

Making Work Safe

A SUMMARY ON THE ENGAGEMENT ON PAID SICK LEAVE

PREPARED FOR:

THE MAKING WORK SAFE PANEL
YUKON TERRITORY
JANUARY 13, 2022

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Table of Contents

Overview	03
Engagement Process	04
Results	05
Worker Survey	06
Employer Survey	15
General Survey	29
Quick Polls	36
Your Ideas	37
Conclusion	39



let's talk
Yukon!
PAID SICK LEAVE
YUKON PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Overview

On December 31, 2019, Chinese authorities alerted the World Health Organization of a mystery disease known today as COVID-19. On January 25, 2020, Canada reported its first presumptive case of COVID-19.

At home, the COVID-19 pandemic placed a spotlight on Canada's income support programs and the legislation protecting workers' employment for personal sickness and caregiving leave. Federal, provincial, and territorial governments took immediate action to implement emergency measures to address the impact faced by workers and employers. Many of these temporary programs are set to expire. Without adequate sick leave, many workers have limited options when making a choice to go to work sick or stay home.

The Making Work Safe Panel is a collection of individuals brought together under the 2021 Confidence and Supply Agreement between the Yukon Liberal Government and the Yukon NDP. The panel is co-chaired by Minister Richard Mostyn and MLA Emily Tredger. The panel also includes members of the public who represent the voices of workers and employers in Yukon. Together, they have been tasked with providing recommendations by January 31, 2022, on how to implement permanent paid sick days in the Yukon and other relevant changes required to the Employment Standards Act that may be required to ensure that work remains safe and that the rights of workers are protected. These recommendations will be based on the information collected in the public engagement, and the research gathered in the jurisdictional report conducted on paid sick leave.

Narrative Consulting Inc. is honoured to have had the opportunity to facilitate public consultation on behalf of the panel. We gathered your valuable feedback, ideas, and diverse perspectives through our digital engagement space, LetsTalkYukon.ca.



PAID SICK LEAVE

YUKON PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Engagement Process

Approach

Taking into consideration the challenges of COVID-19 and the window to complete the research and engagement activities required for a quality outcome, the Making Work Safe panel opted for a digital-first approach. Narrative Consulting's public engagement platform, LetsTalkYukon.ca enabled safe, online community engagement and allowed conversations to happen between community members from across the territory who may otherwise never have a chance to connect.

Throughout the digital engagement campaign, we looked to understand what paid sick leave means to Yukoners. More specifically, we looked to:

- Discover how workers feel about how paid sick leave should be implemented in Yukon;
- Discover how employers feel about the introduction of paid sick leave for their employees and their thoughts about what the leave looks like;
- Listen to the stories shared from the community to understand the true impact to the people who live, work and play in Yukon;
- Gather data to support analysis on the current landscape of paid sick leave for workers; and
- Hear the ideas and voices from citizens on what they recommended for possible options to explore regarding paid sick leave for Yukoners.

Public Awareness

The Government of Yukon promoted the engagement and online surveys via a press release and through its corporate Facebook account.

Narrative Consulting promoted the engagement, which ran from November 9 to December 10, 2021, by leveraging social media advertising on Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram, and digital and print advertising through traditional media. An email campaign saw letters distributed to First Nation governments, chambers of commerce, unions, municipalities and other key stakeholder groups identified by the Making Work Safe panel. These stakeholders were encouraged to share the information regarding the public engagement with their communities to help raise awareness.

Additionally, registered Let'sTalkYukon.ca participants received email notifications when additional engagement opportunities were launched throughout the public engagement.



PAID SICK LEAVE

YUKON PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Participation Results on LetsTalkYukon.ca



1.5k Site visits

1.2k Engaged participants

399 Quick Poll participants

311 Survey responses

111 Document downloads

Engagement Tools

LetsTalkYukon.ca participants were invited to engage in different methods including:



A general survey



An employer survey



A worker survey



Quick Polls



Q & A



Sharing personal stories



Sharing ideas



Reviewing educational materials

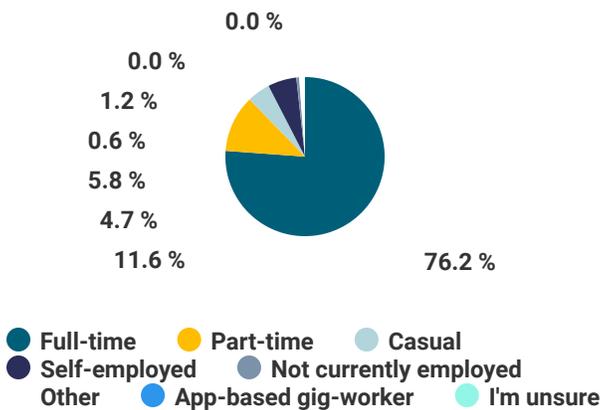
Paper copies and fillable PDF versions of the survey were also made available, and all documents received were manually entered by Narrative Consulting on the respondent's behalf.

Worker Survey Results

The Worker survey was intended for individuals identifying as being a working Yukoner, or someone who may be currently unemployed but looking to re-enter the workforce. There were **172 responses** from individuals across the territory, with **88%** of respondents residing in Whitehorse.

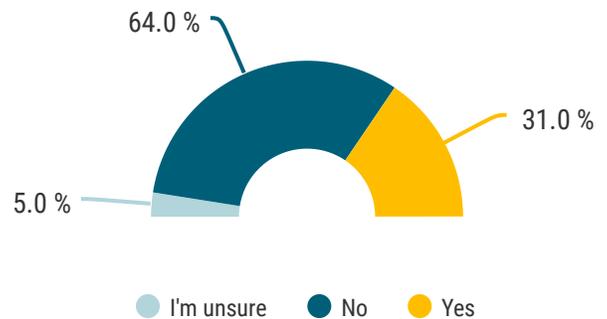
When asked, **23%** of respondents indicated that they worked for more than one employer, with some indicating that they worked several part-time jobs equating to more than full-time hours.

Respondents by Worker Type



Of those workers with access to paid sick leave, **70%** of respondents report that they are able to take at least six paid days, with **52%** eligible for **more than 10** paid sick days.

Do you typically use all the paid sick days you have each year?*



* Based on respondents who indicated that they currently have access to paid sick leave.

As depicted in the chart above, **64%** of workers who reported that they had paid sick leave did not take all of the leave that was available to them during the year. When asked how many days per year they typically miss work because they are sick, **36%** of those workers reported missing **3 - 5 days** due to illness, with another **27%** missing **2 days or less**.

Fifty-four percent of workers with paid sick leave reported that they are able to carry over unused days from one year to the next, and **22%** reported that they are entitled to a payout of unused days when their employment or work contract ends.

Overall, workers who report having access to paid sick leave are pleased with the leave that is currently available to them, with **61%** of applicable respondents indicating that they are either happy or very happy with their current paid sick leave.

Respondents were asked a series of questions to learn more about the number of workers who currently receive paid sick leave from their employers and to better identify which types of industries are offering these benefits to their workers.

Workers with paid sick leave:

Fifty-one percent of workers surveyed indicated that they currently receive paid sick leave* with **93%** of those workers receiving full pay for each paid sick day.

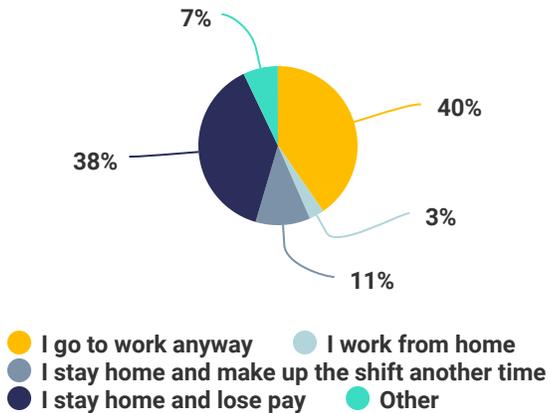
* Sixty-five percent of those workers who identified they have paid sick leave available to them have also identified as workers working under a collective agreement. This is important to consider as workers who are part of a collective agreement are only covered under the Employment Standards Act if the collective agreement they are covered under does not meet the minimum requirements set out under the Act. Additionally, any worker that works for the Yukon Government is not covered under the Employment Standards Act.

