

# Pittsburgh Expands COVID-19 Paid Sick Leave

By Daniel L. Blanchard &

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Pittsburgh has joined other American cities by enacting new legislation to address the uptick in COVID-19 cases from a sick leave perspective.

On July 29, 2021, Pittsburgh Mayor Bill Peduto signed a [new ordinance](#) granting COVID-19 sick time to certain employees working within the city (the “July 29 Ordinance”). Although the July 29 Ordinance is technically “new,” it is closely related to (and practically mirrors) Pittsburgh’s December 9, 2020, [Temporary COVID-19 Emergency Paid Sick Time Law](#) (the “December 20 Ordinance”).

Similar to the December 20 Ordinance, the new legislation supplements the Pittsburgh Paid Sick Days Act (PSDA) and amends the PSDA by expressly permitting employees to take sick time under the PSDA before it is accrued if the reason for use arises directly from COVID-19. Like the previous legislation, the new ordinance requires Pittsburgh employers with more than 50 employees to provide up to 80 hours of paid COVID-19 sick time to their employees for COVID-19-related reasons. The July 29 Ordinance also requires employers to provide paid COVID sick time *in addition to* other forms of paid leave, so long as the employee provides notice to the employer of the need for COVID-19 sick time as soon as practicable.

The new ordinance also adds to how COVID-19 sick time may be used. Along with the reasons listed in the December 20 Ordinance, employees may use COVID-19 sick time:

- i. To obtain a vaccine or vaccine booster for themselves or a family member;
- ii. If they are unable to work or telework due to COVID-19 *or any of its variants* and
- iii. To self-isolate and care for oneself or a family member under the guidelines *promulgated by* the Allegheny County Health Department because the employee or their family member is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 or any of its variants.

Importantly, the new ordinance is silent as to whether sick time previously taken under the December 20 Ordinance will be applied to leave under the new legislation. More guidance on this issue is expected.

The July 29 Ordinance went into effect immediately upon Mayor Peduto’s signature and will remain law for one year (until July 29, 2022). However, unlike the December 20 Ordinance, it does not permit employees to use COVID-19 sick time for an additional one week following the official end of the public health emergency (whenever that may be).

Jackson Lewis will continue to track COVID-19-related statutes and ordinances around the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the entire United States. If you have questions or need assistance, please reach out to the Jackson Lewis attorney with whom you regularly work, or any member of our [COVID-19 team](#).

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