

LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT LAW

INFORMATION MEMO

AUGUST 25, 2025

End of an Era: New York's COVID-19 Paid Sick Leave Has Ended

After more than five years, New York State's pioneering COVID-19 paid sick leave law officially came to an end on July 31, 2025.

What the COVID-19 Leave Covered

When the law was first introduced in March 2020, it was designed to provide employees leave if they needed to quarantine or isolate due to COVID-19. For many businesses, this meant adjusting policies overnight to comply with new rules during an unprecedented time. The COVID-19 leave provided up to three separate periods of leave while an employee was subject to a quarantine or isolation order. According to the statute, the leave was either paid or unpaid, depending on the employer's size and income. Medical documentation was required for multiple leaves, and leave was not available if employees were able to work remotely. Employers were not allowed to deduct this leave from other available paid leave such as regular sick or vacation time.

What Happens Now

With the law no longer in place, employees will need to rely on other existing leave options if they become ill with COVID-19 (or another serious health condition). Depending on the situation, those options may include:

- **Family and Medical Leave Act ("FMLA"):** an employee may be eligible for FLMA leave if the employee is unable to perform the essential functions of their job due to the employee's serious health condition or to care for the employee's spouse, child or parent with a serious health condition.
- **Americans with Disabilities Act ("ADA"):** an employee may be eligible for protections under the ADA if the employee has a serious COVID-related illness that qualifies the employee for leave or for other reasonable accommodation(s) thereunder.
- **New York State Paid Family Leave:** an eligible employee may use New York State Paid Family Leave to care for a family member with a serious health condition.
- **New York State Paid Sick Leave:** an employee may use New York State Paid Sick Leave for mental or physical illness, injury, health condition or for the diagnosis, care or treatment thereof, or for medical diagnosis or preventive care for the employee or a member of their family for whom they are providing care or assistance with care. The amount of leave and whether the employer is required to provide paid or unpaid leave may depend upon the employer's size and income.
- **New York City Earned Safe and Sick Time Act:** an employee may use Safe and Sick Leave for the employee's health, including to receive medical care or to recover from illness or injury, to care for a family member who is sick or has a medical appointment or when the employee's job or child's school closes due to a public health emergency. The amount of leave and whether the employer is required to provide paid or unpaid leave may depend upon the employer's size and income.

What Employers Should Do

Even though COVID-19 is no longer a declared emergency, illnesses that keep employees out of work are not going away. With cold and flu season around the corner, now is a good time for employers to:

- Review and update sick leave policies.
- Ensure compliance with New York State and New York City requirements.
- Communicate clearly with employees about what leave options are available.

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact [Samuel Dobre](#), [Jason Kaufman](#), [Rachel Kreutzer](#) or the Bond attorney with whom you are regularly in contact.

