1 STATE OF OKLAHOMA 2 1st Session of the 56th Legislature (2017) 3 HOUSE BILL 1536 By: Dunnington 4 5 6 AS INTRODUCED 7 An Act relating to labor; creating the Healthy Families and Workplaces Act; stating legislative findings; defining terms; providing for earned paid 8 sick time for employees; providing for carryover to 9 following year; designating usage of sick leave; providing for notice of sick leave use; prohibiting 10 search for replacement worker; providing for types of documentation for usage of sick leave; prohibiting employer from requesting certain information; 11 prohibiting interference with rights protected under 12 this act; prohibiting retaliatory actions; requiring certain notice by employer; providing for language 1.3 and display of notice; authorizing Department of Labor to create certain notice and posters; providing 14 penalty; requiring employers to keep certain records for certain time; authorizing Department to 15 promulgate rules; authorizing Department to investigate and enforce provisions of this act; 16 providing for powers and duties of the Department; providing for relief and penalties; requiring annual 17 report be posted on website; prohibiting disclosure of certain details; providing for exceptions; 18 requiring Department to develop outreach program; providing for codification; and providing an 19 effective date. 20 2.1 22 BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA: 23 2.4

- SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified
 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 901 of Title 40, unless there is
 created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:
 - A. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Healthy Families and Workplaces Act".
 - B. The Legislature finds that:

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- 1. Most workers in Oklahoma will at some time during the year need limited time off from work to take care of their own health needs or the health needs of their family members; and
- 2. Nationally, nearly forty percent (40%) of private sector workers do not have any paid sick time. In addition, many workers who do have paid sick time are disciplined for using it or not allowed to use the time to care for sick children.
 - C. The purposes of this act are to:
- 1. Ensure that all workers in Oklahoma can address their own health and safety needs and the health and safety needs of their families by requiring employers to provide a minimum level of earned paid sick time, including time to care for their family members;
- 2. Diminish public and private health care costs and promote preventive health services in Oklahoma by enabling workers to seek early and routine medical care for themselves and their family members;
- 3. Protect the public's health in Oklahoma by reducing the risk of contagion;

4. Promote the economic security and stability of workers and their families;

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- 5. Protect employees in Oklahoma from losing their jobs or facing workplace discipline when they use the paid sick time they earn to care for themselves or their families;
- 6. Assist victims of domestic violence and their family members by providing them job-protected time away from work to receive treatment and to take the necessary steps to ensure their safety;
- 7. Safeguard the public welfare, health, safety and prosperity of the people of Oklahoma; and
- 8. Accomplish the purposes described in paragraphs 1 through 7 of this subsection in a manner that is feasible for employers.
- SECTION 2. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 902 of Title 40, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

For purposes of the Healthy Families and Workplaces Act:

- 1. "Department" means the Department of Labor;
- 2. "Domestic violence" shall have the same meaning as domestic abuse used in Section 60.1 of Title 22 of the Oklahoma Statutes;
- 3. "Earned paid sick time" means time that is compensated at the same hourly rate and with the same benefits, including health care benefits, as the employee normally earns during hours worked and is provided by an employer to an employee for the purposes described in Section 4 of this act, but in no case shall this hourly

amount be less than that provided under 29 U.S.C., Section 206(a)(1) or Section 197.2 of Title 40 of the Oklahoma Statutes;

- 4. "Employee" shall have the same meaning as used in Section 197.4 of Title 40 of the Oklahoma Statutes. "Employee" includes recipients of public benefits who are engaged in work activity as a condition of receiving public assistance;
- 5. "Employer" shall have the same meaning as used in Section 197.4 of Title 40 of the Oklahoma Statutes. "Employer" shall not include any of the following:
 - a. the United States government,
 - b. the State of Oklahoma including any office, department, agency, authority, institution, association, commission or other body of the state, including the Legislature and the judiciary, or
 - c. any county, municipal or other local government;
 - 6. "Family member" means:

