: IWPR analysis of employer survey data

It is possible that one response to these difficulties lay in non-compliance, and one-quarter of employers who reported difficulties implementing the PSLO also reported providing no paid sick days in the survey.

Smaller firms reported finding it easier to administer the PSLO, but more difficult to adjust workload for absent workers. They were also much more likely to answer that they did not know whether it was difficult to understand or implement the PSLO or to manage workload when workers used paid sick days. The restaurant and hospitality industry showed higher rates of difficulty implementing the PSLO, perhaps because few employers had paid sick days before the ordinance, or because they often needed to hire replacement workers.

Employers were also asked about hiring replacement workers to cover for workers using paid sick days. Few did so; nine out of 10 firms answered that they never or rarely hired replacements when workers used paid sick days (Figure 5 and Appendix Table 3). The hospitality industry was the only industry that significantly used replacements, with just under one-third of firms reporting that they brought in outside workers “always” or “frequently” to replace workers using paid sick days. However, hospitality firms that actually provided paid sick days reported rarely using replacement workers; the firms that did not offer paid sick days were more likely to use this staffing strategy.⁴⁰ The generally low rates of replacement hiring are consistent with the finding that employees reported increased work demands as the most common employer response to the PSLO (21.7 percent overall, and 25.3 percent in the leisure and hospitality industry; see Table 5).

Employer Benefits from the Paid Sick Leave Ordinance

Employer reports of cost-savings or improved employee performance should be limited to the minority of employers who implemented or improved policies in response to the PSLO. It follows that most employers will report only minimal changes in these aspects of business performance, and the data reflect this pattern.

Most employers reported that the PSLO had no effect on the predictability of employee absence, employee morale, customer service, or employees coming to work sick (Table 10 and Appendix Table 4). Approximately one out of seven did not know if complying with the PSLO had affected these aspects of their business.



Table 10. Effect of PSLO on the Predictability of Absence

	Impact on Predictability of Employee Absences			
	Better	About the Same	Worse	Don't Know
All Firms	3.8%	75.5%	6.9%	13.9%
Number of Employees				
1 to 9	3.8%	75.7%	3.5%	16.9%
10 to 24	3.3%	74.8%	17.1%	4.8%
25 to 49	5.3%	76.0%	15.0%	3.7%
50 or More	3.3%	72.8%	18.7%	5.2%
Industry				
Accommodation and Food Service	1.6%	65.8%	11.8%	20.7%
Construction	20.2%	54.8%	15.9%	9.2%
Education, Health Care, and Social Services	3.5%	67.5%	11.8%	17.2%
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	5.4%	84.4%	2.8%	7.4%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	6.4%	81.0%	1.8%	10.8%
Retail and Wholesale Trade	0.4%	78.1%	6.1%	15.4%
Other Services	1.9%	67.4%	3.5%	27.3%
Other	1.6%	83.8%	12.0%	2.6%
Wage Levels				
Low-Wage Firms	1.8%	76.7%	7.0%	14.5%
High-Wage Firms	5.3%	76.3%	4.7%	13.8%
Firms Work-Hours				
Low-Hours Firms	5.4%	70.5%	10.9%	13.3%
High-Hours Firms	4.4%	79.3%	5.5%	10.8%
Female Workforce				
More Than 80 Percent of Employees Are Women	4.8%	73.8%	7.3%	14.1%
Other Firms	0.2%	80.8%	6.0%	13.0%
Diverse Workforce				
50 Percent or More of Employees Are Non-White	5.0%	77.4%	2.7%	14.9%
Other Firms	1.8%	72.1%	13.0%	13.1%
Has Unionized Workers				
Some Employees Are Union Members	6.2%	74.2%	14.6%	5.1%
No Union Members	3.6%	75.5%	6.5%	14.3%

Note: At least one worker in “low-wage firms” earns less than \$10 per hour; all employees in “high-wage firms” earn more than \$15 per hour. More than 30 percent of employees in “low-hour firms” work less than 10 hours per week; in “high-hours firms,” all employees work at least 30 hours per week.

Source: IWPR analysis of employer survey data.

Net Effects and Employer Support for the PSLO

As shown below (Table 11), most employers—more than two out of three—reported no impact on profitability, whereas an additional one-seventh reported they did not know if there were any effects. The group that reported positive profitability effects is very small (0.6 percent), and a larger group reported negative effects (14.2 percent). Overall, **six out of every seven San Francisco employers did not report negative profitability effects from the PSLO.**

The industries where reports of adverse profitability effects occurred most frequently were in accommodation and food service, construction, retail and wholesale trade, and other services. Not surprisingly, these are the same industries where new paid sick days were implemented most frequently in response to the PSLO (see Table 8).

Although respondents in this minority of industries reported perceived profitability declines, higher coverage in these industries is especially likely to result in public health gains. Excepting construction, new paid sick days coverage in these industries should have generated substantial public health benefits due to employees working closely with customers. A check revealed that profitability declines were not associated with reports of policy change in response to the PSLO (three-quarters of respondents reporting policy change also reported no impact on profits).

Table 11. Effect of PSLO on Profitability

	Impact on Profitability			
	Better	About the Same	Worse	Don't Know
All Firms	0.6%	70.6%	14.2%	14.6%
Number of Employees				
1 to 9	0.6%	70.3%	12.0%	17.0%
10 to 24	0.2%	71.0%	22.7%	6.2%
25 to 49	2.0%	73.8%	19.9%	4.3%
50 or More	0.4%	70.4%	18.4%	10.9%
Industry				
Accommodation and Food Service	0.0%	64.9%	17.4%	17.7%
Construction	5.7%	62.2%	25.6%	6.6%
Education, Health Care, and Social Services	2.1%	70.4%	6.9%	20.6%
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	1.1%	78.6%	7.9%	12.4%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	0.1%	78.2%	10.1%	11.6%
Retail and Wholesale Trade	0.0%	71.3%	16.0%	12.7%
Other Services	0.0%	45.9%	24.0%	30.1%
Other	0.4%	76.2%	17.4%	6.1%
Wage Levels				
Low-Wage Firms	1.1%	63.2%	15.9%	19.8%
High-Wage Firms	0.6%	76.3%	10.4%	12.7%
Firms Work-Hours				
Low-Hours Firms	1.2%	68.8%	17.3%	12.8%
High-Hours Firms	0.7%	70.9%	16.7%	11.8%
Female Workforce				
More Than 80 Percent of Employees Are Women	0.8%	68.0%	16.1%	15.1%
Other Firms	0.2%	77.6%	9.2%	12.9%
Diverse Workforce				
50 Percent or More of Employees Are Non-White	0.3%	71.0%	14.4%	14.3%
Other Firms	1.3%	69.5%	14.9%	14.3%
Has Unionized Workers				
Some Employees Are Union Members	1.1%	56.0%	32.5%	10.4%
No Union Members	0.6%	71.3%	13.3%	14.8%

Note: At least one worker in “low-wage firms” earns less than \$10 per hour; all employees in “high-wage firms” earn more than \$15 per hour. More than 30 percent of employees in “low-hour firms” work less than 10 hours per week; in “high-hours firms,” all employees work at least 30 hours per week.