Worker Survey Results

Workers without paid sick leave:

When asked if paid sick leave was available if they were required to miss work, **47%** of respondents indicated that they do not have any paid sick leave options, with nearly **46%** of those without sick leave earning an income of **less than \$42,801** in 2020. Many of these workers report that without any access to paid sick leave, they must choose to go to work even though they are unwell.

What do you do if you get sick and do not have any paid sick days available?*

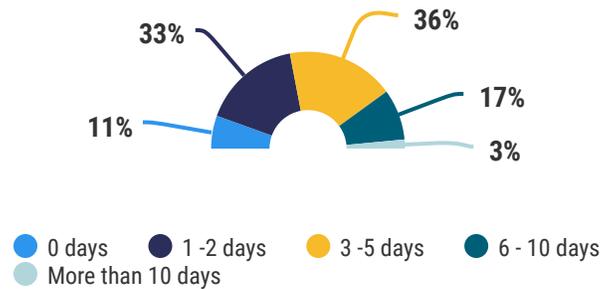


* Based on respondents who indicated that they do not currently have access to paid sick leave.

Sixty-one percent of respondents without paid sick leave reported that they work full time, while **31%** of workers without paid sick leave reported that they work for more than one employer, with responses ranging from **2 - 6 employers** including part-time, casual and self-employment.

As depicted in the chart below, when asked how many days per year they typically miss work because they are sick, **27%** of workers reported **2 days or less**, **36%** of those workers reported missing **3 - 5 days** due to illness, and **17%** of workers missing **6-10 days** per year.

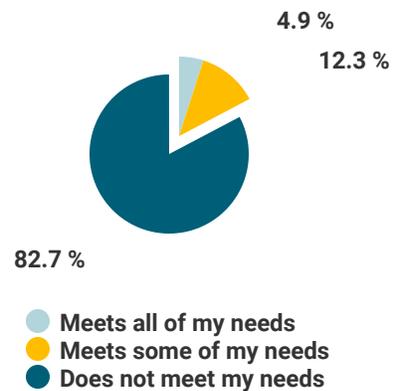
Before COVID-19, how many days per year did you typically miss work because you were sick?*



* Based on respondents who indicated that they do not currently have access to paid sick leave.

Workers without paid sick leave were clear to express that their current sick leave options do not meet their needs.

Sick leave satisfaction of those workers without paid sick days*



* Based on respondents who indicated that they do not currently have access to paid sick leave.

Worker Survey Results

General sentiments from all worker respondents

We asked all worker respondents to provide insight into what life looks like for them when they are sick. We explored what options, if any, were available to work from home, and dug deeper to understand the circumstances and behavioural patterns that may increase a workers' likelihood of coming to work when they are sick. Even workers who have access to paid sick leave report that they go to work when they are sick.

"Before COVID-19, how many days per year did you typically go to work even though you felt sick?"

Reported # of days a worker attended work while sick (unrelated to COVID-19)	Workers WITH Paid Sick Leave	Workers WITHOUT Paid Sick Leave
0 days	14%	7%
1 -2 days	18%	17%
3 - 5 days	27%	31%
6 - 10 days	23%	20%
More than 10 days	18%	25%

"If you have ever gone to work while you are sick, please tell us why? Select all that apply."

Reason for Going to Work Sick	Workers WITH Paid Sick Leave	Workers WITHOUT Paid Sick Leave
I needed the pay	44%	83%
I had to meet demands or deadlines at work	82%	51%
My boss insisted	20%	19%
I was afraid I would lose my job is I didn't go to work	20%	29%
I wasn't too sick to work	51%	34%
Other	5%	5%

Other reasons why workers came to work sick:

"I work in mental health care and demands are high. Taking off only overloads me in the next week."

"Pressure of not wanting to miss too many days of work."

"My main issue is that I am the only person in my workplace who does my specific job, so I worry that if I am not there and something goes wrong, there might be issues for my colleagues."

"We were already short staffed."

"The effort of covering my shift was greater than doing it while sick."

Worker Survey Results

"Did you suffer any consequences from going to work when you were sick? Select all that apply."

Consequences experienced:	Workers WITH paid sick leave	Workers WITHOUT paid sick leave
It took me longer to recover	84%	85%
I had additional health complications	39%	27%
Some of my co-workers got sick	65%	58%
Some of the customers I served got sick	29%	18%
I did not experience any consequences	6%	6%
Other	10%	9%



72%

of all worker respondents are concerned to very concerned about their co-workers coming to work sick



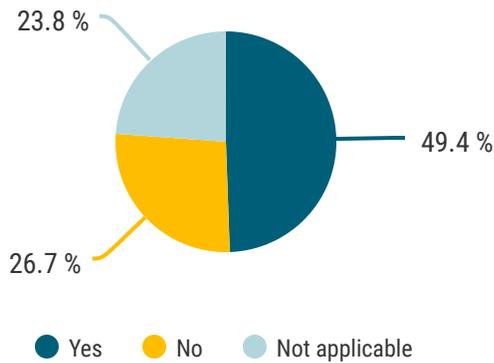
66%

of all worker respondents feel they have previously gotten sick from being exposed to a co-worker who came to work when they were sick



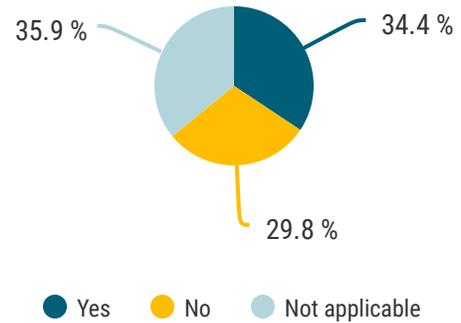
Worker Survey Results

Have you ever had to use a sick day to care for a sick child or family member?*



* based on all worker survey respondents

Have you ever had to send your child to school when they were sick because you could not take a sick day?*



* based on all worker survey respondents

All worker survey respondents were asked how many paid sick days they think that workers should have available to them each year. While the results varied by respondent type, it was clear across both groups that workers felt that more than 5 days per year were needed to provide the coverage they need to stay home when they are sick.

Recommended # of Paid Sick Days	Workers WITH Paid Sick Leave	Workers WITHOUT Paid Sick Leave
1 - 2 days	2%	2%
3 - 5 days	9%	16%
6 - 10 days	23%	41%
More than 10 days	60%	27%
Other	6%	14%



Worker Survey Results

How would you improve your sick leave options?

"Our special leave is really limited and with the pandemic so many families are running out of leave and struggling. My partner doesn't have paid sick leave or any equivalent to special leave so I have to stay home when our son is ill. This means I've used up all my special leave and it's not even December. I've heard this from so many families. YG is going to see a lot more people using sick because they are running out of special. I hope this engagement looks at leave provisions beyond sick for an individual employee and also the leave they need to care for their family."

"Have at least 1 paid sick day a month which can be carried over."

"Extra leave for care related to a child or family member. Mental Health Days"

"Offer sick days to all employees no matter if they are temporary, casual, auxiliary on-call or other. This is why people burn out or get really really sick!"

"I need coverage so I can pay my bills so I can stay home if I'm sick!"

"Work from home allowed without complication, more paid sick days"

"Guaranteed Basic Income for all Yukoners over 18 would remove the needed for paid sick leave or other leaves - Guaranteed Basic Income of 20 to 25 thousand per year would make the need to paid leave benefits"

"More sick days available per year"

"More sick days !!! I'm a single mother. It's difficult!"

"I don't have any sick leave. Paid sick leave would be great."

"Full pay, no limit on days"

"Private sector .. construction seasonal workers working for companies don't have to give sick leave to employees... so when sick lose pay."

"Sick leave should be expanded to reflect parental obligations related to caring for sick children."

"There should be short-term disability to bridge to extended disability. As well more flexibility around a sick day, mental health days are just as required"

"Shorter notice More paid leave No pressure from boss to return"

"I would like 5 days sick leave per year"

"I would like to receive a small number of paid sick days however I'm torn because I understand already how expensive labour is for small, non-government, business owners and I don't see this being feasible if it was on the employer to cover the costs. I believe employees in private sector should receive a small number of paid sick days but that this should not be at the expense of the employer."

"Employer asking for a sick note when you are too sick to get one is not right. Once you are well enough to travel to the health centre should be what they do."

