



The Honourable Monte McNaughton, Minister of Labour
Government of Ontario
By email: monte.mcnaughton@ontario.ca

December 8, 2020

Subject: Implementation of Paid Sick Days in the Province of Ontario

Dear Minister McNaughton:

We are writing to request urgent action by the Ontario government to address the issue of paid sick days in the Province of Ontario.

The Ontario Nonprofit Network (ONN) is the independent network for the 58,000 nonprofits in Ontario, focused on policy, advocacy and services to strengthen Ontario's nonprofit sector as a key pillar of our society and economy.

The nonprofit sector contributes \$50 billion to Ontario's GDP. Nonprofits employ over one million workers, of which 80 per cent are women. Five million people collectively donate 820 million hours of labour to Ontario communities, the equivalent of 400,000 full-time jobs. As a sector, Ontario nonprofits receive less than half of their revenues from governments.

We are asking for the Ontario government to implement minimum paid sick days for all Ontario employers.

Paid sick days matter. Ensuring employers have paid sick days means that all Ontario workplaces are safer and healthier for everyone - because workers don't come to work sick. They also alleviate workers' concerns about lost income if they miss a day of work. Paid sick days are a smart retention strategy, as employees stay longer when there are paid sick days, saving employers valuable resources when they don't have to recruit and re-train new employees. This pandemic has shone a light on the critical importance of paid sick days in keeping our entire communities safe.

This is a critical issue for nonprofit organizations in Ontario because this is a big issue for our communities and our workforce. Seventy per cent of low wage workers in Canada don't have paid sick leave. As a sector that directly serves our communities, we know paid sick leave is essential to those most vulnerable, particularly lower income workers. As employers, overall compensation in the nonprofit sector is less than private and public sectors, and paid sick days are one way to provide decent work and keep our workplaces safe and healthy.

We also know that women make up the majority of the nonprofit sector's workforce, and that they are often employed in lower-paid positions with fewer benefits (particularly racialized women),

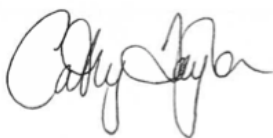
while also facing the need to care for family at home. Paid sick days are a key part of an equitable approach to decent work.

The Government of Ontario has noted that the federal government has already moved to cover paid sick days with the Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit. However, this has not solved the issue as the program provides less than minimum wage and has other shortcomings.

Paid sick days are a systemic solution to the spread of COVID that, as Minister of Labour in the Government of Ontario, you can implement. This pandemic has shone a light on the critical importance of this issue, especially for vulnerable populations, including low income and racialized workers. **Paid sick days will save lives and will save jobs.**

We look forward to working with your government to immediately provide a solution to this issue. Thank you for your serious consideration.

Sincerely,



Cathy Taylor
Executive Director
Ontario Nonprofit Network

Copy to: The Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario, premier@ontario.ca
The Honourable Christine Elliott, Minister of Health, christine.elliott@ontario.ca
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