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- a. regardless of age, a biological, adopted or foster child, stepchild or legal ward or a child of a domestic partner of the employee, a child to whom the employee stands in loco parentis or an individual to whom the employee stood in loco parentis when the individual was a minor,
- b. a biological, foster, stepparent or adoptive parent or legal guardian of an employee or an employee's spouse

or domestic partner or a person who stood in loco

parentis when the employee or employee's spouse or

domestic partner was a minor child,

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- c. a person to whom the employee is legally married under the laws of any state, or a domestic partner of an employee as registered under the laws of any state or political subdivision,
- d. a grandparent, grandchild or sibling, whether of a biological, foster, adoptive or step relationship, of the employee or the employee's spouse or domestic partner,
- e. a person for whom the employee is responsible for providing or arranging care, including but not limited to helping that person obtain diagnostic, preventive, routine or therapeutic health treatment, or
- f. any other person related by blood or affinity whose close association with the employee is the equivalent of a family relationship;
- 7. "Harassment" shall have the same meaning as used in Section 60.1 of Title 22 of the Oklahoma Statutes;
- 8. "Health care professional" means any person licensed under federal or state law to provide medical or emergency services, including but not limited to doctors, nurses and emergency room personnel;

9. "Retaliatory personnel action" means denial of any right guaranteed under this act and any threat, discharge, suspension, demotion, reduction of hours, reporting or threatening to report an employee's suspected citizenship or immigration status, or the suspected citizenship or immigration status of a family member of the employee to a federal, state or local agency, or any other adverse action against an employee for the exercise of any right guaranteed herein including any sanctions against an employee who is the recipient of public benefits for rights guaranteed under this act. Retaliation shall also include interference with or punishment for in any manner participating in or assisting an investigation, proceeding or hearing under this act;

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- 10. "Sexual assault" shall have the same meaning as used in Section 142.20 of Title 21 of the Oklahoma Statutes;
- 11. "Stalking" shall have the same meaning as used in Section 60.1 of Title 22 of the Oklahoma Statutes; and
- 12. "Year" means a regular and consecutive twelve-month period as determined by the employer, provided, that for the purposes of Sections 7 and 9 of this act, "year" shall mean a calendar year.
- SECTION 3. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 903 of Title 40, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:
- A. All employees shall accrue a minimum of one (1) hour of earned paid sick time for every forty (40) hours worked. Employees

shall not use more than eighty (80) hours of earned paid sick time in a year, unless the employer selects a higher limit.

- B. Employees who are exempt from overtime requirements under 29 U.S.C., Section 213(a)(1) of the federal Fair Labor Standards Act shall be assumed to work forty (40) hours in each workweek for purposes of earned paid sick time accrual unless their normal workweek is less than forty (40) hours, in which case earned paid sick time accrues based upon that normal workweek.
- C. Earned paid sick time as provided in this section shall begin to accrue at the commencement of employment or on November 1, 2017, whichever is later. An employer may provide all paid sick time that an employee is expected to accrue in a year at the beginning of the year.
- D. Employees shall not be entitled to use accrued earned paid sick time until the ninety-first calendar day following commencement of their employment, unless otherwise permitted by the employer. On and after the ninety-first calendar day of employment, employees may use earned paid sick time as it is accrued.
- E. Earned paid sick time shall be carried over to the following year. Alternatively, in lieu of carryover of unused earned paid sick time from one year to the next, an employer may pay an employee for unused earned paid sick time at the end of a year and provide the employee with an amount of paid sick time that meets or exceeds

the requirements of this act that is available for the employee's immediate use at the beginning of the subsequent year.

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- F. Any employer with a paid leave policy, such as a paid time off policy, who makes available an amount of paid leave sufficient to meet the accrual requirements of this section that may be used for the same purposes and under the same conditions as earned paid sick time under this act is not required to provide additional paid sick time.
- G. Nothing in this section shall be construed as requiring financial or other reimbursement to an employee from an employer upon the employee's termination, resignation, retirement or other separation from employment for accrued earned paid sick time that has not been used.
- H. If an employee is transferred to a separate division, entity or location, but remains employed by the same employer, the employee is entitled to all earned paid sick time accrued at the prior division, entity or location and is entitled to use all earned paid sick time as provided in this section. When there is a separation from employment and the employee is rehired within one hundred eighty (180) days of separation by the same employer, previously accrued earned paid sick time that had not been used shall be reinstated. Further, the employee shall be entitled to use accrued earned paid sick time and accrue additional earned paid sick time at the recommencement of employment.

I. When a different employer succeeds or takes the place of an existing employer, all employees of the original employer who remain employed by the successor employer are entitled to all earned paid sick time they accrued when employed by the original employer and are entitled to use earned paid sick time previously accrued.