"I would love a chronic illness financial support program that allows me to work as much as I am able (around 20hrs) and supplements the remainder of the wages I lose out on due to fibromyalgia/CFS."

"Have at least 5 days paid sick leave in a year (for parents 10 days), right now I have only unpaid sick leave"

"Full Pay for sick leave, More sick leave days, coverage for employees when sick to cover high demand and continue workflow."

Worker Survey Results

How would you improve your sick leave options?

"Give me paid sick days! As a YG employee who doesn't get paid sick leave I didn't have access to the paid sick leave rebate put out by the government. I've been working as an On Call employee, however I work every single day. Please don't leave out YG employees who don't have access to paid sick leave this time. Perhaps giving On Call employees 1 paid sick day for every 20-30 days they work, or something like that. I've seen this done in other provinces with success."

"We could create a sick leave bank for anyone to access if they run out sick leave credits. Anyone could donate their unused sick days. The health and safety committee could administer it so that there would be no favoritism."

"Each person needs to be able to access sick leave at least 5 days per month"

"Paid sick leave for caring for a sick child"

"The culture of not coming to the workplace when sick needs to be more established and encouraged. Associated stigma should be actively addressed."

"I think sick leave shouldn't count as benefits. Humans get sick and all employees are humans. Every job should offer a certain number of sick days per year proportionate to the number of hours on the contract. I think 5 sick days a year for a full-time worker is extremely reasonable. It makes no sense to punish people for being sick - you end up not only putting that person through the ringer but also putting their coworkers and coworkers' families at risk."

"I'm self Employed and therefore have no sick leave. Having any would be an improvement."

"As a parent, I need to keep my children home from daycare or school when they are sick, and that would require increasing the number of days available, either because I am sick or am caring for a sick family member."

"Less pressure to come in, a culture more accepting of sick leave"

"Parents need sick leave (or 'special leave' or 'caregiver leave') to stay home with kids! This is critical. Kids get sick. Parent stays home, kid bounces back and recovers quickly. Parent gets slightly sick. Parent goes to work anyways because they have already missed a number of days. Having caregiver days would be fantastic. Maybe we shouldn't call them sick days. Maybe we should call them "keep your community safe and rest days"."

"Paid sick leave for self-employed"

"I would love a chronic illness financial support program that allows me to work as much as I am able (around 20hrs) and supplements the remainder of the wages I lose out on due to fibromyalgia/CFS."

"Make it law that we get a min 5 paid sick days a year"

"Have it so I don't lose pay when sick after using up my banked time. I get 3 hours accrued and that's what I get paid when sick. I try to stay healthy to bank sick hours but it doesn't work."

"Include mental health days too - not just physical illnesses"



Worker Survey Results

How would you improve your sick leave options?

"More sick days that's can be carried over to us in next following years"

"Give a chance to have paid sick leave but only if proven from family doctor or hospital that recovery by staying home is needed."

"Including mental health wellbeing as a part of sick leave"

"Have paid sick leave for all workers."

"Get a paid sick leave but show proof from my family doctor or hospital"

"I am fortunate but I would like to advocate for others to have the option to work from home and to be able to stay home when sick"

"Option to work from home if not too ill"

"Zero expectation to work from home while sick, so I could actually focus on getting better."

"YG/Governments could stop allowing people to bank and carry over paid sick leave so maybe there was \$ to fund a few days of private business sick leave. YG employees currently use paid sick leave for holidays. It's a waste of tax payers \$."

"If we could borrow sick leave days in advance and pay later during the year. At the year end, the unpaid sick leave could be accumulated and carried forward to the next year, just like unused sick leave."

"Provide some sick leave pro-rated as well as monthly accrual (monthly accrual could be smaller)"

"10 paid sick leave per year, no deduction in income, protect my job so that I don't get fired."

"I would give employees 12 sick days per year"

"Get some paid sick days More understanding and even being specifically asked to not come into work when we are sick - make it the norm."

"I would now. I have fully paid sick days. It means I don't have to feel shame or guilt because of my chronic illness. I do not lose income because of something out of my control like feeling sick."

"That I get paid so that it is safe for everyone"

"Have clearer guidance available on my company's internal site and/or in the employee handbook about process for different levels of sick leave: i.e. when "sick leave" moves into "short term disability" etc."

"At least give employees a chance for sick leave specially the weather condition in yukon. People get stress due to work and become sick. You need to consider also health considering working 8 hours or more."

"It would be good to have a modest bank of sick days to draw on."

"We need better resources at work so my work load doesn't pile up when I'm away."

"A few more needed for doctor appointments and medical related necessities"

"Work from home if able to. I do not think the private sector should pay sick leave for workers, especially in construction"

Worker Survey Results

How would you improve your sick leave options?

"I would have some. I know you're just trying to get the basics here but, like, not even YTG auxiliary employees have any sick leave. The Yukon sucks for this, no wonder we are a Covid hotspot. It's elitist af that only government and union jobs have sick pay, and it's super racist when you consider how few YTG jobs there are outside of Whitehorse."

"Discuss with employer how to make up time or receive pay or other time off."

"More sick days."

"More sick days available per hours worked."

"I would have more sick leave days. I would have paid sick days for when children are unwell. I would have personal days for mental health."

"More subsidized sick leave."

"Adding more paid days"

"I would make it mandatory for a medical note and eliminate any time limits on days off. I would introduce criminal prosecution for abuse of the system and make it a dismissible offense lying about illness just to stay home. Long term illness is another matter. 'Pulling a sickie' is theft from employer and should be made illegal."

"More options to work from home, more time available to be sick"

"Having sick leave policies mandatory for all businesses in the Yukon, including private ones would relieve a great amount of stress from myself and coworkers to prevent the spread of illnesses of all sorts. Especially if they are related to ongoing medical conditions or chronic illnesses that cannot be helped if someone needs to take a day off. This also includes mental illnesses, not just physical."

"More paid days per year, beyond the three days. Option to work from home."

"Sick leave with pay, people to cover shifts at the restaurant"

"Paid sick leave, not be the only employee"

"I need to get paid sick leave"

"Hard to take sick days if workload is high."

"Paid sick leave for all sick days."

"To get paid leave when I'm sick and unable to work"

"Access to paid leave when sick."

"Sick pay for all employees in all industries"

"For my employer to provide some paid time off when we are sick."

"Paid sick time off without consequences"

Employer Survey Results

The Employer survey was intended for individuals identifying as an employer within Yukon. There were **77 responses** from employers across the territory, from a variety of sectors. Respondents were asked a series of questions to learn more about whether or not paid sick leave was available within their organizations. Employers were also asked questions regarding what typical sick leave usage looks like over the course of a year.

The survey also looked to build an understanding of:

- How worker illness impacts their operations;
- How many sick days they would offer in an ideal world vs. how many sick days they can feasibly offer in their current state; and
- The barriers the employer may face when implementing a paid sick leave program.

When asked about paid sick leave offerings within their organization, the majority of employers surveyed stated they did not offer paid sick leave.

If your workers miss work due to an illness or injury unrelated to COVID-19, do you provide them with any paid sick leave?*



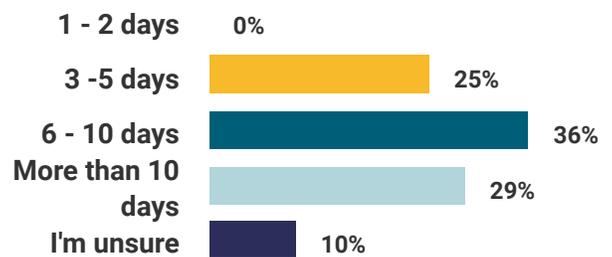
- No workers receive paid sick leave
- Some workers receive paid sick leave
- All workers receive paid sick leave
- I'm unsure

* Based on all employer respondents

Employers Offering Paid Sick Leave

Employers providing paid sick leave were asked if workers were provided different amounts of paid sick days based on their employment status (full-time, part-time, casual, management etc.), with **71%** indicating that yes, employment status impacts the number of paid sick days offered to the worker.

How many paid sick days can your workers take in a year (either fully or partially paid days)?*



* Based on respondents who indicated they provide paid sick leave to some or all of their workers

The amount of pay available to a worker taking paid sick leave varied both within the organizations, and from employer to employer.

