Title 34. Chapter 11D. (New) Sick Leave §§1-11 – C.34:11D-1 to 34:11D-11 §12 - Note

## P.L. 2018, CHAPTER 10, *approved May 2, 2018* Assembly Committee Substitute (*First Reprint*) for Assembly, No. 1827

AN ACT concerning earned sick leave and supplementing P.L.1966, 1 2 c.113 (C.34:11-56a et seq.). 3 4 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State 5 of New Jersey: 6 7 1. For the purposes of this act: 8 "Benefit year" means the period of 12 consecutive months 9 established by an employer in which an employee shall accrue and 10 use earned sick leave as provided pursuant to section 2 of this act, provided that once the starting date of the benefit year is established 11 by the employer it shall not be changed unless the employer notifies 12 13 the commissioner of the change in accordance with regulations 14 promulgated pursuant to this act. The commissioner shall impose a 15 benefit year on any employer that the commissioner determines is changing the benefit year at times or in ways that prevent the 16 17 accrual or use of earned sick leave by an employee. "Certified Domestic Violence Specialist" means a person who 18 19 has fulfilled the requirements of certification as a Domestic 20 Violence Specialist established by the New Jersey Association of 21 Domestic Violence Professionals. 22 "Child" means a biological, adopted, or foster child, stepchild or 23 legal ward of an employee, child of a domestic partner or civil union partner of the employee. 24 "Civil union" means a civil union as defined in section 2 of 25 P.L.2006, c.103 (C.37:1-29). 26 "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Labor and 27 28 Workforce Development. 29 "Department" means the Department of Labor and Workforce 30 Development. 31 "Designated domestic violence agency" means a county-wide 32 organization with a primary purpose to provide services to victims EXPLANATION - Matter enclosed in **bold-faced** brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined <u>thus</u> is new matter.

Matter enclosed in superscript numerals has been adopted as follows: <sup>1</sup>Assembly AAP committee amendments adopted March 22, 2018.

of domestic violence, and which provides services that conform to 1 2 the core domestic violence services profile as defined by the 3 Division of Child Protection and Permanency in the Department of 4 Children and Families and is under contract with the division for 5 the express purpose of providing the services. 6 "Domestic or sexual violence" means stalking, any sexually 7 violent offense, as defined in section 3 of P.L.1998, c.71 (C.30:4-8 27.26), or domestic violence as defined in section 3 of P.L.1991, 9 c.261 (C.2C:25-19) and section 1 of P.L.2003, c.41 (C.17:29B-16). 10 "Domestic partner" means a domestic partner as defined in 11 section 3 of P.L.2003, c.246 (C.26:8A-3). 12 "Employee" means an individual engaged in service to an 13 employer in the business of the employer for compensation. 14 "Employee" does not include an employee performing service in the 15 construction industry that is under contract pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement, or a per diem <sup>1</sup>[hospital] health care<sup>1</sup> 16 employee <sup>1</sup>, or a public employee who is provided with sick leave 17 with full pay pursuant to any other law, rule, or regulation of this 18 State<sup>1</sup>. 19

20 "Employer" means any person, firm, business, educational 21 institution, nonprofit agency, corporation, limited liability company 22 or other entity that employs employees in the State, including a 23 temporary help service firm. In the case of a temporary help service 24 firm placing an employee with client firms, earned sick leave shall 25 accrue on the basis of the total time worked on assignment with the 26 temporary help service firm, not separately for each client firm to which the employee is assigned. <sup>1</sup><u>"Employer" does not include a</u> 27 public employer that is required to provide its employees with sick 28 29 leave with full pay pursuant to any other law, rule or regulation of this State.<sup>1</sup> 30

"Family member" means a child, grandchild, sibling, spouse, 31 32 domestic partner, civil union partner, parent, or grandparent of an 33 employee, or a spouse, domestic partner, or civil union partner of a 34 parent or grandparent of the employee, or a sibling of a spouse, 35 domestic partner, or civil union partner of the employee, or any 36 other individual related by blood to the employee or whose close 37 association with the employee is the equivalent of a family 38 relationship.

