

CLASP

The Center for Law and Social Policy

Millions of Working People Still Don't Have Access to A Single Paid Sick Day

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Challenge

Advocates and policymakers are considering state and local paid sick leave laws across the country.

Yet despite the increased public dialog around paid sick leave and other family friendly workplace policies, there is no single data source out there that can be used to estimate worker access to paid sick leave at the state and local level and disparities in access across different demographic groups.

Our Approach

We follow an approach that was initially developed by the Institute for Women's Policy Research and expand upon it to take into account changes in worker access when states/counties/cities pass laws.

Data: 2021 National Health Interview Survey (NHIS), 2021 American Community Survey (ACS), 2021 Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement (CPS ASEC)

Method: Model access to paid sick leave at the national and regional level in the NHIS and conduct an out-of-sample prediction in the ACS. Predictions are then adjusted based on whether workers are eligible for paid sick leave through state and/or local laws.

Caveats

NHIS relies on worker reports of access to paid sick leave and may underestimate the number of workers who have access.

Adjusting estimates for eligibility for state and/or local laws is not able to capture worker awareness of policies. We may be more accurate in estimates of access, but some workers may still behave as if they don't have paid sick leave.

Model-based estimates require a lot of assumptions and are not perfect. We did compare estimates with those published by BLS and are fairly confident that our estimates are reasonable.

Results - Access to Paid Sick Leave

| Access to Paid Sick Leave - States with Paid Sick Leave Laws | |
|---|--|
| State | % of Workers w/ Access to Paid Sick Leave |
| DC | 94% |
| Massachusetts | 93.5% |
| New Jersey | 93.2% |
| Washington | 92.9% |
| Arizona | 92.4% |
| United States | 77.8% |

Access to Paid Sick Leave Cont.

| Access to Paid Sick Leave - States w/out Paid Sick Leave Laws | |
|--|--|
| State | % of Workers w/ Access to Paid Sick Leave |
| South Dakota | 64.6% |
| Florida | 65.1% |
| Oklahoma | 66.4% |
| North Dakota | 66.5% |
| Iowa | 66.6% |
| United States | 77.8% |

Access to Paid Sick Leave by Income

| Access to Paid Sick Leave by Income Quartile - States w/ Paid Sick Leave Laws | | |
|---|------------|-------------|
| State | Lowest 25% | Highest 25% |
| DC | 88.8% | 95.3% |
| Massachusetts | 89.5% | 94.9% |
| New Jersey | 89.8% | 94.7% |
| Washington | 88.3% | 94.8% |
| Arizona | 87.9% | 93.1% |
| United States | 60.2% | 88.0% |

Access to Paid Sick Leave by Income Cont.

| Access to Paid Sick Leave by Income Quartile - States w/out Paid Sick Leave Laws | | |
|---|------------|-------------|
| State | Lowest 25% | Highest 25% |
| South Dakota | 40.3% | 75.2% |
| Florida | 41.7% | 79.1% |
| Oklahoma | 43.0% | 79.9% |
| North Dakota | 41.1% | 79.1% |
| Iowa | 41.4% | 79.7% |
| United States | 60.2% | 88.0% |

Access to Paid Sick Leave by Hours Worked

| Access to Paid Sick Leave by Hours Worked - States with Paid Sick Leave Laws | | |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| State | Part-Time | Full-Time |
| DC | 81.2% | 95.8% |
| Massachusetts | 87.6% | 95.1% |
| New Jersey | 87.8% | 94.5% |
| Washington | 84.1% | 95.2% |
| Arizona | 84.0% | 94.4% |
| United States | 56.2% | 83.2% |

Access to Paid Sick Leave by Hours Worked Cont.

| Access to Paid Sick Leave by Hours Worked - States w/out Paid Sick Leave Laws | | |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| State | Part-Time | Full-Time |
| South Dakota | 34.3% | 72.4% |
| Florida | 34.0% | 72.6% |
| Oklahoma | 34.4% | 73.7% |
| North Dakota | 38.5% | 72.9% |
| Iowa | 36.1% | 74.3% |
| United States | 56.2% | 83.2% |

Race and Gender

Occupational segregation means women of color are disproportionately likely to work in low-paid service sector jobs, so racial inequities in access to paid sick leave are likely.

Due to gendered caregiving norms, women bear a disproportionate share of family caregiving responsibilities, compounding the impact the lack of paid sick leave has on women and their families.

Looking into deeper into this data could be an interesting area of additional exploration for researchers.

Closing

We hope this will be a helpful advocacy tool in state and local campaigns.

For questions or more information - please email Sapna Mehta at smehta@clasp.org, or Jessica Milli at jmilli@research2impact.org.

Paper can be found here: [Millions of Working People Still Don't Have Access to A Single Paid Sick Day](#)