[Understanding HR Policies: Why do employees misuse sick days?](#)

Many surveys and reports inform us that today's employees struggle increasingly with feeling overwhelmed, stressed, or burnt out. Consequently, these employees experience increased mental health concerns. Sometimes these employees are coming to work and other times calling in 'sick'. It can be difficult for an organization to manage employee health and wellness needs while acknowledging that some employees abuse sick leave privileges.

According to a recently published survey by Angus Reid on behalf of Kronos, an astonishing 54% of Canadians admitted to faking sick time. Nearly two-thirds of those who admitted to faking sick time (65%) indicated that they did so because they were feeling stressed, while 35% did so to take care of a sick child. An additional 13% faked illness due to overwork and 12% admitted to calling in sick because they felt they did have not enough vacation time.

According to stats Canada, Canadians who work full-time lost, on average, between 5.6 and 12.2 days of work in 2012 due to illness or disability, and this costs the Canadian economy $16.6 billion/year

Add the stats together and the misuse of sick time costs the Canadian economy almost $9 billion.

Does it affect you?

In the latest **HR Insider** *Understanding HR Policies* whitepaper, **HR Insider** explains what constitutes misuse of sick time, if you can fire an employee for missing too much work, how medical notes factor in to decision criteria, and what steps you can take to address sick leave.

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