How much of a day's pay do your workers receive if they take a full sick day? Select all that apply

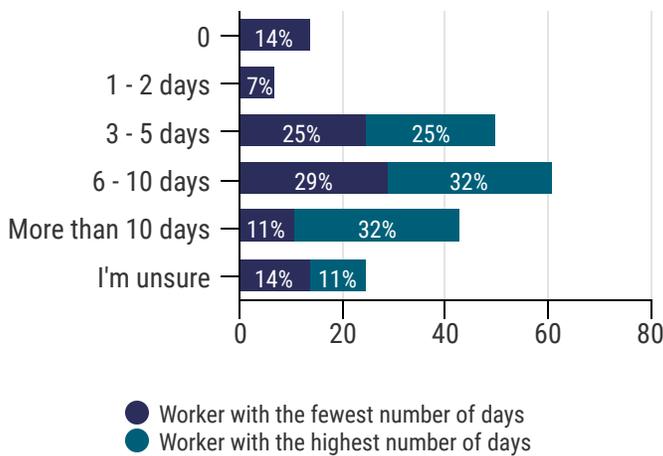
All workers receive full pay for every paid sick day	61%
Some workers receive full pay for every sick day	25%
Workers receive full pay for some sick days, and partial pay for some sick days	4%
I'm unsure	14%

* Based on respondents who indicated they provide paid sick leave to some or all of their workers

Employer Survey Results

With this information, we looked to dig deeper to understand the potential ranges in available days within an organization.

Workers with fewest vs. workers with the most paid sick days

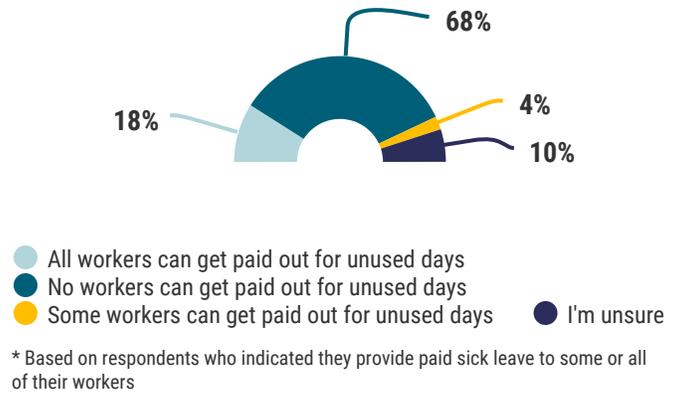


When asked if the paid sick leave was offered to their workers as part of a collective agreement, **82%** of respondents indicated that they did not have union workers in their organization and are not required to offer paid sick leave as part of a collective agreement.

Of the employers that reported offering paid sick leave, **50%** have a written sick leave policy covering **all** workers, **14%** have a written policy covering **some** workers, and **29%** reported that they didn't have a written sick leave policy at all. Carry-over of sick days was only available from **25%** of applicable respondents.

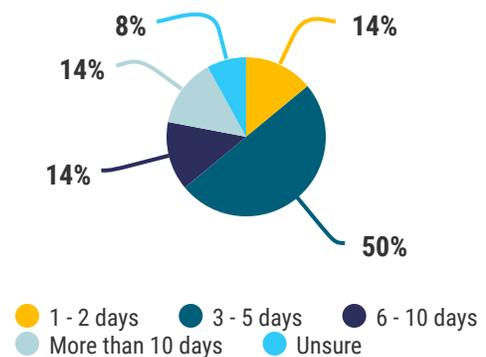
Employers were also asked about whether workers were entitled to be paid out for unused sick days when their employment or work contract ends.

Do your workers get paid out for unused paid sick days when their employment or work contract ends?*



The survey also asked employers about the typical usage of paid sick days within their organization.

How many days per year on average did your workers typically miss work because they were sick?*

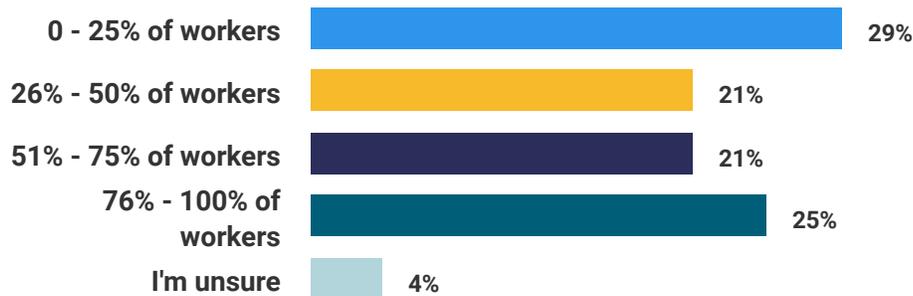


* Based on respondents who indicated they provide paid sick leave to some or all of their workers

Employer Survey Results

Employers offering paid sick leave were also asked to estimate the percentage of their workers that use all of their available paid sick leave each year.

What percentage of your workers do you estimate use all the paid sick days they are entitled to each year?*



* Based on respondents who indicated they provide paid sick leave to some or all of their workers

How could your paid sick leave program be improved?

"Coverage for all workers regardless of whether they work for themselves or others or how much they make or how many hrs worked"

"Our sick leave is combined with vacation (four weeks for most employees), and we call it PTO. I don't like to use sick leave as a separate bank, because I've had employees abuse this in the past. Employees can use this time for sick leave, Dr's appointments, bank appointments, vacation etc. Really, it's personal time that I don't want to police. I would like any proposed legislation to allow provisions for employers to combine sick leave and vacation."

"Stringer requirement for reason for leave and steps being taken to return to work plan."

"More paid days extended to all staff."

"Not many options at this time"

"It would be great to be able to offer part-time staff a similar number of paid sick days as full-time staff. Unfortunately, we can't afford that at this time."

"We are a private business and providing 5 paid sick days is exceptionally generous, especially considering that 80% of our workforce is seasonal (works less than 5 months per year)."

"It could include mental health time off, say 12 days per year. The number of days of sick leave could be independent of length of employment. Wages for sick leave / mental health could be partially removed from a government support programme perhaps similar to CPP."

"As a small business I can't afford to offer paid sick leave to everyone. I only do for salary full time employees. This said are office is fully online and most staff work from home. Additionally they are all in charge of their work time so they can reschedule themselves accordingly."



Employer Survey Results

How could your paid sick leave program be improved?

"We currently provide paid sick days to salaried workers within reason. Our hourly workers generally make upward of 20 hours of overtime per week at really high wages, they generally pull in more money than the salaried workers. That said it's hard to think about adding more paid time off when the business is operating at a loss. In a perfect world we could offer sick leave to everyone."

"The government could pay for it, or reduce other employer contributions to offset the cost (WCB premiums, for instance)."

"Paid sick time for casual workers."

"Have the Yukon Government reimburse us."

"It does not need to improve - my employees are salary and get paid no matter if they are there or not."

"The sick leave plan is robust for permanent and seasonal workers as per our Union agreement. Casual staff have no paid leave and perhaps could be included with the regular staff - however they would accumulate slowly and it may not make much impact. For example, if they were entitled to 1.5 days per month (as the regular staff do), short contracts would not have much opportunity to use paid sick leave."

"It needs to be formalized."

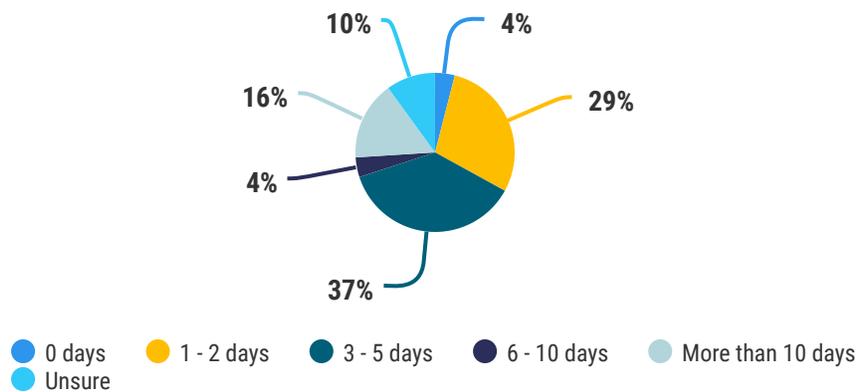
"Have sick days 100% paid for by the government;"

Employer Survey Results

Employers not offering paid sick leave

Employers not offering paid sick leave were asked to share insight into how many days their workers missed work due to illness prior to COVID-19.

