



## PA Supreme Court Affirms Paid Sick Days in Pittsburgh

*Approximately 49,000 Pittsburgh-based workers will finally have access to paid sick days*

July 17, 2019, PENNSYLVANIA – Today, after a years-long legal battle, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court affirmed the City of Pittsburgh’s authority to enforce the Paid Sick Days Act (PSDA) signed into law back in 2015. As a result, approximately 49,000 Pittsburgh-based workers will finally have access to paid sick days.

“This is a huge win for the workers who will no longer be forced to lose pay if they are too sick to work or need to care for a sick family member, but also for public health,” says WLP attorney Susan J. Frietsche, who co-authored and filed a brief supporting the City of Pittsburgh’s effort to enforce the PSDA.

“It’s literally sickening to deprive people who can’t afford to miss a day’s pay the opportunity to recover from a cold, or a day to care for a sick child who would otherwise be forced to go to school or daycare while sick.”

In 2017, the Women’s Law Project co-authored and filed an *amicus curiae* brief supporting the City of Pittsburgh’s effort to appropriately use its authority to protect its own workers and public health by enforcing the Paid Sick Days Act.

In our brief, we note the lack of paid sick days harms low-wage working women and people of color with special cruelty. Women, who still labor under a persistent gender wage gap, also bear a disproportionate share of family caregiving responsibilities: two-thirds of all family caregivers are female.

In Pennsylvania, 25 percent of African-American families and 26 percent of Latino families live in poverty, compared with seven percent of White families.

We also note that workers without paid sick days are less likely to go to the doctor or access preventive care. This burden also disproportionately harmful to Black families, who due to the legacy of structural discrimination have substantially higher mortality rates from stroke, heart disease, and breast cancer. Similarly, Latinos have substantially higher mortality rates from diabetes, hypertension, and liver disease.

By recognizing Pittsburgh's fundamental authority to protect the health, safety and welfare of its citizens, today's ruling also sets a significant precedent for local enforcement of a wide range of local public health ordinances.

To learn more about this case or to request an interview with an attorney, contact Tara Murtha at [tmurtha@womenslawproject.org](mailto:tmurtha@womenslawproject.org) or 215.928.5766.

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