

Mayor's Working Families Task Force Releases Recommendations on Earned Sick Time, Other Work Protections

Report recommendations point the way to make Chicago a national leader in fair and family-friendly workplaces

(Chicago) - Mayor Emanuel appointed the Working Families Task Force in an effort to ensure Chicago workers have access to the rights and protections necessary to give them a fair shot at the middle class. The mayor directed the Task Force to focus on three issues: earned sick time, paid family and medical leave, and schedule predictability for hourly workers.

Ald. Ameya Pawar and Women Employed Executive Director Anne Ladky co-chaired the Task Force that participated in focus groups throughout the city to illuminate the challenges facing working families in Chicago and hear the perspectives of small employers. The Task Force also met with experts, reviewed economic trends, conducted research, and discussed policies adopted in other cities and states.

After months of research, community engagement, and extensive deliberations, the Task Force released a report in April 2016 with recommendations to expand access to earned sick time and paid family and medical leave through legislative action. The Task Force report also recommended additional research and discussion on fair scheduling practices and benefits portability as well as recognition for "best practice" employers.

The report provides a balanced blueprint for making Chicago a leader in meeting the needs of working families. [Read the full report](#) and learn more.

About the Report

Here are the Task Force recommendations on the three issues that Mayor Emanuel asked the members to explore:

- **Earned Sick Time** – Expand workers' access to earned sick time. This will have a nominal impact on employer costs. The framework the Task Force recommended included a cost model that showed expanding access to sick time would lead to less than a 0.7-1.5% increase in labor costs for employers. Women Employed looks forward to working with Alderman Moreno and City Council officials to move forward with an ordinance modeled on these recommendations.
 - If you'd like to get involved in supporting a city-wide ordinance, visit SickTimeChicago.org or connect with Sick Time Chicago on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#).
- **Family and Medical Leave** – The Task Force also proposed a framework that would allow employees to bank a portion of their earned sick time for FMLA purposes. Only companies subject to FMLA requirements and employees eligible for federal FMLA benefits would qualify.
- **Predictable Scheduling** – The Task Force came to the conclusion that more deliberation is needed to develop potential solutions that address the need for predictability, consistency, and adequacy of schedules for hourly workers while recognizing the need for some flexibility for both employers and employees. These may

be employer "best practices" as well as policy solutions. For that reason, the Task Force did not recommend policy or legislation at this time; members will continue conversations with key stakeholders on this issue. Women Employed strongly encourages that a group be convened to develop best practice solutions, as volatile scheduling has costly consequences including economic instability and diminished opportunities for education and training that can lead to advancement.

About the Task Force

The Mayor appointed the Task Force in June 2015. Members were drawn from a wide range of groups, including owners and managers of small and large businesses, worker advocates, academics, trade association leaders, and city and state elected officials. The Task Force process was inclusive, ensuring that a wide assortment of voices would be heard. Task Force members donated their time and were committed to reaching consensus and compromise to produce a useful blueprint for making Chicago a leader in sound workplace practices that support working families.