

Tacoma, WA Enacts Paid Sick Leave Law

By Michael J. Soltis on February 18, 2015

Now comes Tacoma, Washington, joining the growing throng of cities and states that have passed paid sick leave laws. Recall our prediction two years ago that a mega patchwork of paid sick leave laws was on the way. It has arrived and continues to grow. There are more jurisdictions with paid sick leave laws that with family and medical leave laws.

The next states likely to enact paid sick leave laws are Rhode Island and Vermont, according to The Kiplinger Letter (subscription service) It also reports that a few states are also considering joining the eleven others that have enacted kibosh laws to preempt cities from enacting paid sick leave laws.

President Obama in his State of the Union Address last month exhorted Congress to pass a federal paid sick leave bill. Thus far, neither the Senate nor the House has taken up such a bill.

The Tacoma Paid Leave Ordinance, which is effective February 1, 2016, follows the typical structure of these laws. Employees accrue paid sick time at the rate of one hour for every 40 hours worked, to a maximum of 24 hours per year. Employees may use sick time for the usual reasons, i.e., the employee's or family member's illness, injury or health condition; when the employee's workplace or a child's school is closed due to a public health emergency, and for reasons relating to domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking. The ordinance also allows employees to use sick time for bereavement for the death of a family member.

Welcome Tacoma!