CLIENT ALERT: Connecticut Passes New Law Expanding Paid Sick Days Protections

On May 28, 2024, Connecticut Governor Ned Lamont signed Public Act 24-8 expanding the state's laws on paid sick days protections. Under the new legislation, nearly all Connecticut workers will be entitled to paid sick days.

Currently, Connecticut's paid sick days laws require employers with more than 50 employees to provide up to 40 hours of paid sick leave annually to employees in retail and service occupations. The new legislation expands coverage of Connecticut paid sick days laws to workers in nearly every occupation, except for seasonal employees, certain temporary employees, and certain union employees. Further, it lowers the threshold for the number of employees that an employer must have to be subject to the new legislation in three phases. Employers with at least 25 employees must comply with the law by January 1, 2025; employers with at least 11 employees beginning on January 1, 2026; and those with at least 1 employee beginning on January 1, 2027.

Additionally, the new legislation provides that employees may use paid sick leave to care for a family member and expands the definition of "family member" to include "spouse, sibling, child, grandparent, grandchild or parent of an employee or an individual related to the employee by blood or affinity whose close association the employee shows to be equivalent to those family relationships." The current law defines "family member" narrowly as the employee's minor or disabled child and spouse. Finally, the legislation adds "declaration of a public health emergency" as a reason employees may use paid sick days.

Employers with employees in Connecticut should prepare for the expansion of these paid sick leave laws by reviewing their leave practices and updating their written policies, to the extent necessary. Employers are encouraged to contact their MBJ attorney with questions regarding this new legislation and how it may impact their policies and practices.

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This alert was prepared on May 30, 2024.

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