39 "Health care professional" means any person licensed under 40 federal, State, or local law, or the laws of a foreign nation, to 41 provide health care services, or any other person who has been 42 authorized to provide health care by a licensed health care 43 professional, including but not limited to doctors, nurses and 44 emergency room personnel.

45 "Parent" means a biological, adoptive, or foster parent,
46 stepparent, or legal guardian of an employee or of the employee's
47 spouse, domestic partner, or civil union partner, or a person who

stood in loco parentis of the employee or the employee's spouse, 1 2 domestic partner, or civil union partner when the employee, spouse 3 or partner was a minor child. "Per diem <sup>1</sup>[hospital] <u>health care</u><sup>1</sup> employee" means any 4 5 <sup>1</sup> [individual performing work for a hospital system on an as needed basis to replace or substitute for a temporarily absent hospital 6 7 employee, and who works on a flexible or non-fixed schedule ]: 8 (1) health care professional licensed in the State of New Jersey 9 employed by a health care facility licensed by the New Jersey 10 Department of Health; 11 (2) any individual that is in the process of applying to the New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs for a license to provide health 12 care services who is employed by a health care facility licensed by 13 14 the New Jersey Department of Health; or 15 (3) any first aid, rescue or ambulance squad member employed 16 by a hospital system. 17 An employee listed in paragraphs (1), (2), and (3) of this definition shall be considered a per diem health care employee if 18 19 that employee: 20 (1) works on an as-needed basis to supplement a health care 21 employee, or to replace or substitute for a temporarily absent health 22 care employee; 23 (2) works only when the employee indicates that the employee 24 is available to work, and has no obligation to work when the 25 employee does not indicate availability; and 26 (3) either: 27 (a) has the opportunity for full time or part time employment in 28 their scope of practice under that healthcare provider which offers 29 paid time off benefits greater in length than provided under this act 30 under the terms of employment; or 31 (b) has waived earned sick leave benefits as provided under this 32 act under terms of employment for alternative benefits or 33 consideration. 34 "Per diem health care employee" shall not include any individual 35 who is certified as a homemaker-home health aide<sup>1</sup>. 36 "Retaliatory personnel action" means denial of any right 37 guaranteed under this act and any threat, discharge, including a 38 constructive discharge, suspension, demotion, unfavorable reassignment, refusal to promote, disciplinary action, sanction, 39 40 reduction of work hours, reporting or threatening to report the 41 actual or suspected immigrant status of an employee or the 42 employee's family, or any other adverse action against an 43 employee. 44 "Sibling" means a biological, foster, or adopted sibling of an 45 employee.

46 "Spouse" means a husband or wife.

2. a. Each employer shall provide earned sick leave to each 1 2 employee working for the employer in the State. For every 30 hours 3 worked, the employee shall accrue one hour of earned sick leave, 4 except that an employer may provide an employee with the full 5 complement of earned sick leave for a benefit year, as required 6 under this section, on the first day of each benefit year in 7 accordance with subsection c. or subsection d. of section 3 of this 8 act. The employer shall not be required to permit the employee to 9 accrue or use in any benefit year, or carry forward from one benefit 10 year to the next, more than 40 hours of earned sick leave. Unless 11 the employee has accrued earned sick leave prior to the effective 12 date of this act, the earned sick leave shall begin to accrue on the 13 effective date of this act for any employee who is hired and 14 commences employment before the effective date of this act and the 15 employee shall be eligible to use the earned sick leave beginning on 16 the 120th calendar day after the employee commences employment, 17 and if the employment commences after the effective date of this 18 act, the earned sick leave shall begin to accrue upon the date that 19 employment commences and the employee shall be eligible to use 20 the earned sick leave beginning on the 120th calendar day after the 21 employee commences employment, unless the employer agrees to 22 an earlier date. The employee may subsequently use earned sick 23 leave as soon as it is accrued.

b. An employer shall be in compliance with this section if the employer offers paid time off, which is fully paid and shall include, but is not limited to personal days, vacation days, and sick days, and may be used for the purposes of section 3 of this act in the manner provided by this act, and is accrued at a rate equal to or greater than the rate described in this section.

c. The employer shall pay the employee for earned sick leave
at the same rate of pay with the same benefits as the employee
normally earns, except that the pay rate shall not be less than the
minimum wage required for the employee pursuant to section 5 of
P.L.1966, c.113 (C.34:11-56a4).

