

California Updates Paid Sick Leave FAQs: What Employers Need to Know

California Employment Law Update on **December 16, 2024**

The California Department of Industrial Relations (DIR) has released updated guidance clarifying how the state's latest statutory enactments will impact employers' paid sick leave obligations. Specifically, as we reported [here](#), [Assembly Bill \(AB\) 2499](#) and [Senate Bill \(SB\) 1105](#) expand the permissible reasons for which employees can use paid sick leave.

The updated [FAQs](#) now explain that, in addition to existing uses of paid sick leave, employees may take paid sick leave for the following reasons:

- **Agricultural Workers:** to avoid smoke, heath or flooding created by a local or state emergency; or
- **Crime Victims:** Employees that are victims of a crime or a family member to a crime victim may use their sick time to seek judicial relief to ensure their own or their child's health, safety, or welfare.
- **For Companies with more than 25 employees, additional permissible reasons for using sick leave include:**
 - Seeking or assisting a family member in obtaining relief, such as a temporary restraining order or other legal protection.
 - Seeking medical attention or recovering from injuries caused by a qualifying act of violence.
 - Accessing services from a domestic violence shelter, rape crisis center, or similar support organization.
 - Seeking psychological counseling or mental health services.
 - Participating in safety planning to prevent future violence.
 - Relocating or securing housing due to violence, including enrolling children in a new school or childcare.
 - Caring for a family member recovering from injuries caused by violence.

- Accessing legal services related to a qualifying act of violence.
- Preparing for or attending civil, administrative, or criminal legal proceedings.
- Providing childcare or dependent care necessary to ensure the safety of the child or dependent adult.

Employees can continue to use sick leave for preventative care, treatment, or diagnoses, or to attend judicial proceedings when they or their family member(s) are victims of a serious felony, theft, or embezzlement.

Employers should review and update their sick leave policies to align with these expanded mandates to ensure compliance with California law.

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