

Legislative Summary: Ordinance No. 756-2022

Ordinance No. 756-2022 enacts new Codified Ordinance Section 171.67, Paid Safe Leave, to provide paid time off to city employees who are victims, or are parents or legal guardians of a child victim, of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking. This paid time off of work can be used for seeking: medical or psychological attention; services from a victim-services organization; secure shelter; and/or legal assistance. This 60 hours of paid time off for full-time employees and 30 hours for part-time employees is specific to Safe Leave and will not be deducted from other forms of leave. All non-union city employees are entitled to Paid Safe Leave, and Council intends that this leave also be available to union employees through union negotiations with the Administration.

Many cities, including Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Chicago, Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota, have enacted similar ordinances that require their cities and/or employers to provide job-protected leave to employee victims of domestic and sexual violence. Instances of domestic violence and sexual assault have increased in the past two years due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and this Council wants to secure the health and safety of city employees who are victims. Council also encourages other employers to provide paid safe leave to their employees.

Work on this ordinance began with Council adopting Resolution No. 1158-2019, on September 30, 2019, establishing a working committee with the Administration and community stakeholders, including the Cleveland Rape Crisis Center, Journey Center for Safety and Healing (formerly the Domestic Violence and Child Advocacy Center), The Legal Aid Society of Cleveland, and Cleveland State University Law and Urban Affairs students to study domestic violence and safe leave policies and consider implementing a City policy. This ordinance is the result of collaboration with these community partners. It shall take effect 60 days after the effective date to allow the Department of Human Resources to implement an administrative policy.

Proposed Amendment:

The Administration proposes to amend new Section 171.67(c)(1) to change 60 hours paid safe leave time annually for full-time and 30 hours for part-time to 40 hours and 20 hours.