

February 3, 2021



**TO: Toronto and York Region MPPs**

**Urgent - Legislate Paid Sick Time!**

The Toronto & York Region Labour Council is calling on the provincial government to implement paid sick days immediately by passing Bill 239 to provide seven permanent days, and an additional 14 days during public health outbreaks.

Paid sick leaves save lives. The evidence for this is so clear during the pandemic, resulting in consensus among unlikely allies including public health experts and advocates, mayors, progressive business groups and the labour movement. All workers should be able to take paid time to be tested, isolate while they await test results, or quarantine if diagnosed with COVID-19.

We know that people are going to work sick. During the stay-at-home order, frontline workers are still encouraged to go to work. Many have jobs where they are likelier to get COVID, to be paid less and have few or no benefits, no paid sick time, and precarious job security. They can't access vaccines. Getting food on the table doesn't pause if they need to take time off work.

The Ford government repealed paid sick days soon after their election in 2018, along with other roll-backs to Employment Standards. This was a huge bonus for some of the wealthiest corporations in Canada, taking millions out of the pockets of employees and reducing safety during the pandemic.

In the face of growing pressure, Premier Ford deflects responsibility by saying workers can use the federal benefit. But experts and those workers who access the Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit know there are shortcomings in the benefit, especially for those who live paycheque to paycheque. You take time off, apply for the benefit, but can not use it for periods of one or two days, might be eligible or not, and have to wait weeks for the money to be paid if eligible. The CRSB is only a temporary solution.

It is clear we need permanent, legislated paid sick days for all workers in this province. Please support the passing of Bill 239 to provide workers with 7 paid sick days and an additional 14 paid sick days during public health outbreaks.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J. Cartwright".

John Cartwright  
President

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