



How America's Largest Employers Are Treating Workers Amid the Coronavirus Crisis:

Paid Sick Leave

The COVID-19 pandemic has created a global health and economic crisis, and companies are at the frontline. JUST Capital knows that many companies face unprecedented operational and financial challenges and are making difficult decisions each day, including how to support their workers, customers, and communities in the face of declining revenues. JUST Capital's [latest polling](#) shows that the American public's top priority when it comes to just business practices, especially in this unprecedented time, is the treatment of workers. Additionally, companies that are prioritizing their workers are [outperforming their peers in the market](#). **At this moment, providing workers access to paid sick leave is critical to reducing the spread of COVID-19 and mitigating economic hardship.**

Americans Want Large Companies to Implement Paid Sick Leave Programs:

- In a [recent poll](#) by JUST Capital, a large majority of the American public identified paid sick leave as one of the most important things companies can do to protect the health of their workers.
- Our [polling](#) also shows that **70% of Americans expect companies to maintain COVID-19 paid sick leave policies**, offering a minimum of 14 days to employees, for at least the next 12 months.

Less than Half of Large Companies Have Taken Action

- JUST Capital's analysis of the largest 301 employers in the Russell 1000 indicates that **only 31% of companies have announced a paid sick leave policy** for their workers since the COVID-19 crisis began.

Key Components of a Paid Sick Policy Include:

A [number of large](#) companies have implemented robust paid sick leave policies over the last few weeks, including [Target](#) and [Lowe's](#), extending meaningful support to all workers. As your company considers implementing or improving its paid sick leave policy, here are the key components to keep in mind:

- **Universal Coverage:** COVID-19 and its economic impact knows no boundaries. All workers, regardless of full-time, part-time, or contract classification need access to paid sick leave.
- **Wage Replacements:** Paying workers their full wages while on paid leave will increase the effectiveness and impact of a paid sick leave policy. Lower wage replacement rates may result in workers coming back to work before they are fully recovered.
- **Eligibility:** Eliminating burdensome barriers to use, such as a positive COVID-19 test result, and expanding situations for which they can take leave, such as caring for a sick family member or child, will ensure workers can take full advantage of paid leave.



- **Length of Leave:** Companies should follow CDC guidelines for how much time workers need to quarantine. At a minimum, workers should have access to 14 days.

Examples of Corporate Paid Sick Leave policies under COVID

As businesses of all kinds work to implement paid sick leave policies, here are some examples of those that meet the best practices outlined above:

- **Cognizant:** Cognizant has standardized 14 days sick-leave coverage globally for COVID-19 cases or self-quarantine without impacting other sick leave or vacation programs.
- **Charter:** Charter's new plan of action also includes an additional three weeks paid leave for all employees "to be used for any COVID-19-related personal need" and "increased social distancing plans in our call centers and operations facilities.
- **Anthem:** To recognize the unusual circumstances and to help put associates' mind at ease, Anthem is offering up to 80 hours of paid emergency leave for qualifying needs – including if associates are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, or are caring for young children whose schools have been closed.

The Benefits of Paid Sick Leave

Ensuring workers have and can use paid sick leave will strengthen businesses too by limiting spread of the COVID-19 to customers, reducing overall absenteeism and turnover, and ensuring that workers are healthy and productive when on the job. In fact, in comparison with the equal weight returns of its GICS sectors among the S&P 500, companies that have implemented and disclosed a paid sick leave policy outperformed their sector by ~4.7% through April 2, 2020.

We encourage companies that have not yet implemented these best practices to share these resources with HR personnel, and welcome any questions at corpengage@justcapital.com.