Source: IWPR analysis of employer survey data.

Some firms may have reported no adverse profitability effects because they found ways to contain costs or improve revenues while implementing the PSLO. However, more than eight in 10 employers report that they did not make any of the changes asked about in the survey. Further, only 14.1 percent of employees reported that their employer reduced compensation or benefits (see Table 5), while a very similar proportion of employers (12.8 percent) reported reductions in employee compensation (Table 12). Specifically, 2.8 percent reduced vacation leave; 7.1 percent converted vacation leave to paid time off or paid sick days; and 7.1 percent reduced raises or bonuses.

A smaller proportion of employers (10.9 percent) said they increased prices in response to the PSLO (results not shown). These employers were concentrated in the same industries where the PSLO led to the most dramatic expansion in coverage, and where employers reported adverse profitability effects—accommodation and food services, construction, retail and wholesale trade, and other services. In at least some cases, these employers were able to pass along these costs to customers.

Table 12. Employer Changes to Compensation in Response to the PSLO

Firm Characteristics	Decreased Vacation Time	Converted Vacation to PTO or PSD	Reduced Raises or Bonuses	One or More of These Responses		
				Yes	Don't Know	No
All Firms	2.8%	7.1%	7.1%	12.8%	6.6%	80.6%
Number of Employees						
1 to 9	1.4%	5.0%	6.2%	10.1%	7.6%	82.3%
10 to 24	8.8%	15.5%	11.7%	22.7%	4.2%	73.1%
25 to 49	5.9%	11.8%	9.8%	21.5%	2.7%	75.9%
50 or More	5.4%	11.6%	5.5%	17.7%	1.8%	80.6%
Industry						
Accommodation and Food Service	5.1%	6.9%	10.0%	16.4%	20.7%	62.8%
Construction	15.6%	19.8%	15.6%	34.5%	0.0%	65.5%
Education, Health Care, and Social Services	0.4%	12.1%	20.6%	30.1%	2.3%	67.6%
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	0.9%	5.1%	0.1%	6.0%	1.0%	92.9%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	1.5%	8.0%	4.3%	9.4%	1.8%	88.8%
Retail and Wholesale Trade	1.0%	2.8%	1.2%	4.1%	5.9%	89.9%
Other Services	2.4%	3.7%	11.1%	13.2%	18.7%	68.1%
Other	6.3%	9.0%	7.8%	13.1%	3.4%	83.4%
Wage Levels						
Low-Wage Firms	4.7%	4.3%	6.6%	11.4%	10.0%	78.7%
High-Wage Firms	1.8%	8.0%	6.7%	13.1%	2.5%	84.4%
Firms Work-Hours						
Low-Hours Firms	2.2%	10.5%	8.1%	18.9%	12.7%	68.4%
High-Hours Firms	3.2%	6.6%	9.2%	13.0%	3.4%	83.6%
Female Workforce						
More Than 80 Percent of Employees Are Women	3.7%	7.8%	6.9%	12.6%	7.9%	79.5%
Other Firms	0.5%	5.3%	8.1%	13.7%	2.8%	83.5%
Diverse Workforce						
50 Percent or More of Employees Are Non-White	1.5%	5.9%	6.4%	10.6%	2.9%	86.6%
Other Firms	5.4%	9.3%	9.2%	17.4%	12.0%	70.6%
Has Unionized Workers						
Some Employees Are Union Members	3.8%	6.9%	8.2%	12.1%	3.2%	84.7%
No Union Members	2.8%	7.1%	7.1%	12.8%	6.8%	80.4%

Note: At least one worker in “low-wage firms” earns less than \$10 per hour; all employees in “high-wage firms” earn more than \$15 per hour. More than 30 percent of employees in “low-hours” firms work less than 10 hours per week; in “high-hours firms,” all employees work at least 30 hours per week.

Source: IWPR analysis of employer survey data.

Two out of three firms were “supportive” or “very supportive” of the PSLO, of which one-third reported being “very supportive” (Figure 6 and Table 13). The same four industries where reported profitability issues emerged were also those with the lowest levels of support for the PSLO—accommodation and food services, construction, retail and wholesale trade, and other services. However, **even in these industries, more than 60 percent of employers in accommodation and food services and in retail and wholesale trade are supportive, whereas fewer than 30 percent of employers in the construction industry report not being supportive.**⁴¹ Most employers supported the PSLO.

Figure 6. Firms Supporting the PSLO



Source: IWPR analysis of employer survey data.