- J. An employer may loan earned paid sick time to an employee in advance of accrual by such employee.
- SECTION 4. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 904 of Title 40, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:
- A. Earned paid sick time shall be provided to an employee by an employer for:
- 1. An employee's mental or physical illness, injury or health condition; an employee's need for medical diagnosis, care or treatment of a mental or physical illness, injury or health condition; and an employee's need for preventive medical care;
- 2. Care of a family member with a mental or physical illness, injury or health condition; care of a family member who needs medical diagnosis, care or treatment of a mental or physical illness, injury or health condition; care of a family member who needs preventive medical care; or, in the case of a child, to attend a school meeting or a meeting at a place where the child is receiving care necessitated by the child's health condition or

disability, domestic violence, sexual assault, harassment or stalking;

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- 3. Closure of the employee's place of business by order of a public official due to a public health emergency or an employee's need to care for a child whose school or place of care has been closed by order of a public official due to a public health emergency or care for oneself or a family member when it has been determined by the health authorities having jurisdiction or by a health care provider that the employee's or family member's presence in the community may jeopardize the health of others because of his or her exposure to a communicable disease, whether or not the employee or family member has actually contracted the communicable disease; or
- 4. Absence necessary due to domestic violence, sexual assault, harassment or stalking, provided the leave is to allow the employee to obtain for the employee or the employee's family member:
 - a. medical attention needed to recover from physical or psychological injury or disability caused by domestic violence, sexual assault, harassment or stalking,
 - b. services from a victim services organization,
 - c. psychological or other counseling,
 - d. relocation or taking steps to secure an existing home due to the domestic violence, sexual assault, harassment or stalking, or

- e. legal services, including preparing for or participating in any civil or criminal legal proceeding related to or resulting from the domestic violence, sexual assault, harassment or stalking.
- B. Earned paid sick time shall be provided upon the request of an employee. Such request may be made orally, in writing, by electronic means or by any other means acceptable to the employer. When possible, the request shall include the expected duration of the absence.

- C. When the use of earned paid sick time is foreseeable, the employee shall make a good-faith effort to provide notice of the need for such time to the employer in advance of the use of the earned paid sick time and shall make a reasonable effort to schedule the use of earned paid sick time in a manner that does not unduly disrupt the operations of the employer.
- D. An employer that requires notice of the need to use earned paid sick time where the need is not foreseeable shall provide a written policy that contains procedures for the employee to provide notice. An employer that has not provided to the employee a copy of its written policy for providing such notice shall not deny earned paid sick time to the employee based on noncompliance with such a policy.
- E. An employer may not require, as a condition of an employee's taking earned paid sick time, that the employee search for or find a

replacement worker to cover the hours during which the employee is using earned paid sick time.

- F. Earned paid sick time may be used in the smaller of hourly increments or the smallest increment that the employer's payroll system uses to account for absences or use of other time.
- G. For earned paid sick time of three (3) or more consecutive workdays, an employer may require reasonable documentation that the earned paid sick time has been used for a purpose covered by subsection A of this section. Documentation signed by a heath care professional indicating that earned paid sick time is necessary shall be considered reasonable documentation for purposes of this section. In cases of domestic violence, sexual assault, harassment or stalking, one of the following types of documentation selected by the employee shall be considered reasonable documentation:
- 1. A police report indicating that the employee or the employee's family member was a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, harassment or stalking;
- 2. A signed statement from a victim and witness advocate affirming that the employee or employee's family member is receiving services from a victim services organization; or
- 3. A court document indicating that the employee or employee's family member is involved in legal action related to domestic violence, sexual assault, harassment or stalking.

An employer shall not require that the documentation explain the nature of the illness or the details of the domestic violence, sexual assault, harassment or stalking. If an employer chooses to require documentation for earned paid sick time and the employer does not offer health insurance to the employee, then the employer is responsible for paying all out-of-pocket expenses the employee incurs in obtaining the documentation. If the employee does have health insurance, the employer is responsible for paying any costs charged to the employee by the health care provider for providing the specific documentation required by the employer. The employer is responsible for paying any costs charged to the employee for documentation of domestic violence, sexual assault, harassment or stalking required by the employer.