35 d. Upon the mutual consent of the employee and employer, an 36 employee may voluntarily choose to work additional hours or shifts 37 during the same or following pay period, in lieu of hours or shifts 38 missed, but shall not be required to work additional hours or shifts 39 or use accrued earned sick leave. An employer may not require, as 40 a condition of an employee's using earned sick leave, that the 41 employee search for or find a replacement worker to cover the 42 hours during which the employee is using earned sick leave.

e. If an employee is transferred to a separate division, entity, or location, but remains employed by the same employer, then the employee shall be entitled to all earned sick leave accrued at the prior division, entity, or location, and shall be entitled to use the accrued earned sick leave as provided in this act. If an employee is terminated, laid off, furloughed, or otherwise separated from

1 employment with the employer, any unused accrued earned sick 2 leave shall be reinstated upon the re-hiring or reinstatement of the 3 employee to that employment, within six months of termination, 4 being laid off or furloughed, or separation, and prior employment 5 with the employer shall be counted towards meeting the eligibility 6 requirements set forth in this section. <sup>1</sup>When a different employer succeeds or takes the place of an existing employer, all employees 7 8 of the original employer who remain employed by the successor 9 employer are entitled to all of the earned sick leave they accrued 10 when employed by the original employer, and are entitled to use the earned sick leave previously accrued immediately.<sup>1</sup> 11 12 An employer may choose the increments in which its f.

employees may use earned sick leave, provided that the largest increment of earned sick leave that an employee may be required to use for each shift for which earned sick leave is used shall be the number of hours the employee was scheduled to work during that shift.

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a. An employer shall permit an employee to use the earnedsick leave accrued pursuant to this act for any of the following:

(1) time needed for diagnosis, care, or treatment of, or recovery
from, an employee's mental or physical illness, injury or other
adverse health condition, or for preventive medical care for the
employee;

(2) time needed for the employee to aid or care for a family
member of the employee during diagnosis, care, or treatment of, or
recovery from, the family member's mental or physical illness,
injury or other adverse health condition, or during preventive
medical care for the family member;

30 (3) absence necessary due to circumstances resulting from the 31 employee, or a family member of the employee, being a victim of 32 domestic or sexual violence, if the leave is to allow the employee to 33 obtain for the employee or the family member: medical attention 34 needed to recover from physical or psychological injury or 35 disability caused by domestic or sexual violence; services from a 36 designated domestic violence agency or other victim services 37 organization; psychological or other counseling; relocation; or legal 38 services, including obtaining a restraining order or preparing for, or 39 participating in, any civil or criminal legal proceeding related to the 40 domestic or sexual violence;

41 (4) time during which the employee is not able to work because 42 of a closure of the employee's workplace, or the school or place of 43 care of a child of the employee, by order of a public official due to 44 an epidemic or other public health emergency, or because of the 45 issuance by a public health authority of a determination that the 46 presence in the community of the employee, or a member of the 47 employee's family in need of care by the employee, would 48 jeopardize the health of others; or

1 (5) time needed by the employee in connection with a child of 2 the employee to attend a school-related conference, meeting, 3 function or other event requested or required by a school 4 administrator, teacher, or other professional staff member 5 responsible for the child's education, or to attend a meeting 6 regarding care provided to the child in connection with the child's 7 health conditions or disability.