Table 13. Percentage of Firms Supporting the PSLO

Firm Characteristics	Share of Firms Stating Specified Level of Support			
	Very	Somewhat	Not Supportive	Don't Know
All Firms	33.9%	34.5%	23.6%	8.0%
Number of Employees				
1 to 9	34.9%	33.7%	22.0%	9.4%
10 to 24	27.3%	39.5%	31.5%	1.7%
25 to 49	38.7%	32.5%	24.3%	4.4%
50 or More	33.3%	35.0%	23.0%	8.7%
Industry				
Accommodation and Food Service	12.0%	53.7%	31.6%	2.7%
Construction	7.7%	40.3%	28.1%	23.8%
Education, Health Care, and Social Services	52.2%	32.9%	12.3%	2.6%
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	59.9%	23.4%	12.2%	4.6%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	30.3%	43.2%	16.0%	10.5%
Retail and Wholesale Trade	34.4%	27.4%	30.9%	7.2%
Other Services	29.3%	21.7%	35.6%	13.4%
Other	28.5%	32.5%	29.4%	9.6%
Wage Levels				
Low-Wage Firms	30.8%	40.7%	20.3%	8.2%
High-Wage Firms	37.6%	31.4%	19.8%	11.2%
Firms Work-Hours				
Low-Hours Firms	27.2%	39.5%	26.3%	7.0%
High-Hours Firms	34.4%	32.2%	24.1%	9.3%
Female Workforce				
More Than 80 Percent of Employees Are Women	32.0%	34.0%	24.5%	9.5%
Other Firms	39.0%	37.4%	21.1%	2.4%
Diverse Workforce				
50 Percent or More of Employees Are Non-White	39.2%	32.0%	21.9%	7.0%
Other Firms	28.0%	37.1%	27.2%	7.8%
Has Unionized Workers				
Some Employees Are Union Members	23.1%	19.9%	49.3%	7.8%
No Union Members	34.5%	35.3%	22.3%	8.0%

Note: At least one worker in “low-wage firms” earns less than \$10 per hour; all employees in “high-wage firms” earn more than \$15 per hour. More than 30 percent of employees in “low-hours firms” work less than 10 hours per week; in “high-hours firms,” all employees work at least 30 hours per week.

Source: IWPR analysis of employer survey data.

Among the minority of employers who were not supportive of the PSLO, most (two-thirds) reported hiring replacement workers always or frequently.

The generally high levels of support may reflect the fact that paid sick days are simply becoming a way of doing business in the city, rather than the burden some expected to see.

Conclusion:

How Well Is the Paid Sick Leave Ordinance Working?

San Francisco's Paid Sick Leave Ordinance expanded paid sick leave to thousands of employees, according to both employee and employer reports, although only one in six employers implemented a new paid sick days policy to comply with the ordinance.⁴² Most San Francisco employers reported that implementing the PSLO was not difficult and that it did not negatively affect their profitability. Half of San Francisco workers benefited directly from the PSLO in terms of their ability to use paid sick days—even though more than one-third of workers said they did not use any paid sick days in the previous year. Thus, the evidence presented in this report suggests that the PSLO is functioning as intended to level the playing field across employers and spread the benefits of paid sick days to employees who previously needed but did not have paid sick days.

The PSLO created costs for a relatively small share of employers and employees. Only one in seven employers reported adverse effects on profitability, and a similar proportion of employees reported fewer raises or bonuses or reductions in other benefits. In part, it appears that many employers offset potential costs by having co-workers fill in when others were absent, rather than hiring replacement workers. Of course, these employers may ultimately benefit due to reductions in employee turnover and by having a healthier and more productive workforce.

The finding that so few employers were adversely affected contradicts speculation from employer groups that paid sick days policies would increase costs among employers who already had paid sick days systems in place.⁴³ The reason this speculation turned out to be unfounded is simple: employees in San Francisco use fewer than half of the sick days available under the PSLO, and employers will never pay for many of these unused days. This finding is not surprising, given the way that workers earn paid time off under the PSLO. Employees can earn a maximum of up to five or nine paid sick days, and carry up to that many days over from one year to the next. This structure gives employees an incentive to treat paid sick days as a form of insurance, saving paid sick days in case they need the time for their own illness or that of a family member. Many workers will end up not having to use any paid sick days in a given year.

Workers' reports of their reasons for using paid sick days suggest that many employees make strategic trade-offs in taking this leave. For instance, workers with caregiving commitments, whether for children or other adults in need, tend to use paid sick days to care for others, not themselves. This underscores the importance of the PSLO's design, as compared to sick leave policies that can be used only for a worker's own illness or injury.

Employer and worker reports suggest that some challenges remain in order to fully implement the PSLO; however, extending public and employer education about the law and employer compliance are paramount. Although most employers appear to be in compliance with the requirements of the PSLO and are supportive of the law, a significant minority of workers report that they still lack paid sick days (see Appendix Table 1). And nearly one in five employers report that they do not offer paid sick days. Finally, it appears that many employers and workers are not familiar with the requirements of the PSLO, despite the outreach conducted by several public agencies to familiarize employers and workers with the law.⁴⁴

If there is a bottom line to San Francisco employer responses to the PSLO, it does not necessarily lie in perceptions of costs, benefits, or profitability, but in whether they support the law. Although most businesses already provide paid sick days in the United States, employer organizations have often opposed mandates such as the PSLO.⁴⁵ However, two-thirds of employers in the only city with experience with a paid sick days mandate for all workers are supportive of the policy.

Appendix A: Methodology for the Survey of Workers

The survey of workers was conducted by telephone by David Binder Research in January and February 2010. The sample frame was constructed by David Binder Research based on zip codes inside and outside San Francisco and included both land-line and cell phone numbers. The survey was designed by the Institute for Women's Policy Research. Survey respondents were at least 18 years old and had worked an average of at least 10 hours per week for at least three months for a private-sector San Francisco firm at some time after February 2007. Interviews were completed with 1,194 workers.

The Institute for Women's Policy Research imputed missing wage data and created post-stratification weights using Stata's raking procedure to represent the demographic (gender, age, ethnicity, and education) and employment (industry, wage, and work hours) characteristics of private-sector San Francisco workers in 2008 according to the American Community Survey.

