

Puerto Rico Enacts Five-Day Paid Emergency Leave for Pandemic Illness

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Puerto Rico's Law 37-2020 provides certain employees up to five days of paid leave once they exhaust other paid leave.

Law 37-2020 amends Puerto Rico Law 180-1998, which establishes paid sick and vacation leave benefits for some private sector employees, excluding employees classified as executives, administrators, and professionals, among others. The new law is effective immediately.

Under Law 37-2020, covered employees who are sick — or suspected of being sick — as a result of a pandemic illness during a state of emergency declared by the Governor of Puerto Rico, or the Secretary of the Department of Health, must first use any accrued sick leave.

Once accrued sick leave is exhausted, employees may use other leave to which they are entitled to receive pay during any absence.

Should the employee need additional leave, Law 37-2020 provides up to five days of paid leave.

Employers in Puerto Rico should review their policies and practices to ensure they comply with the new law.

For additional guidance on this issue, please contact a Jackson Lewis attorney.

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