If you work within the cities of St. Paul or Minneapolis, you can use up to 80 hours of what is called “Safe Time” under those cities’ ESST ordinances, because they define school closures and public-health emergencies as events that can trigger mandatory “Safe Time” coverage from employers. Where you live has no bearing on whether the St. Paul and Minneapolis ordinances apply – just where your work is performed. You accrue 1 hour of Safe and Sick Time for every 30 hours worked, up to a maximum of 80 for the year.

This also means that if the coronavirus forces some employees to work in a reduced capacity or work fewer hours from what was previously scheduled, those employees may use accrued Sick and Safe Time for the previously scheduled hours.

If you are infected or symptomatic, you may use any accrued Sick and Safe Time hours and the employer is required to allow access. Furthermore, ordinance protection is triggered if an employee has reason to believe they are probably infected. Under those circumstances, self-quarantine (“preventive care” during a global pandemic) would constitute a protected use of accrued sick and safe time. Note that preemptive self-quarantine (i.e. without reason to believe you have contracted an illness) is not covered by the Sick and Safe Time ordinance.

SEIU HCMN worked together with a broad coalition of labor, faith and community partners to pass these ordinances – and continues to fight for the same protections to be extended by state law to cover all workers in Minnesota.

If you have additional questions about ESST and how it applies to you, there are FAQs for both MPLS and St. Paul or you can contact the Member Action Center at 651-294-8100 | mac@seiuhcmn.org