Appendix Table A: Sample Sizes and Weighted Distribution, Worker Survey

	Sample Size	Weighted Distribution		Sample Size	Weighted Distribution
Total	1,194	100.0%	Industry		
			Information and Prof. and Business Services	353	28.1%
Age			Financial Activities	128	14.6%
18 to 24 Years	41	6.4%	Educational and Health Services	240	14.9%
25 to 54 Years	733	68.4%	Leisure and Hospitality	117	12.3%
55 or Over	420	25.2%	Other Services	164	11.2%
			Other	173	19.0%
Gender			Wage Quartiles		
Men	639	55.2%	Bottom Wage Quartile	189	26.6%
Women	555	44.8%	Second Wage Quartile	296	24.8%
			Third Wage Quartile	372	23.6%
Race and Ethnicity			Top Wage Quartile	337	25.0%
Black	86	5.7%	Union Member		
Latino	108	15.9%	Union	220	17.1%
Other	197	25.4%	Non-Union	963	82.9%
White	761	53.0%	Part-Time		
Parents			Part-Time	281	16.1%
Has Children	307	28.5%	Not Part-Time	913	83.9%
No Children	887	71.5%	Temporary or Seasonal Worker		
Mothers			Temporary or Seasonal Worker	154	14.2%
Mother	150	14.0%	Not Temporary or Seasonal Worker	1,017	85.8%
Not A Mother	1,044	86.0%	College Graduate		
Single Mothers			College Graduate	856	57.4%
Single Mothers	35	3.6%	Not a College Graduate	328	42.6%
Others	1,159	96.4%	Has Paid Vacation or PTO		
Workers with Chronic Health Conditions			Has Paid Vacation or PTO	890	76.2%
Has Chronic Health Condition	281	20.2%	No Paid Vacation or PTO	275	23.8%
No Chronic Health Condition	902	79.8%	Has Health Insurance		
Union Member			Has Health Insurance	1,034	84.2%
Union Member	220	17.1%	No Health Insurance	154	15.8%
Non-Union	963	82.9%	Firm Size		
Firm Size			Less Than 10	320	28.1%
Less Than 10	320	28.1%	10 to 24	197	17.6%
10 to 24	197	17.6%	25 to 99	248	21.1%
25 to 99	248	21.1%	100 or More	429	33.3%
100 or More	429	33.3%			

Source: IWPR analysis of employee survey data.

Appendix B: Methodology for the Survey of Employers

The 2009 Bay Area Employer Health Benefits Survey (BAEHBS) was conducted by telephone by National Research LLC in July through December 2009.⁴⁶ The survey was designed by William H. Dow, Arindrajit Dube, and Carrie Hoverman Colla of the University of California Berkeley as part of an evaluation of San Francisco's Health Care Security Ordinance (HCSO); staff of the Institute for Women's Policy Research collaborated on writing the questions about the PSLO. The sample frame was based on the 2007 Dun and Bradstreet database of businesses. The sample was stratified by non-profit status and firm size, and the survey was targeted at benefits managers. Interviews were completed with 727 San Francisco firms.⁴⁷ The overall response rate was 19 percent among eligible phone numbers attempted.

The Institute for Women's Policy Research created post-stratification weights using Stata's raking procedure to represent the firm-size and industry distribution of San Francisco establishments in 2008 according to the U.S. Census Bureau's County Business Patterns data.

Appendix Table B: Sample Sizes and Weighted Distribution, Employer Survey

	Sample Size	Weighted Distribution
Offers Paid Sick Days		
Paid Sick Days	682	84.2%
No Paid Sick Days	36	15.8%
Total	718	100.0%
Number of Employees		
1 to 9	190	77.2%
10 to 24	206	13.9%
25 to 49	145	4.6%
50 or more	186	4.3%
Total	727	100.0%
Industry		
Accommodation and Food Service	80	12.0%
Construction	37	4.4%
Education, Health Care, and Social Services	86	11.3%
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	91	12.9%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	197	19.9%
Retail	46	12.4%
Other	190	27.1%
Total	727	100.0%
Wage Levels		
Low-Wage Firms	167	19.6%
Other Firms	192	24.0%
High-Wage Firms	368	56.5%
Total	727	100.0%
Firms Work-Hours		
Low-Hours Firms	166	19.9%
Other Firms	239	33.1%
High-Hours Firms	300	47.0%
Total	705	100.0%
Hires Temporary Workers		
Hires Temporary Workers	138	14.9%
Does Not Hire Temporary Workers	412	85.1%
Total	550	100.0%
Offers Health Insurance		
Offers Health Insurance	630	60.8%
No Health Insurance	97	39.2%
Total	727	100.0%
Firm Has More Than 80 Percent Women?		
More Than 80 Percent Women	109	24.3%
Other Firms	596	75.7%
Total	705	100.0%
25% or More of Employees Are Workers of Color		
More Than 25 Percent Workers of Color	473	64.0%
Other Firms	254	36.0%
Total	727	100.0%

Source: IWPR analysis of employer survey data.

Appendix Table 1: Workers Who Can Use for Specified Purpose and Earn at the Required Rate

	Has PSD for Own Health			Has PSD for Family Care			Has PSD To See Doctor		
	Yes	No	Don't Know	Yes	No	Don't Know	Yes	No	Don't Know
All Workers	79.3%	15.4%	5.3%	63.2%	25.2%	11.6%	68.8%	24.9%	6.4%
Age									
Age 25 to 54 Years	80.8%	14.3%	5.0%	66.2%	22.8%	10.9%	70.0%	23.5%	6.5%
Age 55 or Over	78.1%	17.8%	4.1%	56.9%	31.8%	11.4%	66.2%	28.6%	5.3%
Sex									
Men	78.0%	16.9%	5.0%	60.1%	29.0%	10.9%	67.4%	27.3%	5.3%
Women	80.9%	13.5%	5.6%	67.0%	20.5%	12.5%	70.5%	21.9%	7.6%
Race/Ethnicity									
Black	87.3%	10.6%	2.1%	72.7%	20.1%	7.2%	69.5%	25.3%	5.3%
Latino	76.4%	20.2%	3.4%	57.8%	33.9%	8.3%	55.3%	36.8%	8.0%
Other	80.8%	12.7%	6.5%	66.2%	23.1%	10.7%	72.8%	21.9%	5.3%
White	78.6%	15.4%	6.0%	61.9%	24.2%	13.9%	70.1%	22.7%	7.1%
Parents									
Mothers	77.0%	18.5%	4.5%	72.5%	21.4%	6.1%	77.1%	19.3%	3.6%
Single Mothers	67.5%	28.9%	3.6%	59.8%	34.4%	5.8%	53.9%	43.5%	2.6%
Chronically Ill	77.1%	19.6%	3.3%	56.0%	30.9%	13.1%	70.5%	24.5%	5.1%
Union Members	86.0%	11.0%	3.1%	62.1%	26.6%	11.2%	63.8%	30.8%	5.4%

Source: IWPR analysis of employer survey data.