8 b. If an employee's need to use earned sick leave is foreseeable, an employer may require advance notice, not to exceed seven 9 calendar days prior to the date the leave is to begin, of the intention 10 11 to use the leave and its expected duration, and shall make a 12 reasonable effort to schedule the use of earned sick leave in a 13 manner that does not unduly disrupt the operations of the employer. 14 If the reason for the leave is not foreseeable, an employer may 15 require an employee to give notice of the intention as soon as 16 practicable, if the employer has notified the employee of this 17 requirement. Employers may prohibit employees from using foreseeable earned sick leave <sup>1</sup>[from being used]<sup>1</sup> on certain dates, 18 19 and require reasonable documentation if sick leave that is not 20 foreseeable is used during those dates. For earned sick leave of 21 three or more consecutive days, an employer may require 22 reasonable documentation that the leave is being taken for the 23 purpose permitted under subsection a. of this section. If the leave is 24 permitted under paragraph (1) or (2) of subsection a. of this section, 25 documentation signed by a health care professional who is treating 26 the employee or the family member of the employee indicating the 27 need for the leave and, if possible, number of days of leave, shall be 28 considered reasonable documentation. If the leave is permitted 29 under paragraph (3) of subsection a. of this section because of 30 domestic or sexual violence, any of the following shall be considered reasonable documentation of the domestic or sexual 31 32 violence: medical documentation; a law enforcement agency record 33 or report; a court order; documentation that the perpetrator of the 34 domestic or sexual violence has been convicted of a domestic or 35 sexual violence offense; certification from a certified Domestic Violence Specialist or a representative of a designated domestic 36 37 violence agency or other victim services organization; or other 38 documentation or certification provided by a social worker, 39 counselor, member of the clergy, shelter worker, health care 40 professional, attorney, or other professional who has assisted the employee or family member in dealing with the domestic or sexual 41 42 If the leave is permitted under paragraph (4) of violence. 43 subsection a. of this section, a copy of the order of the public 44 official or the determination by the health authority shall be 45 considered reasonable documentation.

46 c. Nothing in this act shall be deemed to require an employer to
47 provide earned sick leave for an employee's leave for purposes
48 other than those identified in this section, or prohibit the employer

from taking disciplinary action against an employee who uses 1 2 earned sick leave for purposes other than those identified in this 3 section. An employer may provide an offer to an employee for a 4 payment of unused earned sick leave in the final month of the 5 employer's benefit year. The employee shall choose, no later than 6 10 calendar days from the date of the employer's offer, whether to 7 accept a payment or decline a payment. If the employee agrees to 8 receive a payment, the employee shall choose a payment for the full 9 amount of unused earned sick leave or for 50 percent of the amount 10 of unused earned sick leave. The payment amount shall be based on 11 the same rate of pay that the employee earns at the time of the 12 payment. If the employee declines a payment for unused earned 13 sick leave, or agrees to a payment for 50 percent of the amount of 14 unused sick leave, the employee shall be entitled to carry forward 15 any unused or unpaid earned sick leave to the proceeding benefit 16 year as provided pursuant to subsection a. of section 2 of this act. If 17 the employee agrees to a payment for the full amount of unused 18 earned sick leave, the employee shall not be entitled to carry 19 forward any earned sick leave to the proceeding benefit year 20 pursuant to subsection a. of section 2 of this act.

21 d. If an employer foregoes the accrual process for earned sick 22 leave hours pursuant to subsection a. of section 2 of this act and 23 provides an employee with the full complement of earned sick leave 24 for a benefit year on the first day of each benefit year, then the 25 employer shall either provide to the employee a payment for the full 26 amount of unused earned sick leave in the final month of the 27 employer's benefit year or carry forward any unused sick leave to 28 the next benefit year. The employer may pay the employee the full 29 amount of unused earned sick leave in the final month of a benefit 30 year pursuant to this subsection only if the employer forgoes, with 31 respect to that employee, the accrual process for earned sick leave during the next benefit year. 32 Unless an employer policy or 33 collective bargaining agreement provides for the payment of 34 accrued earned sick leave upon termination, resignation, retirement 35 or other separation from employment, an employee shall not be 36 entitled under this section to payment of unused earned sick leave 37 upon the separation from employment.

e. Any information an employer possesses regarding the health
of an employee or any family member of the employee or domestic
or sexual violence affecting an employee or employee's family
member shall be treated as confidential and not disclosed except to
the affected employee or with the written permission of the affected
employee.

