New Jersey Municipalities Catch Paid Sick Leave Fever

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By: Kerri Wright, David Disler

By Kerri A. Wright and David L. Disler

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Unlike many countries, the United States does not require private employers to offer paid sick leave. However, several states and an increasing number of local governments have recently passed paid sick leave laws. New Jersey has followed this trend by leading the nation in the number of municipalities (thirteen) that have passed local paid sick leave ordinances. Each ordinance is relatively similar, with nearly identical ordinances having been passed in Bloomfield, East Orange, Elizabeth, Irvington, Montclair, Morristown, Newark, Passaic, Paterson, Plainfield, and Trenton (collectively the "Eleven Ordinances"). Jersey City's and New Brunswick's ordinances are similar, but differences result in Jersey City's ordinance being more favorable to employees, and New Brunswick's ordinance being more favorable to employers.

New Jersey employers, and the attorneys who counsel them, must be cognizant of these local ordinances. In particular, employers operating multiple locations must keep a careful eye on the actions of their municipal government, as competing ordinances may require the adoption of different policies for different groups of employees across the State.

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