How many days on average did your workers typically miss work because they were sick?*



* Based on respondents who indicated they do not offer paid sick leave to their workers

The majority of employer respondents surveyed indicated that they did not currently offer paid sick leave to their workers. These respondents were asked additional survey questions to help understand some of the reasons why they may not be offering this to their workers.

What are the reasons for not providing paid sick leave to your workers? Select all that apply.	
I cannot afford to pay workers for sick time	73%
Now is not the time, but I may be able to afford it after recovery from the pandemic	10%
My workers have not asked for it	31%
My workers will take advantage of it	41%
The government has not required me to provide it	27%
My workers don't need it because they can work from home when sick or make up the time	12%
Other	20%



Employer Survey Results

Other comments from Employers on why they do not offer paid sick leave

"We have a benefits plan that covers illness longer than 5 days. Sick time is expensive."

"If a staff calls in sick for my business, I work in a sector where I need to find a replacement staff as it is mandatory. So I would be paying for the individual who is sick and the person coming to cover the sick individual. I own a small custodial business and would lose my livelihood if YTG decided to implement this."

"Workers are subcontractors"

"My workers are not so committed to me that it would be appropriate for me to commit to them. Short term informal employment."

"Workers can draw from their 4 - 6 % holiday pay to cover sick days."

"Manual payroll, unsure how to implement or track paid sick days."

"We already have staff that consistently take unordinary amounts of sick time despite our attempts to curb this. For a small business paid sick time would be extremely costly and it is fully expected that staff will abuse this benefit. Most jobs are entry-level and this sort of benefit will undoubtedly be abused."

"All workers are part-time, less than 24 hours in 2 week period."

"We are a small business and had to choose between paying for paid sick time or initiatives that improve our worker's wellness. We have a wellness program where we pay for extra paid days off (vacation days) and also an enhanced employee health and dental benefit program that is better than YG. We also pay higher wages so employees do not have to work other jobs to make ends meet. Our employees are critical to our business, if they are suddenly away then we cannot open our doors because we would not be able to have them there to screen customers, check health status and do the cleaning required to meet CMOH obligations to stay open. By focusing on their wellness in this way, our employees very rarely get sick, and none have contracted COVID. Our employees are all vaccinated and are proactive about following guidelines outside of work as they value the wellness program we have instituted."

"Government has asked for rates for the coming year that do not include the cost of this new policy. In our business it could mean up to \$20,000 annually. Government is constantly implementing more measures such as COVID policies that cost the businesses money. The rates we are currently committed to have not included the cost of any of these new measures."

Employer Survey Results

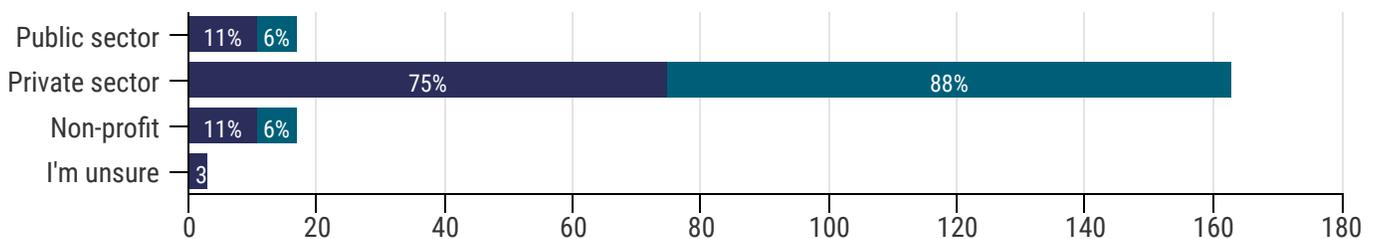
General sentiments from all employer respondents

Employers were asked to identify what industries they operate in to provide a better understanding of the types of employment where workers may be offered paid sick leave options. The following chart identifies the percentage of respondents who are working in the identified industry.

Which industry do you operate in? Select all that apply.	Employer respondents WITH paid sick leave	Employer respondents WITHOUT paid sick leave
Accommodation / Food services	0%	14%
Agriculture	11%	8%
Construction	11%	18%
Educational Services	4%	4%
Finance & related fields	14%	2%
Health care & Social assistance	11%	4%
Manufacturing	7%	18%
Natural resources	0%	4%
Professional / Technical services	11%	10%
Public administration / Government	14%	0%
Retail & wholesale trade	21%	49%
Transporting & Warehousing	11%	10%
Utilities	4%	0%
Other services	25%	16%
Personal care services	0%	6%

* Based on all employer respondents

How would you describe yourself as an employer?*



* Based on all employer respondents ● Employers WITH paid sick leave ● Employers WITHOUT paid sick leave

Employer Survey Results

General sentiments from all employer respondents

Have you ever sent a worker home because they were sick?*

	Employer respondents WITH paid sick leave	Employer respondents WITHOUT paid sick leave
Yes	79%	53%
No	21%	39%
I'm unsure	0%	8%

* Based on all employer respondents

Did you pay the sick worker for their shift even though you sent them home?*

	Employer respondents WITH paid sick leave	Employer respondents WITHOUT paid sick leave
Yes, I paid the worker for their whole shift	54%	23%
Yes, I paid the worker for part of their shift	9%	8%
No, I did not pay the worker	9%	31%
The worker was given the opportunity to make up the lost hours	14%	27%
Other (see below)	14%	11%

* Based on all employer respondents

"Workers have the option to make up lost hours but because we are able to give them a good wellness program they don't usually feel they need to."

"Those entitled to sick pay were paid sick pay. Employees not entitled to sick pay were asked to go home with no sick pay"

"Depends on employee and reason - someone with the flu vs someone who is hungover are two different things, and we do encounter it all."

"They were paid for the hours they worked prior to being sent home"

"Case by case basis depending on circumstances"

Employer Survey Results

General sentiments from all employer respondents

Are your workers able to work from home when they are sick?*

	Employer respondents WITH paid sick leave	Employer respondents WITHOUT paid sick leave
Yes	21%	8%
No	47%	86%
Sometimes	32%	6%

* Based on all employer respondents

Do you provide any other options for your workers when they are sick?*

	Employer respondents WITH paid sick leave	Employer respondents WITHOUT paid sick leave
Yes	18%	16%
No	75%	76%
Sometimes	7%	8%

* Based on all employer respondents

Employer Survey Results

General sentiments from all employer respondents

Please describe the other options you give workers when they are sick

"If the employee is out of paid time off, they can take leave without pay. We don't have a policy for this, but in cases where employees are out of sick time, or where there are extraneous circumstances, we can top up PTO or provide other support."

"Make up the time when they are healthy"

"Make up a day if needed (wanted)."

"It depends on the nature of the illness and how long it will be to resolve"

"They set their own schedules they can work another day to make up time."

"Work from home -- depends on the nature of the position"

"Remote work"

"Relaxed work hours, paid full hours"

"Depending on their role they can make up time"

"They can reschedule clients and usually do"

"Make days up or will accommodate should there be a need"

"If they miss a day's work I let them make up the hours"

"If they wish, they can 'makeup' for days missed."

"If the employee is able to work from home, we facilitate that but not often possible due to nature of business. If employees wish to make up time, we accommodate them but it is not required. Duration and doctors care are considered and we will pay sick days in some instances until health coverage plan takes over."

"Online training has helped our workers receive some wages while isolating or sick"

"We pay slightly higher compensation to account for the expectation that staff may miss a few days a year sick"

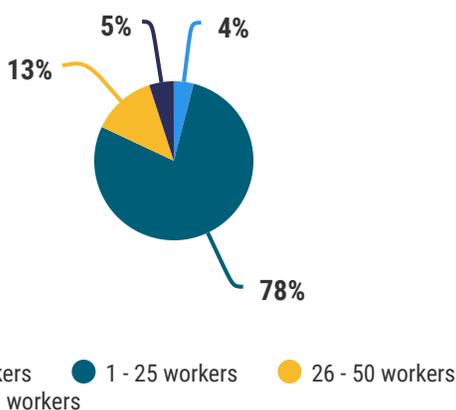
"As we are open 7 days per week all year we normally bank stat holidays to be provided at a time convenient to both the employer and staff or to be added to their annual vacation time. When employees experience sick days we can provide paid days off by utilizing these banked days should the employees wish. We also strive to have our employees consider a swap of days off to accommodate the sick days so that there is no loss of wages and often we can provide opportunity for the employee to make up lost time. As we are a small business with entry level employees we would expect a high level of abuse as we already see a high level of abuse with unpaid sick days. Being required to pay employees just one sick day per year could result in a fairly significant hit to the bottom line. I expect this would be especially true for many rural businesses. People will use these days as personal days rather than truly as sick days. We generally strive to find suitable ways to make up lost revenue without taking a hit to the bottom line and this has worked well for use and most all employees except those that are abusing the sick days as there are some claiming sick days in excess of 4 per month. We expect these people simply do not care about lost wages."

