

## Preparing for The New MA Paid Sick Leave Law

In our November 10 e-Alert, we informed our valued clients that Massachusetts voters approved a November 4, 2014, ballot question mandating paid sick leave. You will find the original e-alert on our [website](#). This new law takes effect on July 1, 2015, and we are receiving many questions from our clients about how this new law will affect them.

### Awaiting Guidance

As of yet, the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office (AGO) has not issued guidance to answer the many questions employers have about this new paid sick time law and its practical application. Therefore, employers continue to be unsure of how to review their existing paid time-off policies to ensure they do not conflict with the new law. Senator Michael Rodrigues has filed a bill to amend the new law. The proposed amendments will provide additional protections to employers, allowing them to have stricter sick leave policies. So far, nothing has been confirmed and we recommend that employers stand by and wait for the final provisions of the law to be published.

### Communicating to Employees

We recommend that employers notify their employees that they are aware of the new law and will be reviewing their current time-off policies to ensure they are compliant.

### Sample Communication

Dear Employees, We are aware that on November 4, 2014, Massachusetts voters passed the Earned Sick Time Law to take effect on July 1, 2015. We will likely need to make some changes to our current time-off policies to comply with the new law. The law may require us to modify how time off is accrued, used, carried over, documented and tracked. The law may also require that we reclassify some of our existing time-off benefits as earned sick time. We will continue to watch for guidance from the state and will share with you any policy changes as soon as they are confirmed. In the interim, we will follow our existing policy.

### Paid Sick Leave Movement

Multi-state employers should be aware that Massachusetts is not the only place where paid sick leave laws have arisen. Currently, paid sick leave is required by law in California; Connecticut; Massachusetts; the District of Columbia; Eugene, Oregon; various cities in New Jersey; New York City; and Seattle, Washington. Paid sick leave requirements vary widely from location to location and all employers should be aware of the paid sick leave laws that affect their business and locations.

### Next Steps for Employers

We will continue to monitor and provide updates from AGO regarding the new law. This e-Alert reflects our understanding of the law as of right now; however, the AGO may make changes as it determines the final rulings:

- Employers must comply with these changes by July 1, 2015.
- Employers should notify their employees that they are aware of this new law and will communicate any policy changes as soon as possible.



- If you are one of our full-service clients, we will help you review your current Paid Time-Off policies to ensure they are compliant with these new regulations once the final rules have been published.

*This content is provided with the understanding that HR Knowledge is not rendering legal advice. While every effort is made to provide current information, the law changes regularly and laws may vary depending on the state or municipality. The material is made available for informational purposes only and is not a substitute for legal advice or your professional judgment. You should review applicable laws in your jurisdiction and consult experienced counsel for legal advice. If you have any questions regarding this advisory, please contact HR Knowledge at 508.339.1300 or email us at [HR@hrknowledge.com](mailto:HR@hrknowledge.com).*