

March 29, 2019

Urge Your Alderman to Oppose Any Work Scheduling Ordinance Proposal That Includes Hospitals – Unworkable and Costly

The Chicago City Council is expected to consider a restrictive scheduling ordinance proposal (known as the “Fair Workweek” ordinance) at its April 10 meeting.

IHA strongly opposes any scheduling ordinance that includes hospitals because it would be unworkable and costly. Hospitals are exempted from work scheduling ordinances in New York City, Oregon, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Seattle, and Washington DC. We need to let the City Council know that a work scheduling ordinance would harm Chicago hospitals and patients.

ACTION REQUESTED: Contact your Alderman and urge them to oppose any scheduling ordinance proposal that includes hospitals. To send an email to your Alderman, [click here](#).

Suggested Talking Points

- I urge you to oppose any workweek scheduling ordinance proposal that includes hospitals.
- Elsewhere around the country, hospitals have been exempted from work scheduling ordinances in New York City, Oregon, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Seattle and Washington DC.
- Thousands of Chicago residents rely on flexibility in their schedules, especially when unplanned issues arise at home, school or life. When these issues arise, Chicago workers currently have the ability to work with their employer to address the issues and find a schedule that works for them.
- But the ordinance being considered by the City Council threatens flexible scheduling options in Chicago and would have an incredibly negative impact on employees, employers and Chicago.
- Our hospital and Chicago's 40 other hospitals are the cornerstones of healthcare for the millions of people residing in Chicago – and they are vital to the city's economy, generating nearly 140,000 jobs and an annual economic impact of more than \$26 billion.
- I am deeply concerned that the ordinance's very restrictive requirements are unworkable and impractical for hospitals given unpredictable shifts in patient volumes and staffing needs.
- The ordinance would undermine the timely and efficient delivery of healthcare to patients, which it recognizes and acknowledges by exempting the Cook County Health and Hospital System.
- For example, if there were a major flu outbreak in Chicago, many hospitals would receive an influx of pediatric and elderly patients needing critical life-saving care.
- To ensure that the hospitals are fully staffed to meet this unplanned demand, additional nurses, technicians and support staff would be needed on very short notice.
- But under the proposed ordinance, hospitals would be forced to pay a penalty for every employee who is called in or be short-staffed and risk the health and safety of their patients.
- Our hospital is strongly committed to supporting healthcare workers in providing quality healthcare to all patients.
- Hospitals across Chicago have unique needs and demands and must have the flexibility to align and deploy their employees to provide quality healthcare to patients, but this proposal would unnecessarily jeopardize the ability of

hospitals to meet those needs.

- For all of these reasons, I urge you to oppose any scheduling ordinance proposal that includes hospitals.

Background – Requirements of the Chicago Fair Workweek Ordinance Proposal

- The ordinance applies to Chicago employers with hourly employees or salaried employees earning less than \$50,000 a year.
- Chicago employers must post work schedules for their employees at least two weeks (14 days) in advance.
- Employers must pay their employees for at least one additional hour of “predictability pay” if the work schedule changes or if work hours are added or subtracted.
- If work hours are canceled or reduced with less than 24 hours’ notice, the employer must pay the employee no less than one-half times the employee’s regular hourly pay rate for any scheduled hours that the employee does not work.
- Employees have the right to decline unscheduled hours that an employer adds if the employee has received less than 14 days’ notice of the additional hours.
- An employee has the right to decline shifts that occur during the 11 hours following the end of a shift.
- Before hiring new employees or contract employees, including the use of a temporary or staffing agency, an employer must first offer additional hours to existing employees.
- Employers must provide newly hired employees, in writing prior to or on the commencement of employment, an estimate of the median number of hours they are expected to work and their work schedule.
- Employers face fines of \$500 for each affected employee in each pay period for failing to comply with the ordinance.

For more information, contact [David Gross](#).

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