

Assembly Bill No. 2017

CHAPTER 211

An act to amend Section 233 of the Labor Code, relating to employment.

[Approved by Governor September 28, 2020. Filed with
Secretary of State September 28, 2020.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2017, Mullin. Employee: sick leave: kin care.

Existing law requires an employer who provides sick leave for employees to permit an employee to use the employee's accrued and available sick leave entitlement to attend to the illness of a family member and prohibits an employer from denying an employee the right to use sick leave or taking specific discriminatory action against an employee for using, or attempting to exercise the right to use, sick leave to attend to such an illness.

This bill would provide that the designation of the sick leave taken under these provisions is at the sole discretion of the employee.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 233 of the Labor Code is amended to read:

233. (a) Any employer who provides sick leave for employees shall permit an employee to use in any calendar year the employee's accrued and available sick leave entitlement, in an amount not less than the sick leave that would be accrued during six months at the employee's then current rate of entitlement, for the reasons specified in subdivision (a) of Section 246.5. The designation of sick leave taken for these reasons shall be made at the sole discretion of the employee. This section does not extend the maximum period of leave to which an employee is entitled under Section 12945.2 of the Government Code or under the federal Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (29 U.S.C. Sec. 2601 et seq.), regardless of whether the employee receives sick leave compensation during that leave.

(b) As used in this section:

(1) "Employer" means any person employing another under any appointment or contract of hire and includes the state, political subdivisions of the state, and municipalities.

(2) "Family member" has the same meaning as defined in Section 245.5.

(3) (A) "Sick leave" means accrued increments of compensated leave provided by an employer to an employee as a benefit of the employment for use by the employee during an absence from the employment for any of the reasons specified in subdivision (a) of Section 246.5.

(B) “Sick leave” does not include any benefit provided under an employee welfare benefit plan subject to the federal Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-406, as amended) and does not include any insurance benefit, workers’ compensation benefit, unemployment compensation disability benefit, or benefit not payable from the employer’s general assets.

(c) An employer shall not deny an employee the right to use sick leave or discharge, threaten to discharge, demote, suspend, or in any manner discriminate against an employee for using, or attempting to exercise the right to use, sick leave to attend to an illness or the preventive care of a family member, or for any other reason specified in subdivision (a) of Section 246.5.

(d) Any employee aggrieved by a violation of this section shall be entitled to reinstatement and actual damages or one day’s pay, whichever is greater, and to appropriate equitable relief.

(e) Upon the filing of a complaint by an employee, the Labor Commissioner shall enforce this section in accordance with Chapter 4 (commencing with Section 79) of Division 1, including, but not limited to, Sections 92, 96.7, 98, and 98.1 to 98.8, inclusive. Alternatively, an employee may bring a civil action for the remedies provided by this section in a court of competent jurisdiction. If the employee prevails, the court may award reasonable attorney’s fees.

(f) The rights and remedies specified in this section are cumulative and nonexclusive and are in addition to any other rights or remedies afforded by contract or under other law.