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4. a. No employer shall take retaliatory personnel action or
discriminate against an employee because the employee requests or
uses earned sick leave either in accordance with this act or the
employer's own earned sick leave policy, as the case may be, or

files a complaint with the commissioner alleging the employer's violation of any provision of this act, or informs any other person of their rights under this act. No employer shall count earned sick leave taken under this act as an absence that may result in the employee being subject to discipline, discharge, demotion, suspension, a loss or reduction of pay, or any other adverse action.

7 There shall be a rebuttable presumption of an unlawful b. 8 retaliatory personnel action under this section whenever an 9 employer takes adverse action against an employee within 90 days 10 of when that employee: files a complaint with the department or a 11 court alleging a violation of any provision of this section; informs 12 any person about an employer's alleged violation of this section; 13 cooperates with the department or other persons in the investigation 14 or prosecution of any alleged violation of this section; opposes any 15 policy, practice, or act that is unlawful under this section; or 16 informs any person of his or her rights under this section.

c. Protections of this section shall apply to any person whomistakenly but in good faith alleges violations of this act.

d. Any violator of the provisions of this section shall be subject
to relevant penalties and remedies provided by the "New Jersey
State Wage and Hour Law," P.L.1966, c.113 (C.34:11-56a et seq.),
including the penalties and remedies provided by section 25 of that
act (C.34:11-56a24), and relevant penalties and remedies provided
by section 10 of P.L.1999, c.90 (C.2C:40A-2), for discharge or
other discrimination.

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27 5. Any failure of an employer to make available or pay earned 28 sick leave as required by this act, or any other violation of this act, 29 shall be regarded as a failure to meet the wage payment 30 requirements of the "New Jersey State Wage and Hour Law," 31 P.L.1966, c.113 (C.34:11-56a et seq.), or other violation of that act, 32 as the case may be, and remedies, penalties, and other measures 33 provided by that act, R.S.34:11-58, and section 10 of P.L.1999, c.90 34 (C.2C:40A-2) for failure to pay wages or other violations of that act 35 shall be applicable, including, but not limited to, penalties provided 36 pursuant to sections 23 and 25 of that act (C.34:11-56a22 and 37 34:11-56a24), and civil actions by employees pursuant to section 26 38 of that act (C.34:11-56a25), except that an award to an employee in 39 a civil act shall include, in addition to the amount provided pursuant 40 to section 26 of that act (C.34:11-56a25), any actual damages 41 suffered by the employee as the result of the violation plus an equal 42 amount of liquidated damages.

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6. Employers shall retain records documenting hours worked by employees and earned sick leave taken by employees, for a period of five years, and shall, upon demand, allow the department access to those records to monitor compliance with the requirements of this act. If an employee makes a claim that the

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employer has failed to provide earned sick leave required by this act 1 2 and the employer has not maintained or retained adequate records 3 documenting hours worked by the employee and earned sick leave 4 taken by the employee or does not allow the department access to 5 the records, it shall be presumed that the employer has failed to 6 provide the earned sick leave, absent clear and convincing evidence 7 otherwise. In addition, the penalties provided by the "New Jersey 8 State Wage and Hour Law," P.L.1966, c.113 (C.34:11-56a et seq.) 9 for violations of the requirements of that act regarding the maintaining and disclosure of records shall apply to violations of 10 11 the requirements of this section.

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13 7. a. Employers shall provide notification, in a form issued by 14 the commissioner, to employees of their rights under this act, 15 including the amount of earned sick leave to which they are entitled 16 and the terms of its use, and remedies provided by this act to 17 employees if an employer fails to provide the required benefits or 18 retaliates against employees exercising their rights under this act. 19 Each covered employer shall conspicuously post the notification in 20 a place or places accessible to all employees in each of the 21 employer's workplaces. The employer shall also provide each 22 employee employed by the employer with a written copy of the 23 notification: not later than 30 days after the form of the notification 24 is issued; at the time of the employee's hiring, if the employee is 25 hired after the issuance; and at any time, when first requested by the 26 employee. The commissioner shall make the notifications available 27 in English, in Spanish, and any other language that the 28 commissioner determines is the first language of a significant 29 number of workers in the State and the employer shall use the 30 notification in English, Spanish or any other language for which the 31 commissioner has provided notifications and which is the first 32 language of a majority of the employer's workforce.

