

# Electronic Alert

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## More Changes to Washington Paid Sick Leave

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### **Revised Definition of Construction Worker**

Earlier this year, Washington began requiring employers to pay out the balance of any accrued but unused paid sick leave to construction workers upon separation from employment. Last month, Washington passed [Senate Bill 5979](#) which revised the definition of “construction worker.” Under the new definition, “construction worker” is defined as “a worker who performed service, maintenance, or construction work on a jobsite, in the field or in a fabrication shop using the tools of the worker’s trade or craft.” This new definition became effective on March 13, 2024.

### **Expanded Reasons for Taking Paid Sick Leave**

In the same legislative session, Washington passed [Senate Bill 5793](#) which expanded the reasons for which employees can take Washington paid sick leave. Beginning January 1, 2025, employees can take paid sick leave when their child’s school or place of care has been closed after the declaration of an emergency by a local or state government or agency, or by the federal government.

### **Expanded Definitions of Family Member & Child**

Senate Bill 5793 also revised the definition of “family member” to include “any individual who regularly resides in the employee’s home or where the relationship creates an expectation that the employee care for the person, and that individual depends on the employee for care. ‘Family member’ includes any individual who regularly resides in the employee’s home, except that it does not include an individual who simply resides in the same home with no expectation that the employee care for the individual.” The definition of “child” now includes “a child’s spouse.” The bill also defined “grandchild” as “a child of the employee’s child” and “grandparent” as “a parent of the employee’s parent.” These revised definitions become effective on January 1, 2025.

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