"Our employee wellness program with increased paid vacation days, increased income and enhanced benefits. This has reduced their incidence of being sick significantly. We also give workers the opportunity to make up for lost hours of work by working extra during the time period when they feel well if they wish. However our workers do not take this because of the benefits we offer."

Employer Survey Results

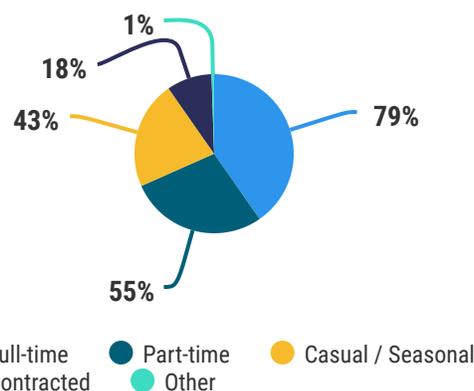
General sentiments from all employer respondents

How many workers do you currently have?*



*Based on data provided by all Employer respondents

Which best describes your workforce?
Select all that apply.*



*Based on data provided by all Employer respondents

How concerned are you about your workers coming into work sick?

Workers coming to work sick makes me feel...	Employer respondents WITH paid sick leave	Employer respondents WITHOUT paid sick leave
Very concerned	32%	14%
Moderately concerned	36%	29%
Somewhat concerned	25%	37%
Unconcerned	7%	20%

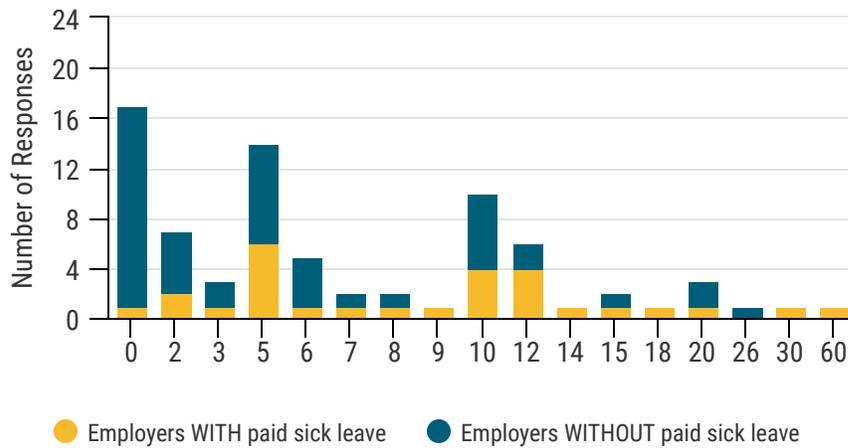
How impactful is it to your operations if multiple workers are off sick?

If multiple workers are off sick my business...	Employer respondents WITH paid sick leave	Employer respondents WITHOUT paid sick leave
Can't operate if multiple workers are sick	18%	35%
Feels a major impact	54%	47%
Feels a moderate impact	28%	16%
Feels a little impact	0%	2%
Feels no impact	0%	0%

Employer Survey Results

General sentiments from all employer respondents

In an ideal world, how many paid sick days do you think a worker should have access to each year?



*Based on data provided by all Employer respondents

What is the maximum number of paid sick days you could offer your workers without significantly impacting your organization?*



*Based on data provided by all Employer respondents

Employer Survey Results

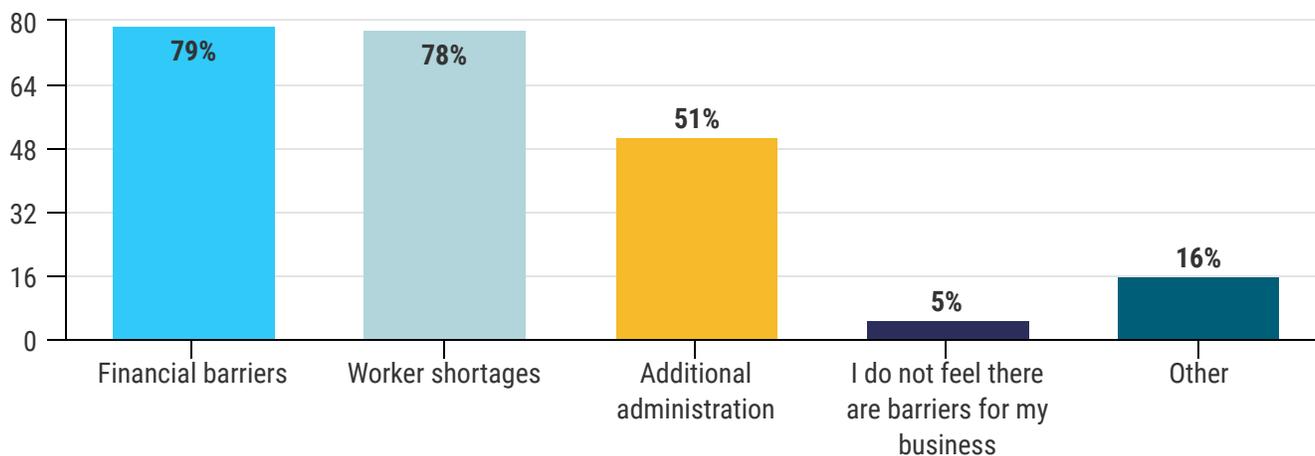
General sentiments from all employer respondents

If workers in the Yukon were entitled to paid sick leave but you, as an employer, were not responsible for paying for it, how many days of paid sick leave per year would you support? Rank the number of paid sick days by putting them into your preferred order. 1= preferred choice, 5 = least preferred choice.



*Based on data provided by all Employer respondents

What are the possible barriers that your business may face when implementing permanent paid sick leave? Select all that apply.*



*Based on data provided by all Employer respondents



Employer Survey Results

General sentiments from all employer respondents

Other comments regarding possible barriers to implementing paid sick leave

"Trained personnel shortages are not as easy to respond to as "worker shortages"."

"We prefer to offer paid time off (sick + vacation time combined). It keeps the sick time from being abused, and it allows employees to use PTO for any personal time off. The reality is that our staff are equipped to work from home, and most prefer to work from home or answer correspondence (even while sick) to stay on top of their projects. Paid sick time doesn't necessarily mean staff won't work anyways- particularly if they are on a deadline. Our system allows flexibility. If staff can't work, they'll ask someone in the office for help. If they can, they'll work from home with a cold and keep their PTO in the bank."

"Worker abuse of even more paid time"

"Custodial businesses make very little. I would have to increase my price substantially on tenders and risk losing my contracts to lower bidders. In addition, there is no way to calculate paid sick leave into a bidding process. For example, if I take into account that I would have 10 sick days estimated in a contract and an employee calls in sick 20 days in a year, the business is left flipping the bill."

"My workers are paid hourly and most are not full-time. How do I decide what to pay them if they are sick?"

"I am self-employed & working employed part-time. The private company that I am working with does not have sick leave"

"When an employee is off sick, we MUST get another employee to cover the shift. If we had to pay the employee that is off sick plus pay the employee covering the shift. Most likely over time. We are forced to pay double time and a half. But only receive regular rate of compensation. (Not a successful business model)"

"If I couldn't cover for them I would need to close my business while they were sick."

"Loss of income! Extra costs - having to pay someone else (possibly overtime) to cover for the employee who calls in sick. We are a small business (5 ish staff) One person calls in sick and we may not be able to open for the day. In a retail environment, already overworked and understaffed there are repercussions. We have to pay someone else to come in which adds to our costs - not just hourly wage, but all the payroll taxes that go with it."

