Portland Paid Sick Leave Ordinance Passes

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The city of Portland joined San Francisco, Seattle, Washington D.C., and the state of Connecticut today when it passed a paid sick leave ordinance. Under the new ordinance, businesses with six or more employees must provide up to 40 hours of paid sick leave a year; smaller businesses must allow employees to take up to 40 hours of *unpaid* sick time. The law will go into effect on January 1, 2014.

While the details have yet to be drafted, the ordinance requires that employees who work more than 240 hours per calendar year in Portland earn one hour of paid sick leave for every 30 hours worked within the city limits and can accrue up to 40 hours of paid sick leave per year. Employees may begin using their accrued sick days after they have been employed for 90 days. If a business already provides at least five days of paid time off during the calendar year, they will not be required to provide employees with additional sick leave. However, they will likely still be required to follow the documentation and tracking requirements in the ordinance.

The ordinance includes a clause prohibiting employers from discriminating or retaliating against employees who request, use, or complain that they are not receiving sick leave. A similar state-wide bill is currently being considered by the Oregon legislature, but has yet to be passed.

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