

# Local Authority to Expand Paid Sick Leave in California



Derek Carr, JD
ChangeLab Solutions
dcarr@changelabsolutions.org





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Equity is at the core of what we do & who we are.

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# Paid Sick Leave vs. Paid Family Leave

**Sick Leave:** Paid sick leave laws require employers to allow people to take paid time off for illness or injury for themselves or their family members.

Family Leave: A generic term referring to any of a variety of government- or employer-sponsored paid leave policies, including maternity, paternity, parental, adoptive, and family leave, which allow parents to take time off work to care for newborn and young children.



### **General Local Authority**

Local Health Officers & Local Governing Bodies

- City and county governing bodies have broad authority to regulate for public health and safety
  - Must not conflict with state law
  - More stringent / protective local policies generally do not conflict with state law.
- County laws generally apply within only the unincorporated areas
- Local health officers are critical but have more limited direct regulatory authority



# Additional Legal Authority During a Declared Emergency

- Local health officers
  - "Any preventive measure that may be necessary to protect the public health from any public health hazard."
- Local governing bodies
  - "Orders and regulations necessary to provide for the protection of life and property"
- Geographic scope of county authority

## Local Paid Sick Leave Policies

- State law authorizes more comprehensive local paid sick leave policies<sup>1</sup>
- LHOs <u>may</u> have sufficient authority to expand emergency paid sick leave, but unprecedented
- Clear authority for cities & counties to expand paid sick leave benefits
- Potential for a county emergency paid sick leave policy to apply within incorporated cities
  - Legally untested
  - Limited to duration of declared emergency





## Local Paid Sick Leave Policies

Considerations and Suggestions

#### **Expanding Paid Sick Leave**

- Option 1: Adopt separate policies in each jurisdiction through local governing bodies
- Option 2: Adopt emergency policies through county boards of supervisors that apply within unincorporated and incorporated areas
- Option 3: Local health officer unilaterally expands paid sick leave

#### **Additional Considerations:**



Establish a robust record & explain the evidence



Ensure the strongest available protections apply



Proactively consult, partner, and coordinate



Periodically reassess the policy



Lay foundation for long-term policy change



2201 Broadway, Suite 502 Oakland, CA 94612 510.302.3380 changelabsolutions.org

#### Assessing Legal Authority for Local Health Officers' and Local Governments' Responses to COVID-19 in California

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If you have any questions or concerns related to the contents of this memorandum, please contact Derek Carr, Senior Attorney, ChangeLab Solutions at <u>dcarr@changelabsolutions.org</u> or Manel Kappagoda, Vice President of Strategic Initiatives, ChangeLab Solutions, at <u>mkappagoda@changelabsolutions.org</u>.

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# Legal & Policy Analysis

- Overview of general and emergency powers of local health officers and local governments in California
- ✓ Suggestions and considerations related to:
  - ✓ Paid sick leave
  - ✓ Eviction moratoriums
  - ✓ Essential workers
  - Criminal justice settings
  - ✓ Shifting from response to recovery







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**Coronavirus Law & Policy Resources** 

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Blueprint for Changemakers: Achieving Health Equity Through Law & Policy

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Paid Family Leave Ensures Health Equity for All

<u>changelabsolutions.org/product/paid-family-leave-ensures-health-equity-all</u>

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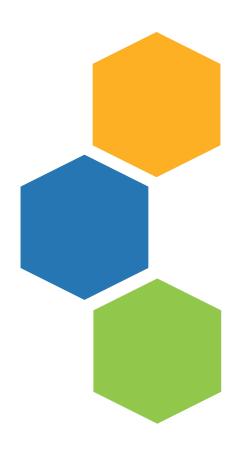
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# Thank you!

## Questions?

**Derek Carr** 

dcarr@changelabsolutions.org ChangeLabSolutions.org