Appendix Table 1 (cont.): Workers Who Can Use for Specified Purpose and Earn at the Required Rate

	Has All PSD Uses			Accrues at Least 1/30 Hours			Has All Uses and Accrues			N
	Yes	No	Don't Know	Yes	No	Don't Know	Yes	No	Don't Know	
All Workers	53.3%	31.2%	15.6%	64.3%	19.1%	16.6%	44.1%	29.0%	26.9%	1,172
Age										
Age 25 to 54 Years	56.2%	28.6%	15.1%	66.0%	17.2%	16.8%	46.4%	26.6%	27.0%	721
Age 55 or Over	47.1%	37.5%	15.4%	67.2%	20.8%	12.0%	43.2%	34.9%	21.9%	342
Sex										
Men	51.2%	33.7%	15.0%	61.2%	21.0%	17.8%	40.4%	31.4%	28.2%	623
Women	55.7%	28.1%	16.2%	68.2%	16.8%	15.1%	48.6%	26.1%	25.3%	549
Race/Ethnicity										
Black	52.3%	35.8%	11.9%	64.0%	15.5%	20.5%	40.1%	35.9%	24.1%	86
Latino	44.3%	41.8%	13.9%	60.8%	23.9%	15.3%	33.5%	42.0%	24.5%	108
Other	55.3%	31.0%	13.8%	66.1%	16.7%	17.2%	46.0%	25.3%	28.7%	194
White	54.6%	27.6%	17.8%	64.5%	19.1%	16.4%	46.9%	25.6%	27.5%	745
Parents	58.1%	30.7%	11.1%	63.6%	21.5%	14.8%	47.6%	30.0%	22.4%	305
Mothers	62.0%	29.6%	8.5%	69.9%	17.8%	12.2%	54.1%	28.9%	17.0%	149
Single Mothers	42.8%	51.3%	5.8%	47.5%	24.7%	27.8%	29.9%	40.0%	30.0%	35
Chronically Ill	47.8%	35.7%	16.5%	65.2%	20.9%	13.9%	41.7%	32.5%	25.8%	276
Union Members	50.1%	35.9%	14.1%	71.4%	13.0%	15.6%	45.3%	27.7%	27.0%	218

Appendix Table 2: How Firms Changed Their PSD Policies in Response to the PSLO

Firm Characteristics	Provides PSD	Enacted a New PSD Policy	Increased the Accrual Rate for an Existing Policy	Expanded an Existing Policy to Cover More Workers	Firm Made Changes?		
					One or More	No	Not Sure if Changes Were Made
All Firms	82.1%	17.0%	15.8%	17.1%	30.6%	63.7%	5.7%
Number of Employees							
1 to 9	78.4%	15.1%	11.9%	11.3%	24.3%	70.0%	5.8%
10 to 24	92.0%	25.9%	30.0%	32.2%	49.8%	45.6%	4.6%
25 to 49	97.5%	23.2%	27.6%	38.8%	49.9%	47.4%	2.7%
50 or More	99.4%	15.8%	25.8%	46.5%	58.4%	31.1%	10.5%
Industry							
Accommodation and Food Service	62.1%	38.5%	17.4%	23.3%	46.0%	30.3%	23.7%
Construction	69.3%	39.5%	50.0%	28.2%	66.3%	29.9%	3.8%
Education, Health Care, and Social Services	89.2%	21.5%	13.6%	14.2%	32.6%	66.3%	1.1%
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	93.2%	-6.2%	8.2%	8.4%	10.8%	87.3%	1.9%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	85.3%	5.4%	10.9%	13.7%	20.7%	76.3%	3.0%
Retail and Wholesale Trade	77.9%	16.4%	15.6%	17.3%	32.4%	65.7%	1.9%
Other Services	78.5%	24.0%	33.6%	27.9%	49.7%	41.1%	9.2%
Other	91.6%	12.0%	9.4%	16.6%	24.3%	72.4%	3.3%
Wage Levels							
Low-Wage Firms	69.7%	18.6%	19.0%	17.4%	35.0%	57.7%	7.3%
High-Wage Firms	87.1%	15.7%	15.3%	14.3%	26.4%	70.3%	3.3%
Firms Work-Hours							
Low-Hours Firms	73.7%	21.1%	14.8%	16.7%	30.9%	62.8%	6.2%
High-Hours Firms	88.7%	10.1%	13.9%	15.2%	24.1%	72.1%	3.8%
Female Workforce							
More Than 80 Percent of Employees Are Women	82.3%	14.6%	16.2%	17.9%	30.1%	62.5%	7.5%
Other Firms	80.8%	24.0%	14.6%	15.4%	32.9%	66.9%	0.2%
Diverse Workforce							
50 Percent or More of Employees Are Non-White	84.5%	11.6%	16.4%	13.1%	24.7%	73.7%	1.6%
Other Firms	76.1%	27.4%	14.3%	23.1%	40.8%	48.3%	10.9%
Has Unionized Workers							
Some Employees Are Union Members	91.8%	11.4%	32.8%	48.8%	62.0%	37.1%	0.8%
No Union Members	81.7%	17.3%	14.9%	15.5%	29.1%	65.0%	5.9%

Note: At least one worker in “low-wage firms” earns less than \$10 per hour; all employees in “high-wage firms” earn at least \$15 per hour. More than 30 percent of employees in “low-hours firms” work less than 10 hours per week; in “high-hours firms,” all employees work at least 30 hours per week.

Source: IWPR analysis of employer survey data.