"1-2 days is the only amount of sick days my business could support due to the fact that if my worker do not show I cannot run my business. I may have to shut down for those days. The other choices are not choices I can support."

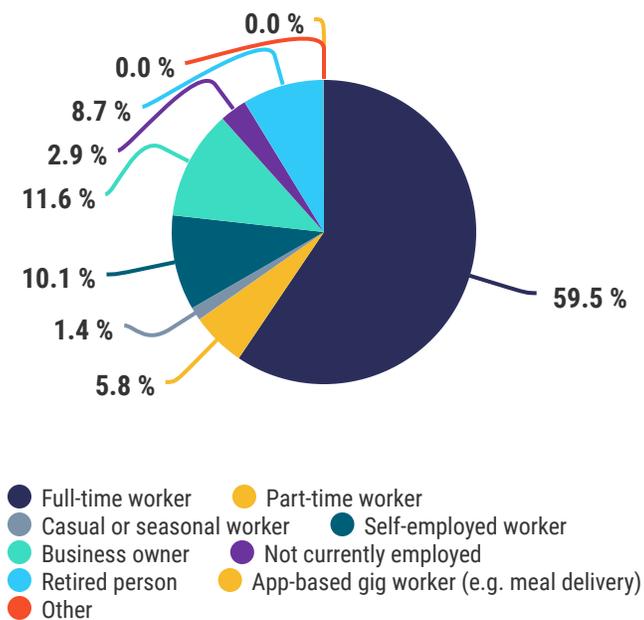
"If staff members 'used' sick days because they were 'entitled' to them, we would consistently be short staffed and negatively financially impacted. That is our fear. We often hear of people 'choosing' to use sick days so they don't lose them...even when they are not sick."

"Workers will take advantage of it."

General Survey Results

The general survey was launched to ensure that all Yukoners had the opportunity to provide feedback on the topic of paid sick leave, regardless of their employment status. **Sixty-nine** individuals responded to this survey. Workers and Employers who previously answered the individual Worker or Employer surveys were welcome to participate in the general survey as well.

Which option best describes you?

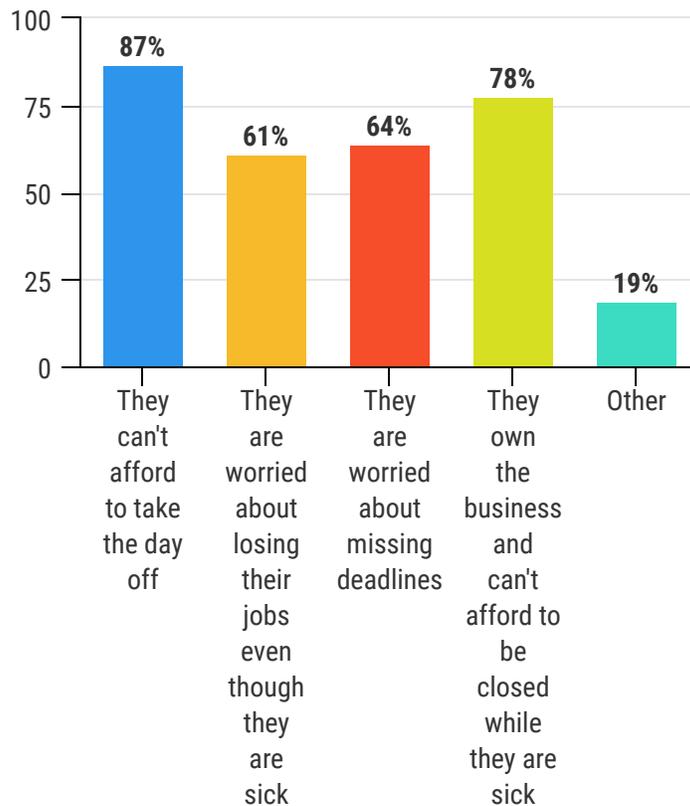


The questions posed in the general survey were designed to get an understanding of Yukoners' level of comfort attending different types of businesses where employees who may be sick are present. Additional questions were asked to identify the public's understanding of the reasons why a worker may choose to come to work sick. It also sought to gather general public feedback on the number of days of paid sick leave that should be available to workers, and the types of workers and scenarios that should be covered. Respondents to the General survey were also encouraged to share their ideas on how paid sick leave should be funded.

When asked about the number of paid sick days that should be made available to workers every year, **48%** of respondents favoured **6 - 10 days**, with another **32%** indicating that they were in favour of **more than ten days**. **Fifteen percent** of respondents recommended **3 - 5 days** of paid sick leave. Respondents were also asked whether they feel that self-employed people should have access to paid sick days, with **65%** of responses indicating that they were in favour, and **20%** of responses indicating that they were unsure.

Respondents were asked to provide thoughts on the types of reasons that a worker may go to work even though they are sick.

Why do you think workers choose to come to work when they are sick? Select all that apply.



General Survey Results

Comments on the other reasons why a worker may come to work when they are sick

"They will be failing their clients or their employer or their co-workers."

"Cultural expectations: work is seen as more important than personal health/comfort."

"They're service-oriented and want to serve in the manner that they are currently meant to."

"They realize there is no one to replace them while they are sick. Schools and daycares can not operate without the correct number of staff."

"They are not encouraged to stay home if sick and face stigma if they do."

"There is nobody to cover for them, small businesses do not have extra people in case someone is sick."

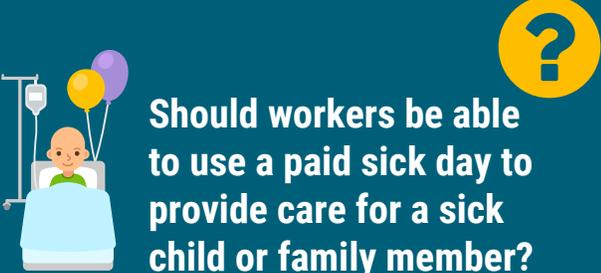
"Some businesses foster a culture of employee dedication, whether they are sick or not. Not showing up, even when sick is perceived poorly by employers and peers alike."

"They know if they don't show up someone else will need to do their work and they may not want the person that would be assigned it to get involved in their work or they may not want the person to have more work put upon them. Consideration for their coworkers."

"All of the above depending on their income and job duties. Also, sick is all relative. Diagnosed or having the flu is a big difference from a cold."

"They like to work even when they are sick."

"Repercussions from managers or supervisors, having hours cut."



Should workers be able to use a paid sick day to provide care for a sick child or family member?



of respondents are in favour of allowing paid sick leave to be used for this situation

General Survey Results

How comfortable are you going to the following types of businesses or events if workers are coming to work sick?

	Very comfortable	Somewhat comfortable	Neutral	Somewhat uncomfortable	Very uncomfortable
Retail shops	1%	10%	17%	30%	42%
Restaurants and bars	0%	9%	10%	14%	67%
Personal services (salons, spas, barbers, etc.)	0%	7%	9%	20%	64%
Health or dental services	0%	6%	7%	13%	74%
Live theatre or music	3%	9%	20%	30%	38%
Administrative or government offices	3%	7%	19%	33%	38%

Most respondents said they are somewhat to very uncomfortable going to businesses or events where workers may be coming to work while sick.





General Survey Results

How do you think paid sick days should be funded?

"Employer funded. For small businesses or non-profits, or the self-employed, some government support may be needed to create a fund. There is NO WAY the fund should be accessible or dependent upon action by employers; the employee should be able to apply directly, and the employer should provide proof. Perhaps an offshoot or something similar to WCB?"

"Taxes from corporations, perhaps business owners could pay into an 'insurance' type fund, maybe instead of using mining to build roads for mining companies so non-local corporations can increase their profit this money could be spent on looking after Yukon people."

"Good question. Generally, I think the employer should be responsible for funding paid sick days. I do support some government funding for very small employers to be able to offer paid sick days to their employees."

"By payroll deduction."

"A combination of YG, Govt of Canada and the business."

"Raise taxes."

"Territorial or Federal Government can reimburse small businesses that can't afford to give paid leave. Larger businesses should be mandated to give paid sick days to employees but not reimbursed to avoid them claiming unused sick days by staff and pocketing the money."

"Government."

"Percentage of wages like holiday pay."

