



Pennsylvania Labor Laws and COVID-19



New Federal Sick Leave & PFL Policies

U.S. House and Senate passed and President signed [Families First Coronavirus Response Act](#). The Act:

- Applies to businesses with <500 employees. Businesses with <50 employees may get exemptions if the Act will make nonviable.
- Will be in effect for one year.
- Provides 80 hours of sick leave: full pay for sick or quarantined employee, 2/3 pay if caring for another.
- Expands FMLA, up to 12 weeks of job-protected leave for quarantine, sickness, or to care for others, at 2/3 pay.
- Employers can take tax credits against the social security tax to cover the benefits provided. If costs exceed SS, then the government will send employer a check.

PA Workers' Compensation Modifications

PA workers' comp has been modified to allow for benefits as follows:

- An illness caused by work exposures can be considered an injury or an occupational disease. Occupational diseases are those identified by the PA Workers' Compensation Act, as well as the diseases that occur more often in specific jobs or industries.
- Exposure to COVID-19, which resulted in the illness, would most likely be considered an injury, but could also be an occupational disease depending on the type of work performed.

Unemployment

Unemployment benefits may be available for employees of businesses who lose their job through no fault of their own.

- May include those who are quarantined or sick or directed not to work because of COVID-19
- Are not being paid by their employer because the work can't be done remotely
- If the employer temporarily or permanently closes due to no business
- An employee who has reduced work hours due to COVID-19 may be eligible for unemployment compensation