Appendix Table 3: Firms Rarely Hire Replacement Workers

Firm Characteristics	Share of Firms Hiring Outside Replacements for Workers Using PSD:				
	Always	Frequently	Rarely	Never	Don't Know
All Firms	1.2%	7.2%	23.6%	65.6%	2.4%
Number of Employees					
1 to 9	0.7%	7.4%	21.0%	68.1%	2.8%
10 to 24	3.3%	7.7%	28.8%	59.6%	0.5%
25 to 49	3.3%	2.5%	35.8%	57.0%	1.3%
50 or More	1.5%	8.0%	38.9%	50.3%	1.3%
Industry					
Accommodation and Food Service	1.6%	30.8%	25.5%	41.9%	0.2%
Construction	0.0%	6.9%	22.7%	70.5%	0.0%
Education, Health Care, and Social Services	1.1%	4.3%	28.5%	65.9%	0.2%
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	0.0%	4.8%	36.6%	57.1%	1.5%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	1.7%	2.0%	34.1%	57.5%	4.8%
Retail and Wholesale Trade	1.4%	1.4%	8.5%	88.6%	0.2%
Other Services	0.0%	10.0%	8.3%	72.8%	8.9%
Other	2.4%	4.4%	21.3%	69.8%	2.1%
Wage Levels					
Low-Wage Firms	1.1%	14.4%	12.5%	66.4%	5.6%
High-Wage Firms	1.0%	2.1%	24.1%	70.6%	2.1%
Firms Work-Hours					
Low-Hours Firms	2.6%	13.9%	19.2%	62.4%	2.0%
High-Hours Firms	0.7%	3.4%	25.3%	66.6%	4.0%
Female Workforce					
More Than 80 Percent of Employees Are Women	1.0%	9.1%	25.5%	62.5%	2.0%
Other Firms	2.0%	2.2%	16.4%	76.5%	3.0%
Diverse Workforce					
50 Percent or More of Employees Are Non-White	0.6%	6.5%	19.3%	72.1%	1.4%
Other Firms	2.3%	9.4%	26.8%	59.1%	2.5%
Has Unionized Workers					
Some Employees Are Union Members	5.1%	5.2%	27.1%	62.0%	0.5%
No Union Members	1.0%	7.3%	23.4%	65.8%	2.5%

Note: At least one worker in “low-wage firms” earns less than \$10 per hour; all employees in “high-wage firms” earn more than \$15 per hour. More than 30 percent of employees in “low-hours firms” work less than 10 hours per week; in “high-hours firms,” all employees work at least 30 hours per week.

Source: IWPR analysis of employer survey data.

Appendix Table 4: Effect on the PSLO on Business Operations

Firm Characteristics	Impact on Employee Morale				Impact on Customer Service				Impact on Presenteeism			
	Better	About the Same	Worse	Don't Know	Better	About the Same	Worse	Don't Know	Better	About the Same	Worse	Don't Know
All Firms	3.2%	82.9%	0.9%	13.0%	1.2%	81.9%	2.6%	14.3%	3.3%	80.4%	3.4%	12.9%
Number of Employees												
1 to 9	2.3%	81.6%	0.2%	15.9%	0.9%	81.1%	0.9%	17.1%	2.1%	81.4%	1.5%	15.0%
10 to 24	4.4%	89.1%	3.0%	3.5%	1.9%	82.4%	10.3%	5.4%	6.6%	77.0%	9.4%	7.0%
25 to 49	8.6%	83.2%	3.3%	4.9%	4.2%	86.0%	5.6%	4.2%	9.4%	77.1%	9.9%	3.7%
50 or More	7.5%	83.5%	3.5%	5.5%	0.3%	89.0%	1.9%	8.9%	5.5%	77.5%	7.8%	9.1%
Industry												
Accommodation and Food Service	2.8%	76.6%	0.8%	19.7%	2.4%	73.8%	4.1%	19.7%	4.9%	69.9%	4.6%	20.5%
Construction	5.6%	73.6%	8.6%	12.2%	0.0%	83.1%	11.2%	5.6%	6.1%	77.3%	10.0%	6.6%
Education, Health Care, and Social Services	3.1%	77.8%	1.1%	17.9%	1.4%	80.4%	0.7%	17.5%	2.2%	78.1%	2.8%	16.9%
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	6.7%	84.6%	0.1%	8.6%	2.4%	87.6%	1.4%	8.6%	0.6%	88.7%	2.8%	7.9%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	2.0%	87.0%	0.7%	10.2%	0.9%	87.3%	0.7%	11.2%	2.9%	86.0%	0.6%	10.5%
Retail and Wholesale Trade	2.1%	82.5%	0.6%	14.8%	0.0%	84.4%	1.4%	14.2%	1.3%	82.9%	4.7%	11.0%
Other Services	1.6%	80.1%	0.0%	18.3%	0.8%	68.1%	2.1%	29.1%	10.7%	68.8%	0.6%	19.9%
Other	4.2%	91.9%	1.2%	2.8%	1.3%	85.2%	7.3%	6.1%	1.8%	82.6%	7.0%	8.7%
Wage Levels												
Low-Wage Firms	3.0%	85.9%	1.6%	9.4%	2.0%	82.2%	2.5%	13.3%	2.4%	84.8%	3.6%	9.3%
High-Wage Firms	2.7%	82.6%	0.7%	14.0%	0.7%	83.8%	1.2%	14.3%	4.2%	80.9%	1.8%	13.1%
Firms Work-Hours												
Low-Hours Firms	6.3%	79.5%	1.1%	13.1%	0.8%	82.2%	3.7%	13.4%	3.0%	77.3%	5.5%	14.2%
High-Hours Firms	1.7%	85.8%	1.3%	11.3%	1.3%	84.5%	2.6%	11.6%	4.9%	82.3%	2.0%	10.8%
Female Workforce												
More Than 80 Percent of Employees Are Women	3.5%	82.4%	1.2%	12.9%	1.6%	81.0%	3.3%	14.1%	2.7%	80.6%	4.1%	12.6%
Other Firms	2.4%	84.4%	0.2%	13.0%	0.1%	84.5%	0.5%	14.9%	5.3%	79.5%	1.3%	13.9%
Diverse Workforce												
50 Percent or More of Employees Are Non-White	3.8%	82.9%	0.7%	12.5%	0.7%	83.0%	1.3%	15.0%	4.0%	82.4%	1.1%	12.5%
Other Firms	2.8%	81.7%	1.0%	14.5%	2.1%	79.1%	4.5%	14.3%	2.5%	77.2%	6.5%	13.8%
Has Unionized Workers												
Some Employees Are Union Members	2.6%	84.7%	2.8%	9.9%	0.3%	91.9%	4.0%	3.9%	2.3%	89.4%	4.7%	3.6%
No Union Members	3.3%	82.8%	0.8%	13.1%	1.3%	81.4%	2.5%	14.8%	3.4%	79.9%	3.4%	13.4%

Note: At least one worker in “low-wage firms” earns less than \$10 per hour; all employees in “high-wage firms” earn more than \$15 per hour. More than 30 percent of employees in “low-wage firms” work less than 10 hours per week; in “high-hours firms,” all employees work at least 30 hours per week.

Source: IWPR analysis of employer survey data.

