



January 11, 2017
For Immediate Release:

Morristown Paid Sick Leave Ordinance Goes into Effect

Mayor, council members, and community advocates gather to publicize implementation of new law.

MORRISTOWN, NJ- On Tuesday, January 11, the Town of Morristown's paid sick leave ordinance came into effect. Mayor Timothy Dougherty joined members of the town council, business owners and community advocates to announce the roll out of the new ordinance at a press event on Tuesday, January 10. The new law allows private sector workers in the Town of Morristown to earn up to 40 paid sick hours each year to recover from an illness or injury, or to care for a sick family member.

“Paid sick time can improve both public and individual health,” said Mayor Tim Dougherty. “By encouraging workers to seek preventive care as well as reducing exposure to contagious illness in the workplace. I am confident that this ordinance is the right choice for the Morristown community.”

Employees who work more than 80 hours a year in the Town of Morristown will be eligible to receive paid sick time. Workers can begin earning sick time immediately, but the benefit is not available for use until 90 days after hire or implementation of this policy.

If employees already receive paid time off that can be used as sick time, the law does not give any additional paid time off. Morristown is the the first municipality to endorse paid sick time in Morris County, and 13th in New Jersey to embrace a similar ordinance.

“Morristown is the latest municipality to enact the earned sick day ordinance and it won't be the last,” said Craig Garcia, political director of NJ working families. “The local victory here in Morristown continues to build momentum for a statewide earned sick days bill that protects all New Jersey workers who risk their health and family’s health in order to make ends meet. We applaud Mayor Dougherty and the Morristown Town Council for passing this ordinance and standing up for workers’ rights.”

Private-sector workers will earn 1 hour of paid sick time for every 30 hours worked. These days can be used for the worker themselves, or for the care of sick family members. The total amount of paid sick days will be determined on the number of workers the business employs. Companies with 10 or more employees are required to provide up to 40 hours, or 5 paid sick

days, per year whereas a company with fewer than 10 employees is required to provide up to 24 hours, or 3 paid sick days a year.

“As a business owner, it never occurred to me not to offer earned sick days,” said Marilyn Wells, owner of Wells Rug Service. “I don’t want my employees going to work sick. They could injure themselves, infect their co-workers, or even our customers. And I don’t want them to have to choose between getting a paycheck and caring for sick relative or loved one.”

According to a study in 2016 by the Center for Women and Work at Rutgers University about 4,600 private sector workers in Morristown do not receive a paid sick leave.

“We will work diligently with the business community” said Mayor Dougherty “... so they will understand the law and how it's implemented, and so the workers understand their rights,” said Mayor Dougherty.

The Morristown Division of Health is in charge of coordinating and enforcing this ordinance. The department may be contacted by mail or in-person at 200 South Street Morristown, NJ 07963; 2nd floor, Room 214, through email at health@townofmorristown.org, or telephone at 973-292-6600. Several documents including FAQ’s, Notice of Employee Rights, and the full ordinance can also be found at townofmorristown.org.

Photo Captions:

dd-1001: Marilyn Harlos, owner of Wells Rug Service, speaks about the importance of providing her employees with paid sick time at a press event on January 10, 2017.

dd-1002 & dd-1003: Morristown Mayor Timothy Dougherty speaks to reporters and community members about the roll out of the Paid Sick Days Ordinance at a press event at Wells Rug Service on January 10, 2017.

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