"Something you pay into off your regular checks or like how EI accumulates. The employee earns the sick days while working."

"By employer as they can write this expense off anyway."

"Federally."

"That is hard to answer. I have seen so much abuse of sick time in my 40 years of working. Taxes can not be any higher. The more government pays for, the higher taxes will have to be."

"Banked hours."

"Contributions from both the employer and employee."

"Business should pay for sick days."



General Survey Results

How do you think paid sick days should be funded?

"It could be something like WCB where it is funded partially by the employer and the government? Or something that employees could opt to pay into and accrue like vacation pay and take as needed."

"Either through the company's benefits program (payroll deduction) or through government support if the organization is a non-profit or the employees are not entitled to a benefits program."

"If only a few days a year - paid by employer; if similar to government program - shared cost; need to be careful that administration costs for program do not cost employers as much as the benefit itself."

"By employers."

"Government funded."

"Taxes."

"I don't think the business should have to pay the sick leave. A lot of businesses are hanging on by a thread and can't afford it. It should be a government initiative."

"If not through collective bargaining then through a similar process as EI and CPP."

"Paid sick leave should be funded by YG, the employer would not pay the employee and they would have to submit to the government for the pay."

"By government or maybe by union dues."

"Employer and government."

"Paid for by Government - similar to the paid sick days previously offered (re: covid-19)."

"Split between employee, employer and government."

"Government paid. Employers are still digesting the massive min wage hike. Like government sick days, these days will be viewed as entitlement and used whether or not an employee is sick."

"Employer funded. its part of doing business."

"Private businesses cannot afford to fund these, the government imposed shut downs and restrictions have strangled small businesses to the pint we are fighting to keep our heads above water."

"It could be funded by combination federal/provincial/municipal governments and employers. Taxing the very rich needs to be increased, tax haven loopholes closed and tax collection enforced. There is entirely too much money hoarded by the rich and taken out of circulation."



General Survey Results

How do you think paid sick days should be funded?

"The employer should pay for them or so much money could be set aside from the employees paycheque so they have money available if they are sick. This could be joint payment between employer and employee and then the decision would be if they can carry unused days forward or if they get paid out at the end of a year and start over again."

"By The federal government EI fund. They have a ton of surpluses and need to start giving it back"

"Government. Otherwise increasing costs for businesses are passed on to the consumer and non-profits cannot afford to pay sick days out of their expenses - there would be less hours available to employees with another cost."

"Government or WCB-type funding."

"Contributions from employers and government."

"Through the government. My employer already pays a higher rate of pay to account for the couple of days a year that someone may take off. The more days that my coworkers take off is the harder I have to work and many will abuse the system if there are a mandated number of days. If it's not paid for by the government, I'm less likely to get future raises due to the additional cost."

"Government."

"Actually, I think we should adopt UBI and do away with all these social programs. Easier and cheaper administration to have just one big social safety net at the federal level. Barring that, gov't provided with a clawback/cutoff on companies that earn over a certain threshold."

"Employers and the Territorial government should split the bill."

"Workers could pay into a fund, like insurance. Maybe shared with the employer."

"It should be funded through health and social."

"Gov and small percentage from our pay."

"Combination of employer and government shared contributions."

"By the employer with government subsidies in certain cases. Large corporations should have to provide sick days but small business should be helped out for a few years until they can adjust their finances to account for the extra cost of paid sick days. Permanent government employees have paid sick leave paid for by tax payers."

"Some combination of employer-paid and government funded, depending on the size of the business and how the business is funded normally."

"Tax the rich. Tax rich corporations. Tax rich individuals. Introduce a VAT if you have to. Tax the rich."



General Survey Results

How do you think paid sick days should be funded?

"Organizations that have 'benefit plans' should have to include sick day benefits as part of the benefits and I assume that most do. Sick days for other employers including self-employment should be organized by the government, somewhat similar to how Unemployment Insurance is, because covering sick days for all workers benefits all of society."

"Government-funded, financed through taxes."

"I believe it should be funded by the government, as that seems the only way to guarantee everyone has equal access to them.."

"Taxes."



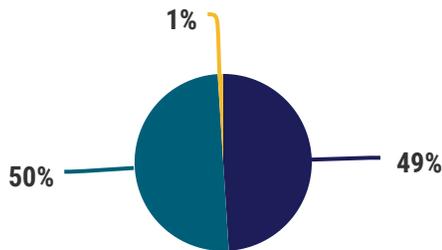
PAID SICK LEAVE

YUKON PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

3 Quick Polls

were available on Let's Talk Yukon

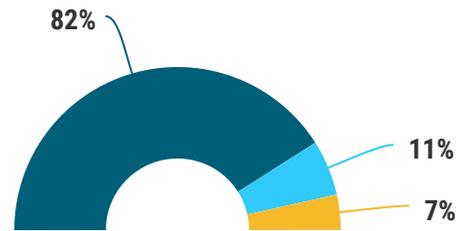
Do you have access to paid sick leave from your employer?



● Yes ● No ● I'm not sure

222 Poll Contributors

Would you be more comfortable patronising Yukon businesses or events knowing the staff would stay home if sick?



● Yes ● No ● I'm unsure

73 Poll Contributors

How do you think paid sick leave should be funded?

Paid sick leave should be funded by employers	10%
Every business should have paid sick days co-funded between the employer and Yukon Government	34%
Only small businesses should have paid sick days co-funded between employers and Yukon Government	20%
A percentage of a workers' gross wages should be allocated to paid sick days, similar to the existing requirements for annual vacation pay	30%
I have another idea that I will share on the 'Your Ideas' page	6%

107 Poll Contributors



PAID SICK LEAVE

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As an employer, how do you think paid sick days should be funded?



Your Ideas

Top Voted Ideas



4 votes

"I realize that sick days are important. I also know that the amount of people going to the hospital greatly affects the health care system and tax dollars. Small business especially is going to be hurt no matter how important. It needs to be a shared cost. Or part of say some sort of benefits package."



4 votes

"As an employer who already invests heavily in our staff we would be willing to share the cost of paid sick leave with government."



1 vote

"If contract tracing shows that transmission happened in a workplace, then it should count as a workplace injury and the employer fined. Illness caught at work is a hazard."

Other Shared Ideas



"Should be operated like a short term disability insurance program. Premiums fully paid by employees so that payouts are non taxable"



"If the government is planning on mandating paid sick days for private-sector employees then they had better fund it entirely."



"Ear mark funds for short-term sick leave from employer-paid contributions to EI or Workers Comp. Use centralized EI system to manage claims."



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What should the requirements be for paid sick days?

Top Voted Idea



"No requirements. People get sick."

Other Shared Ideas



"You should need to provide proof that you are actually sick. Doctors' note would be the only option. If you don't require proof, paid sick days will be abused by employees."



"Doctor's note for more than 3 days off sick. Usually, by that time most of my employees want to go see a doctor. What about mental health? Some employees off work dealing with a family crisis and not in shape to mentally work. So what does being sick mean?"



"Let's look at other countries that are doing this successfully. Many other countries are ALREADY doing this. They have systems ALREADY. Can we stop trying to reinvent the wheel and look at other countries to see what they are doing. Drs notes are Non starter, most of Whitehorse and the Yukon don't have drs so, unless you're gonna address that situation, drs notes ARE NOT the answer."

How would you make paid sick days available to everyone?

Top Voted Ideas



"Manage sick leave similar to employment insurance, administered by government, available to all workers, part-time, self-employed, whatever. Require proof (sick note) only for periods of 10 days or more. Enable those with low-end, low-benefit jobs to look after themselves - and the rest of us - when they are sick. We now know that these are the people we rely on the most to keep stores and restaurants open, trucks on the road, etc. Let's look after them as well as we look after people with lots of workplace benefits."



"It's just part of your Employment Insurance. Use the existing EI system to provide centralized universal access."



PAID SICK LEAVE

YUKON PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

What's Next?

The Making Work Safe panel will use the information gathered in the public engagement and the research gathered in the jurisdictional report to develop recommendations for the Legislative Assembly to establish permanent paid sick days in the Yukon.

On behalf of the Making Work Safe Panel, Narrative Consulting would like to thank everyone who took the time to participate and provide feedback. The panel will report their recommendations for amendments to the Employment Standards Act to the Legislative Assembly by January 31, 2022.