NOTES

- ¹ National Partnership for Women & Families. “Current Paid Sick Days Laws.” <http://www.nationalpartnership.org/site/Page-Server?page-name=psd_campaigns>. (modified July 2010).
- ² Employees who perform work in the City/County of San Francisco are covered by the PSLO beginning 90 calendar days after the date of hire, regardless of where their employer or usual workplace is located. Note that federal, state, and city/county government workers in San Francisco had paid sick days before the PSLO was adopted.
- ³ San Francisco Administrative Code Chapter 12W.
- ⁴ DeBare, Ilana. 2008. “S.F. Sick Leave Law Celebrates 1 Year,” *The San Francisco Chronicle*, February 6. Interviews with 26 employers in March 2008 found that “most employers were able to implement [the PSLO] with minimal impacts on their business in the first year.” Waters Boots, Shelley, Karin Martinson, and Anna Danziger. 2009. *Employers’ Perspectives on San Francisco’s Paid Sick Leave Policy*. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute, 12.
- ⁵ Grinyer, Anne and Vicky Singleton. 2000. “Sickness Absence as Risk-Taking Behavior: A Study of Organizational and Cultural Factors in the Public Sector,” *Health, Risk & Society* 2 (March):14.
- ⁶ Grinyer, Anne and Vicky Singleton. 2000. “Sickness Absence as Risk-Taking Behavior: A Study of Organizational and Cultural Factors in the Public Sector,” *Health, Risk & Society* 2 (March):8.
- ⁷ Li, Jiehui, Guthrie S. Birkhead, David S. Strogatz, and R. Bruce Coles. 1996. “Impact of Institution Size, Staffing Patterns, and Infection Control Practices on Communicable Disease Outbreaks in New York State Nursing Homes.” *American Journal of Epidemiology* 143 (May): 1047.
- ⁸ NPR, Kaiser Family Foundation, and the Harvard School of Public Health. 2008. *Health Care and the Economy in Two Swing States: A Look at Ohio and Florida*. Menlo Park, CA: Kaiser Family Foundation, 4.
- ⁹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2010. “Benefits of Health Promotion Programs.” <<http://www.cdc.gov/workplacehealthpromotion/businesscase/benefits/index.html>> (accessed March 11, 2010).
- ¹⁰ Heymann, S. Jody, Alison Earle, and Brian Egleston. 1996. “Parental Availability for the Care of Sick Children.” *Pediatrics* 98 (August):229.
- ¹¹ Heymann, S. Jody. 2000. *The Widening Gap: Why America’s Working Families Are in Jeopardy and What Can Be Done About It*. New York: Basic Books, 59.
- ¹² Clemans-Cope, Lisa, Cynthia D. Perry, Genevieve M. Kenney, Jennifer E. Pelletier, and Matthew S. Pantell. 2008. “Access to and Use of Paid Sick Leave Among Low-Income Families with Children.” *Pediatrics* 122 (August):e484.
- ¹³ Although wages could not be reduced below the legal minimum.
- ¹⁴ Phillips, Bruce D. 2008. AB2716, The CA Healthy Workplaces Act of 2008: Economic and Small Business Effects. Nashville, TN: NFIB Research Foundation (June).
- ¹⁵ CCH. 2007. “CCH Survey Finds Most Employees Call in “Sick” for Reasons Other Than Illness; Poor Morale Adds Up to Even More No-Shows.” <<http://hr.cch.com/press/releases/20071010h.asp>> (accessed January 26, 2011).
- ¹⁶ Smith, Sandy. 2004. “Vast Majority of Employees Work While Sick.” *EHSToday*. <http://ehstoday.com/news/ehs_imp_36898/> (accessed January 26, 2011).
- ¹⁷ Drago, Robert and Kevin Miller. 2010. *Sick at Work: Infected Employees in the Workplace During the H1N1 Pandemic*. IWPR Publication #B264. Washington, DC: Institute for Women’s Policy Research.
- ¹⁸ Harter, James K., Frank L. Schmidt, and Theodore L. Hayes. 2002. “Business-Unit-Level Relationship Between Employee Satisfaction, Employee Engagement, and Business Outcomes: A Meta-Analysis.” *Journal of Applied Psychology* 87(2): 273; Artz, Benjamin. 2010. “Fringe Benefits and Job Satisfaction.” *International Journal of Manpower* 31(6): 626-27.
- ¹⁹ Mercer. 2008. *The Total Financial Impact of Employee Absences: Survey Highlights*. New York: Kronos, 6. <<http://www.kronos.com/absenceanonymous/media/mercer-survey-highlights.pdf>> (accessed January 22, 2011).
- ²⁰ Cooper, Philip F. and Alan C. Monheit. 1993. “Does Employment-Related Health Insurance Inhibit Job Mobility?” *Inquiry* 30 (Winter):409; Earle, Alison, John Z. Ayanian, and Jody Heymann. 2006. “Work Resumption After Newly Diagnosed Coronary Heart Disease: Findings on the Importance of Paid Leave.” *Journal of Women’s Health* 15(4): 436.
- ²¹ Phillips, J. Douglas. 1990. “The Price Tag on Turnover.” *Personnel Journal* 69 (December): 58.
- ²² Heymann, S. Jody, Alison Earle, and Brian Egleston. 1996. “Parental Availability for the Care of Sick Children,” *Pediatrics* 98 (August):229.
- ²³ “Chronic health conditions” are conditions like heart disease, asthma, or diabetes that require continuous treatment, are not curable, and may last for a lifetime.
- ²⁴ The PSLO provides that workers accrue leave at the rate of one hour of leave for every 30 hours worked, to a maximum of five days for workers in firms with fewer than 10 employees and nine days for workers in larger firms. If a worker uses some of that accrued time, accrual begins again, with the same caps on the amount that can be accrued. San Francisco Office of Labor Standards Enforcement. 2007. *San Francisco Paid Sick Leave Ordinance, Administrative Code Chapter 12W, Frequently Asked Questions* (September 28), 5–6. An individual working 40 hours a week throughout the year would accrue just under nine days (40 hours per week x 52 weeks per year, divided by 30 hours worked per paid sick days earned, equals 8.7 days). Workers use a median of three paid sick days per year regardless of establishment size. We estimate that 28 percent of workers are in small establishments where they earn an average of five days (leaving two days unused), while the remaining 72 percent of workers earn nine days (leaving six days unused). Weighting unused days by the relevant proportions of workers yields an average of 4.9 unused days each year, compared with three days used.