- SECTION 5. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 905 of Title 40, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:
- A. It shall be unlawful for an employer or any other person to interfere with, restrain, or deny the exercise of, or the attempt to exercise, any right protected under the Healthy Families and Workplaces Act.
- B. An employer shall not take retaliatory personnel action or discriminate against an employee or former employee because the person has exercised rights protected under this act. Such rights include but are not limited to:

- 2. The right to file a complaint with the Department or courts or inform any person about any employer's alleged violation of this act;
- 3. The right to participate in an investigation, hearing or proceeding or cooperate with or assist the Department in its investigations of alleged violations of this act; and
- 4. The right to inform any person of his or her potential rights under this act.
- C. It shall be unlawful for an employer's absence-control policy to count earned paid sick time taken under this act as an absence that may lead to or result in discipline, discharge, demotion, suspension or any other adverse action.
- D. Protections of this section shall apply to any person who mistakenly but in good faith alleges violations of this act.
- E. There shall be a rebuttable presumption of unlawful retaliatory personnel action under this section whenever an employer takes adverse action against a person within ninety (90) days of when that person:
- 1. Files a complaint with the Department or a court alleging a violation of any provision of this act;
- 23 2. Informs any person about an employer's alleged violation of this act;

3. Cooperates with the Department or other persons in the investigation or prosecution of any alleged violation of this act;

- 4. Opposes any policy, practice or act that is unlawful under this act; or
 - 5. Informs any person of his or her rights under this act.
- SECTION 6. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 906 of Title 40, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:
- A. Employers shall give employees written notice of the following at the commencement of employment or by November 1, 2017, whichever is later:
- 1. Employees are entitled to earned paid sick time and the amount of earned paid sick time;
- 2. The terms of its use guaranteed under the Healthy Families and Workplaces Act;
- 3. Retaliatory personnel action against employees who request or use earned paid sick time is prohibited;
- 4. Each employee has the right to file a complaint or bring a civil action if earned paid sick time as required by this act is denied by the employer or the employee is subjected to retaliatory personnel action for requesting or taking earned paid sick time; and
- 5. The contact information for the Department where questions about rights and responsibilities under this act can be answered.

B. The notice required in subsection A of this section shall be in English, Spanish and any language that is the first language spoken by at least twenty-five percent (25%) of the employer's workforce, provided that such notice has been provided by the Department.

- C. The amount of earned paid sick time available to the employee, the amount of earned paid sick time taken by the employee in the year and the amount of pay the employee has received as earned paid sick time shall be recorded in, or on an attachment to, the employee's regular paycheck.
- D. Employers shall display a poster that contains the information required in subsection A of this section in a conspicuous and accessible place in each establishment where such employees are employed. The poster displayed shall be in English, Spanish and any language that is the first language spoken by at least twenty-five percent (25%) of the employer's workforce, provided that such poster has been provided by the Department.
- E. The Department shall create and make available to employers, in all languages spoken by more than twenty-five percent (25%) of the Oklahoma workforce and any language deemed appropriate by the Department, model notices and posters that contain the information required under subsection A of this section for employers' use in complying with subsections A and D of this section.

F. An employer who willfully violates the notice and posting requirements of this section shall be subject to a fine in an amount not to exceed One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00) for each separate offense.

SECTION 7. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 907 of Title 40, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

Employers shall retain records documenting hours worked by employees and earned paid sick time taken by employees for a period of three (3) years and shall allow the Department access to such records, with appropriate notice and at a mutually agreeable time, to monitor compliance with the requirements of this act. When an issue arises as to an employee's entitlement to earned paid sick time under this section, if the employer does not maintain or retain adequate records documenting hours worked by the employee and earned paid sick time taken by the employee, or does not allow the Department reasonable access to such records, it shall be presumed that the employer has violated this act, absent clear and convincing evidence otherwise.

SECTION 8. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 908 of Title 40, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

The Department of Labor shall be authorized to coordinate implementation and enforcement of the Healthy Families and

Workplaces Act and shall promulgate rules pursuant to the Administrative Procedures Act for such purposes.

