

St. Paul is Second Minnesota City to Weigh Paid Sick Leave Ordinance

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Minnesota's Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul are both preparing to enact local laws affording employees paid sick leave. St. Paul Mayor Chris Coleman and the St. Paul City Council have announced that the Council will convene a Task Force to discuss an ordinance mandating that all private and public sector employees be provided earned sick and safe time for working in Saint Paul.

The Task Force, chosen by the Mayor and Council, will make recommendations to the Saint Paul Human Rights and Equal Economic Opportunity (HREEO) Commission, which will in turn make recommendations to the Mayor and the City Council.

"Earned sick and safe time is a matter of public health in Saint Paul, and we need to get this done. We understand that many people will apply to serve on the task force," said City Councilmember Dai Thao on January 26. "We want to make it an inclusive conversation, while also recognizing that people will need other avenues to participate as well."

The Mayor and Council also announced plans to extend earned sick and safe time to all city employees as of January 1, 2017.

Minneapolis has been studying a similar paid sick leave proposal for some time and is much closer than St. Paul to implementation. In October 2015, the Minneapolis City Council created a 15-member Workplace Regulations Partnership to seek feedback from the public. The Partnership is scheduled to present a proposal for a paid sick leave ordinance to the full Minneapolis City Council at its regular meeting scheduled for February 24, 2016. An earlier Minneapolis proposal on a "fair scheduling" ordinance was shelved by Minneapolis Mayor Betsy Hodges after concerns were raised by the local business community.

The Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul are part of a growing list of cities around the country that have enacted or are looking at imposing paid sick leave requirements on employers.

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