



New Jersey Time to Care Coalition

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Trenton and Montclair Voters Approve Earned Sick Days!

November 4 - Working families in Trenton and Montclair scored a major victory today when they used their voices at the ballot box to approve municipal earned sick days standards. Their vote means that over 20,000 workers currently without paid sick days, will have the right to earn and take sick leave without risking losing their jobs or a day's pay.

The New Jersey Time to Care Coalition, working with partners, NJ Citizen Action, Working Families Alliance, Blue Wave, and many other member organizations including countless volunteers, collected over 4500 signatures to qualify the ballot question that made this win possible.

Additionally, the Coalition, alongside our community and labor partners knocked on more than 20,000 doors and sent more than 30,000 pieces of mail to voters in both communities. The measures passed with approval from 74% of Montclair voters and 85% of Trenton voters. The Coalition's GOTV efforts proved to be very effective.

With this victory, Trenton and Montclair become the seventh and eighth cities in New Jersey to pass earned sick days, joining eight cities nationwide – San Francisco and San Diego CA, Portland and Eugene OR, Seattle WA, Washington DC, New York City – and two states, Connecticut and California, to enact paid sick days laws.

“Today is a great day for Montclair and Trenton workers,” said Phyllis Salowe-Kaye, Executive Director of New Jersey Citizen Action and spokesperson for the New Jersey Time to Care Coalition. “The voters in Trenton and Montclair have sent a strong message that a bad flu or a sick child can no longer mean losing badly needed pay or even a job. With this initiative, workers are one step closer to getting the protections they so desperately need.”

The new law provides that all private sector workers in Trenton and Montclair will earn one hour of sick time for every 30 hours worked. Workers in establishments with 10 or more employees will be able to earn at least 5 paid sick days per year and workers in establishments with 9 or fewer employees will earn 3 paid sick days per year. Direct service workers who are in contact with the public, such as food-service, child or elder care, however, will be able to earn 5 paid sick days per year regardless of the business size.

“Research has consistently shown that earned sick days benefit employers, employees, and the public alike,” said Karen White, Director of the Working Families Program at the Rutgers Center for Women and Work. “This policy ensures that working families can afford to stay home when they or a loved one are sick without fear of falling behind on bills or losing their job which has been proven to be good for our economy, our health and the workers who need them.”

The Coalition would like to thank all the member organizations who mobilized their members to vote Yes on the earned sick days ballot question. [Research](#) shows that access to earned sick days strengthen families, protect public health, and are good for the economy and businesses. Guaranteeing this basic right to hard working families in these municipalities will benefit not only their pocketbooks but it will also improve employers' bottom line.

The New Jersey Time to Care Coalition is committed to continuing to build the movement calling for earned sick days so that all workers in New Jersey will be guaranteed access to a basic standard of earned sick days.

New Jersey Time to Care Coalition is a broad-based group of community, advocacy, union, religious, research, and academic organizations working to support policies that strengthen communities by ensuring that working families can balance their responsibilities at home and on the job.