33 The commissioner shall advise any employee who files a b. 34 complaint pursuant to this section and is covered by a collective 35 bargaining agreement, that if the agreement provides for earned sick 36 leave, the employee may have a right to pursue a grievance under 37 the terms of the agreement.

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39 8. a. The governing body of a county or municipality shall not, 40 after the effective date of this act, adopt any ordinance, resolution, 41 law, rule, or regulation regarding earned sick leave. The provisions 42 of this act shall preempt any ordinance, resolution, law, rule, or 43 regulation regarding earned sick leave adopted by the governing 44 body of a county or municipality.

45 b. No provision of this act, or any regulations promulgated to 46 implement or enforce this act, shall be construed as:

47 (1) requiring an employer to reduce, or justifying an employer 48 in reducing, rights or benefits provided by the employer pursuant to

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1 an employer policy or collective bargaining agreement which are

2 more favorable to employees than those required by this act or
3 which provide rights or benefits to employees not covered by this
4 act;

5 (2) preventing or prohibiting the employer from agreeing, 6 through a collective bargaining agreement or employer policy, to 7 provide rights or benefits which are more favorable to employees 8 than those required by this act or to provide rights or benefits to 9 employees not covered by this act;

(3) prohibiting an employer from establishing a policy whereby
an employee may donate unused accrued earned sick leave to
another employee or other employees; or

(4) superseding any law providing collective bargaining rights
for employees, or in any way reducing, diminishing, or adversely
affecting those collective bargaining rights, or in any way reducing,
diminishing, or affecting the obligations of employers under those
laws.

18 Employees <sup>1</sup>or employee representatives<sup>1</sup> may waive the rights 19 or benefits provided under this act during the negotiation of a 20 collective bargaining agreement.

c. With respect to employees covered by a collective
bargaining agreement in effect at the time of the effective date of
this act, no provision of this act shall apply until the stated
expiration of the collective bargaining agreement.

25 <sup>1</sup> d. This act shall not be construed to preempt, limit, or otherwise affect the applicability of any provision of any State law 26 27 or regulation regarding earned sick leave for employees of public 28 employers that provides rights or benefits to employees which 29 provide a greater length of earned sick leave to employees than 30 those required by this act, but shall supersede any provision of any 31 State law or regulation which provides a lesser length of earned sick 32 leave to the employees than what is required by this act, 33 notwithstanding the provisions of those other laws or regulations.  $\mathbf{J}^1$ 34

9. The provisions of this act shall be deemed to be severable
and if any section, subsection, paragraph, sentence or other part of
this act is declared to be unconstitutional, or the applicability
thereof to any person is held invalid, the remainder of this act shall
not thereby be deemed to be unconstitutional or invalid.

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41 10. The commissioner shall develop and implement a 42 multilingual outreach program to inform employees, parents, and 43 persons under the care of health care providers about the 44 availability of earned paid sick leave pursuant to this act. The 45 program shall include the distribution of written materials in 46 English, Spanish and any language that is the primary language of 47 10 percent or more of the registered voters in the State to all child 48 care and elder care providers, domestic violence shelters, schools,

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hospitals, community health centers and other healthcare providers. 1 2 The commissioner shall, during each calendar year, allocate not less 3 than \$500,000 to the program, which shall be regarded as a cost of 4 administration of temporary disability and family temporary 5 disability benefits and be charged to the administration account of 6 State disability benefit fund, except that the allocation made pursuant to this subsection shall not result in the total amount 7 credited to administrative costs exceeding the maximum amount 8 9 permitted pursuant to subsection (a) of section 22 of P.L.1948, c.110 (C.43:21-46). 10 11 12 11. The commissioner shall adopt rules and regulations pursuant to the "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968, c.410 13 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.) to effectuate the purposes of this act. 14 15 16 12. This act shall take effect on the 180th day next following 17 enactment. 18 19 20 21 22 Concerns earned sick leave to employees.