

# EARNED SICK TIME

## Notice of Employee Rights

### Who Qualifies?

All employees in Massachusetts can earn sick time.

This includes full-time, part-time, temporary, and seasonal employees.

### How is it Earned?

- Employees earn 1 hour of sick time for every 30 hours they work.
- Employees can earn and use up to **40 hours per year**
- Employees with unused earned sick time at the end of the year can rollover up to 40 hours.
- Employees begin earning sick time on their first day of work and may begin using earned sick time after 90 days

### Can an Employer Have A Different Policy?

Yes. Employers may have their own sick leave or paid time off policy, so long as employees can use at least the same amount of time, for the same reasons, and with the same job protections as under the Earned Sick Time Law.

### Job Protection

- An employee cannot be disciplined, penalized, or retaliated against for exercising their rights under the law.
- For example, employers may not assign disciplinary points to covered absences, take work hours away from an employee for calling out, or fire an employee to asserting sick leave rights.

### Will it be Paid?

- If an employer has 11 or more employees, sick time must be paid.
- For employers with fewer than 11 employees, sick time may be unpaid.
- Paid sick time must be paid on the same schedule and at the same rate as regular wages.

### When Can it be Used?

- An employee can use sick time when the employee or the employee's child, spouse, parent, or spouse's parent is sick or has a routine medical appointment. It can be used to address the effects of domestic violence on the employee or their child. An employee can use sick time after pregnancy loss or failed assisted reproduction, adoption, or surrogacy.
- Employees may be required to use at least one hour of sick time when absent for part of a shift.
- Using sick time for other purposes is not allowed and may result in an employee being disciplined.

### Notice and Verification

- Employees must notify their employer before they use sick time, except in a emergency.
- Employers may decide how the employees notify the employer of an absence.
- An employer generally may not require a doctor's note unless the employee is absent more than 3 days in a row or uses sick time during their last two weeks of employment.

### Do You Have Questions?

**Call** the Fair Labor Division at 617-727-3465

**Visit** [www.mass.gov/ago/earnedsicktime](http://www.mass.gov/ago/earnedsicktime)



Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Office of the Attorney General  
English - December 2025

**The Attorney General enforces the Earned Sick Time Law and regulations. It is unlawful to violate any provision of the Earned Sick Time Law.**

Violations of any provision of the Earned Sick time law, M.G.L. c. 149, § 148C, or these regulations, 940 CMR 33.00 shall be subject to paragraphs ( 1), (2), (4), (6) and (7) of subsection (b) of M.G.L. c. 149, §27C and to §150.

**This notice is intended to inform.  
Full text of the law and regulations are available at  
[www.mass.gov/ago/earnedsicktime](http://www.mass.gov/ago/earnedsicktime)**