

RESOLUTION NO. _____

WHEREAS, most workers in the city of Austin will at some time during each year need limited time off from work to take care of their own health needs or the health needs of their family members; and

WHEREAS, earning paid sick time can have a positive effect on individuals and the public health of Austinites by allowing workers a limited number of hours per year to care for themselves or a close family member when illness strikes or medical needs arise; and

WHEREAS, providing workers time off for health or safety purposes can guarantee a healthier and more productive workforce in Austin; and

WHEREAS, earning paid sick time can reduce recovery time, promote the use of regular medical providers rather than hospital emergency departments, and reduce the likelihood of people spreading illness to other members of the workforce and to the public; and

WHEREAS, access to paid sick time can also help decrease the likelihood that a worker will put off needed care, and can reduce healthcare expenditures and increase the rates of preventive care among workers and their children; and

WHEREAS, low-income workers are significantly less likely to have paid sick time than other members of the workforce; and

WHEREAS, in a study conducted by the Institute for Women’s Policy Research, approximately 37% of workers in the City of Austin lack paid sick time; and

WHEREAS, according to that same study, up to 70% of workers go without access to paid sick time in jobs that require frequent contact with the public, like food preparation and personal care occupations, which has important public health implications due to risk of contagion; and

WHEREAS, Latino and Black workers in Austin are less likely to have paid sick time than workers in any other racial or ethnic group, according to the Institute for Women’s Policy Research; and

WHEREAS, people without paid sick time are 1.5 times more likely than people with paid sick time to go to work with a contagious illness like the flu; and

WHEREAS, according to the Public Welfare Foundation, parents who don’t have paid sick time are more than twice as likely as parents with paid sick time to send a sick child to school or daycare, and five times as likely to report taking their child or a family member to a hospital emergency room because they were unable to take time off work during their regular work hours; and

WHEREAS, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that workers with access to paid sick time were 28 percent less likely than workers without access to paid sick time to be injured on the job; and

WHEREAS, many workers need time away from their jobs to care for their health after incidents regarding sexual violence, physical violence, and/or stalking

by an intimate partner violence, and or to find solutions, such as a restraining order or new housing, to avoid or prevent physical or sexual abuse; and

WHEREAS, survivors of domestic and sexual violence are often forced to lose days of paid employment because of the violence they face; and

WHEREAS, paid sick time results in reduced worker turnover, which leads to reduced costs incurred from advertising, interviewing and training new hires. Replacing workers can cost approximately 21% of an employee's annual compensation; and

WHEREAS, 33 cities and 8 states have passed paid sick policies; and

WHEREAS, according to a study conducted by the McGill Institute for Health and Social Policy, 160 countries in the world guarantee their residents a continued income when they're ill; and

WHEREAS, the Work Strong Austin coalition, a group of local nonprofits and small business owners, have conducted needs assessments, policy research, interviews with other cities and stakeholders, and held meetings since 2015 to advance the opportunity for Austinites to have access to paid sick time; **NOW, THEREFORE,**

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:

The City Manager is directed to provide staff support for a stakeholder process to gain feedback on elements of a paid sick days policy for private employers in Austin.

The stakeholder group should review policy guides compiled by national experts, including *A Better Balance*, and the paid sick day laws passed by other cities. The goal of the stakeholder group should be to facilitate conversations with participants to gain feedback on the following:

- Who will be covered;
- How should sick time be used for broad purposes (e.g. related to domestic violence, criminal justice-related appointments, mental health purposes, etc.);
- At what rate should workers earn paid sick time;
- What amount of paid sick time can be earned per year;
- At what point during employment do workers begin to earn and use paid sick time;
- How unused sick time carries forward to the subsequent year, and how it is accessed or utilized; and
- How the City of Austin should manage enforcement of private employer paid sick time.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

Invitations for the stakeholder meetings should be sent to representatives in the business community. Special attention should be paid to small businesses, and small businesses should be a key stakeholder in this process. The following community groups should be invited, in addition to any other community and health organizations whose missions align with or are related to the topic of earning paid sick days, including, but not limited to:

- Work Strong Austin
- The Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce
- Greater Austin Black Chamber of Commerce

- Austin Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce
- Greater Austin Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- Greater Austin Asian Chamber of Commerce
- Austin Young Chamber
- Austin Independent Business Alliance
- The SAFE Alliance
- One Voice Central Texas
- Austin Central Labor Council
- Home Builders Association of Greater Austin
- Austin Human Resource Management Association
- Texas Society for Human Resource Management
- Texas Association of Staffing
- Texas Workforce Commission

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

Council directs the City Manager to provide a summary of the responses from the stakeholder group at the December 5, 2017 Austin City Council Work Session.

ADOPTED: _____, 2017

ATTEST: _____

Jannette S. Goodall
City Clerk