- SECTION 9. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 909 of Title 40, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:
- A. The Department of Labor shall enforce the provisions of the Healthy Families and Workplaces Act. In effectuating such enforcement, the Department shall establish a system utilizing multiple means of communication to receive complaints regarding noncompliance with this act and investigate complaints received by the Department in a timely manner.
- B. Any person alleging a violation of this act shall have the right to file a complaint with the Department within ninety (90) days of the date the person knew or should have known of the alleged violation. The Department shall encourage reporting pursuant to this subsection by keeping confidential, to the maximum extent permitted by applicable laws, the name and other identifying information of the employee or person reporting the violation; provided however, that with the authorization of such person, the Department may disclose his or her name and identifying information as necessary to enforce this act or for other appropriate purposes.
- C. Upon receiving a complaint alleging a violation of this act, the Department shall investigate such complaint and attempt to resolve it through mediation between the complainant and the subject

of the complaint, or other means. The Department shall keep complainants notified regarding the status of their complaint and any resultant investigation. If the Department believes that a violation has occurred, it shall issue to the offending person or entity a notice of violation and the relief required of the offending person or entity. The Department shall prescribe the form and wording of such notices of violation including any method of appealing the decision of the Department.

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- D. The Department shall have the power to impose penalties provided for in this act and to grant an employee or former employee all appropriate relief. Such relief shall include but not be limited to:
- 1. For each instance of earned paid sick time taken by an employee but unlawfully not compensated by the employer: three times the wages that should have been paid under this act or One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00), whichever is greater;
- 2. For each instance of earned paid sick time requested by an employee but unlawfully denied by the employer and not taken by the employee or unlawfully conditioned upon searching for or finding a replacement worker: One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00);
- 3. For each instance of unlawful retaliation not including discharge from employment: full compensation including wages and benefits lost, an additional amount of at least One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00) and equitable relief as appropriate; and

4. For each instance of unlawful discharge from employment: full compensation including wages and benefits lost, One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00) and equitable relief, including reinstatement, as appropriate.

- E. The Department shall annually report on its website the number and nature of the complaints received pursuant to this act, the results of investigations undertaken pursuant to this act, including the number of complaints not substantiated and the number of notices of violations issued, the number and nature of adjudications pursuant to this act and the average time for a complaint to be resolved.
- F. The Department, the Attorney General, any person aggrieved by a violation of this act or any entity a member of which is aggrieved by a violation of this act may bring a civil action in a court of competent jurisdiction against an employer violating this act. Such action may be brought by a person aggrieved by a violation of this section without first filing an administrative complaint.
- SECTION 10. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 910 of Title 40, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

An employer shall not require disclosure of details relating to domestic violence, sexual assault, harassment or stalking or the details of an employee's or an employee's family member's health

information as a condition of providing earned paid sick time under
the Healthy Families and Workplaces Act. If an employer possesses
health information or information pertaining to domestic violence,
sexual assault, harassment or stalking about an employee or
employee's family member, such information shall be treated as
confidential and not disclosed except to the affected employee or
with the permission of the affected employee.

SECTION 11. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 911 of Title 40, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

- A. Nothing in the Healthy Families and Workplaces Act shall be construed to discourage or prohibit an employer from the adoption or retention of an earned paid sick time policy more generous than the one required by this act.
- B. Nothing in this act shall be construed as diminishing the obligation of an employer to comply with any contract, collective bargaining agreement, employment benefit plan or other agreement providing more generous paid sick time to an employee than required by this act.
- C. Nothing in this act shall be construed as diminishing the rights of public employees regarding paid sick time or use of paid sick time.

D. Nothing in this act shall be construed to supersede any provision of any local law that provides greater rights to paid sick time than the rights established under this act.

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SECTION 12. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 912 of Title 40, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

The Healthy Families and Workplaces Act provides minimum requirements pertaining to earned paid sick time and shall not be construed to preempt, limit or otherwise affect the applicability of any other law, regulation, requirement, policy or standard that provides for greater accrual or use by employees of earned paid sick time or that extends other protections to employees.

SECTION 13. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 913 of Title 40, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

The Department of Labor shall develop and implement a multilingual outreach program to inform employees, parents and persons who are under the care of a health care provider about the availability of earned paid sick time under the Healthy Families and Workplaces Act. This program shall include the distribution of notices and other written materials in English, Spanish and any language that is the first language spoken by at least twenty-five percent (25%) of the state's population to all child care and elder

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care providers, domestic violence shelters, schools, hospitals,
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    community health centers and other health care providers.
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        SECTION 14. This act shall become effective November 1, 2017.
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