- ²⁵ Institute for Women's Policy Research. 2010. Analysis of data from the 2008 National Health Interview Survey.
- ²⁶ Older workers are nearly twice as likely to have a chronic health condition (30.5 percent do) as prime-working-age workers (17.4 percent), but other research shows that older workers are less likely to have acute illnesses, injuries, or accidents than younger workers. Edelstein, Barry A., Ronald R. Martin, and Lesley P. Koven. 2003. "Psychological Assessment in Geriatric Settings," in *Handbook of Psychology, Volume 10: Assessment Psychology*, ed. John R. Graham, Jack A. Naglieri, and Irving B. Weiner. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 390. These facts may explain why older workers were more likely than younger workers to report not using any PSD, but, at the same time, to report using more days, if they did take PSD.
- ²⁷ For example, single parents and low-income families are associated with low rates of job tenure. See Holzer, Harry J. and Karin Martinson. 2005. *Can We Improve Job Retention and Advancement Among Low-Income Working Parents?* Washington, DC: The Urban Institute, 3.
- ²⁸ Survey respondents were asked to report a reason for every leave they took, so the percentages taking different types of leave sum to more than 100 percent.
- ²⁹ These visits could have been for either the respondent or a family member.
- ³⁰ The PSLO does not mandate paid leave for these uses, but they may have been authorized by the policies for these particular workers. For instance, paid sick days may be provided under a general paid time off or PTO plan, and some employers may allow their workers to use paid sick days for vacation time.
- ³¹ Some parents may try not to use PSD for themselves, saving their paid time off for when their children will need care.
- ³² To some extent, workers in San Francisco had that flexibility before the PSLO was passed. Under a California law passed before the PSLO, employers are required to allow workers to use up to half of their accrued sick leave to care for sick family members. Labor Project for Working Families. 2008. *Use of Sick Leave for Family Care/Kin Care* (March). <http://www.working-families.org/learnmore/paid-familyleave/e_sick.pdf> (accessed January 4, 2011).
- ³³ Preventive care has been found to be associated with fewer employee days of unplanned absences, lower productivity loss due to absenteeism, and higher returns to shareholders. See National Business Group on Health and Towers Watson. 2010. *2009/2010 Staying@Work Report: The Health and Productivity Advantage*. New York: Watson Wyatt Worldwide.
- ³⁴ Data in this section are for workers who had the same employer before and after the PSLO went into effect.
- ³⁵ Labor Project for Working Families. May 10, 2008. "Working Moms Speak Out for Paid Sick Days." Press Release. <http://www.paid-sickdaysca.org/media/press/press_release5_08.pdf> (accessed January 25, 2011).
- ³⁶ Close to half (45.9 percent) of workers who interacted with the public were employed in the education or leisure and hospitality industries. In contrast, workers without public contact were primarily employed in the information and financial activities industries (59.7 percent).
- ³⁷ Perhaps this result is explained by employees who are reliant upon customers' tips needing that income, and so come to work while sick.
- ³⁸ Low-wage workers were those in the bottom wage quartile, who earned less than \$15 per hour (2010 dollars). There were 118,000 low-wage workers in San Francisco in 2009.
- ³⁹ This estimate assumes that all employers starting new PSD policies provided PSD to all their employees. It does not reflect the effect of employers extending their existing PSD policies to cover more workers.
- ⁴⁰ Among the two-thirds of hospitality firms that actually provided paid sick days, just 3.6 percent reported hiring replacements "frequently" or "always" for workers using sick leave, implying that employers who had not implemented the PSLO were those hiring replacement workers most frequently.
- ⁴¹ Note that many employers in the construction industry (just under one-quarter) reported "don't know" in terms of support, whereas 51.0 percent of employers in the other services industry were supportive of the PSLO.
- ⁴² 17.9 percent of employers said that they did not have a paid sick days policy at the time of the survey, 18 months after the ordinance went into effect.
- ⁴³ Partnership for New York City. 2010. *Impact of Paid Sick Leave on NYC Businesses: A Survey of New York City Employers* (September), 6.
- ⁴⁴ For example, the San Francisco Office of Labor Standards Enforcement (OLSE) conducted a public rulemaking process for the PSLO; the OLSE and San Francisco's Mayor's Office of Economic and Workforce Development distributed informational brochures and employee fact sheets to employers and advertised the PSLO in local newspapers and in bus shelters; the OLSE and the San Francisco Department of Public Health and the OLSE worked with community-based organizations to educate workers about the PSLO. New York City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor. 2009. *Transcript of the Minutes of the Committee on Civil Service and Labor: Provision of Paid Sick Time Earned by Employees* (November 17), 4.
- ⁴⁵ For example, a study conducted by the Partnership for New York City was anything but supportive of a proposed New York City law that was similar to the PSLO, and the Society for Human Resource Management has opposed similar legislation at the national level. See Partnership for New York City. 2010. *Impact of Paid Sick Leave on NYC Businesses: A Survey of New York City Employers* (September); and Society for Human Resource Management. 2009. *SHRM to Seek Alternative to Healthy Families Act to Encourage Paid Leave* (May 18). <<http://www.shrm.org/about/pressroom/PressReleases/Pages/AlternativetoHealthyFamiliesAct.aspx>> (accessed January 1, 2011).
- ⁴⁶ For more information about the BAEHBS, see Dow, William H., Arindrajit Dube, and Carrie Hoverman Colla. 2010. *2009 Bay Area Employer Health Benefits Survey: Health Benefits Report 2009*. Berkeley: University of California, Berkeley School of Public Health (May).
- ⁴⁷ In addition, 283 non-San Francisco firms completed surveys.

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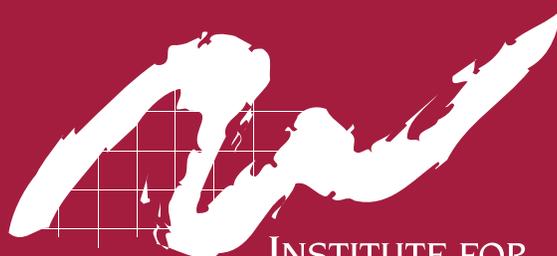
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