

# Key Findings from the City of Seattle **Paid Sick and Safe Time Ordinance** Evaluation Study

Prepared for the San Antonio City Council  
AdHoc Committee on Paid Sick Leave

September 10, 2019

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University of Washington



Section 4. Eighteen months after the effective date of this ordinance, ... the Seattle Office of City Auditor will provide Council with a written evaluation of the impacts this ordinance has had on employees and employers.

*Research team: Wes Bignell, Tracy Brazg, Chantel Johnson, Cori Mar, Jennifer Morton, Chiho Song and the UW Survey Research Division*

*The Seattle City Council commissioned this study through the City of Seattle Office of the City Auditor. Based on a report presented to the the Seattle City Council Finance and Culture Committee on April 23, 2014.*

**Implementation and Early Outcomes of the City of Seattle**

**Paid Sick and Safe Time Ordinance**

**Final Report**



Prepared for:

City of Seattle – Office of City Auditor

Prepared by:

Jennifer Romich with Wes Bignell, Tracy Brazg, Chantel Johnson,

Cori Mar, Jennifer Morton, and Chiho Song

University of Washington

April 23, 2014

[Link to full report](#)

*Implementing the changes was not a problem.*

*People do get sick...*

*I think it's a reasonable policy, that people have some protection...*

*a safety net to rely on.*



# One year in...

- Most employers know about the Ordinance
- The majority of employers are offering paid leave although gaps remain
- Costs to employers and impact on businesses are very modest and smaller than anticipated
- Many employers support the Ordinance, and workers view it as helpful

# Studying the Ordinance's first year

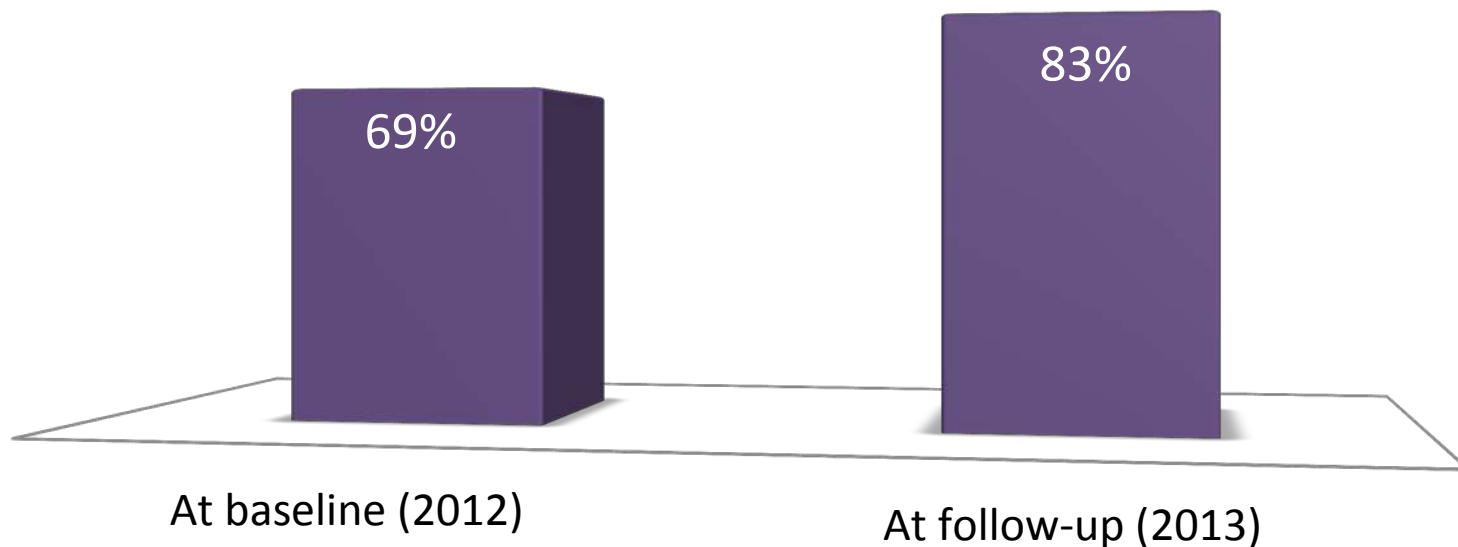
- Two surveys of 345 employers
  - from 1460 employers contacted
- Interviews with 24 employers and 33 workers
  - Retail, food and accommodations, and health and social service sectors
- Analysis of confidential Employment Security Department data
  - employers in Seattle, Bellevue, Everett and Tacoma



Most employers know about the  
Ordinance

# Awareness increased over the first year

**Employers Aware of Ordinance (%)**







*[I] started becoming aware of it when it started becoming public information ....I received some sort of correspondence in the mail from the City of Seattle regarding this. Then once I heard about it I – I started looking it up, just to find out what was happening.*

-General manager, high-end chain restaurant

The majority of employers are  
offering SOME paid leave

# Compliance = Coverage + Adequacy

## PART 2 – BENEFITS

Which of the following benefits does your business or organization offer to its Seattle employees?

### 1. Coverage

Who gets leave?

	Offered to full-time employees only	Offered to full- and part-time employees only	Offered to full-time, part-time, seasonal, and temporary employees	This benefit is not offered
Paid sick leave	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Undesignated leave or universal "Paid time off" (PTO)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

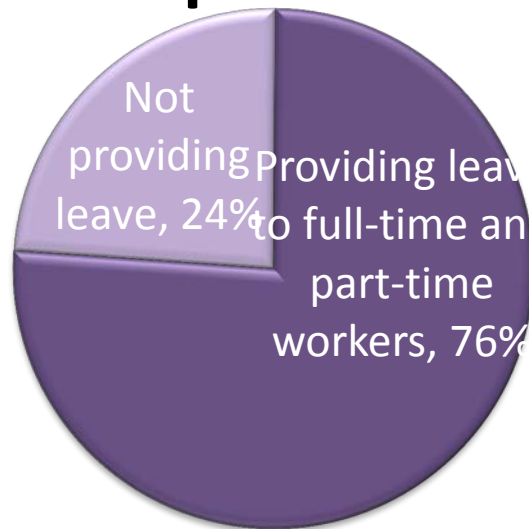
For each of the types of paid leave listed below, how many days or hours would a **full-time** Seattle employee accrue after s/he has been with the business or organization for one year? PLEASE FILL IN ONLY ONE COLUMN BELOW (either # of days or # of hours). If your business **does not** offer paid leave to **full-time** Seattle employees, please enter zeros below.

### 2. Adequacy

How much leave?

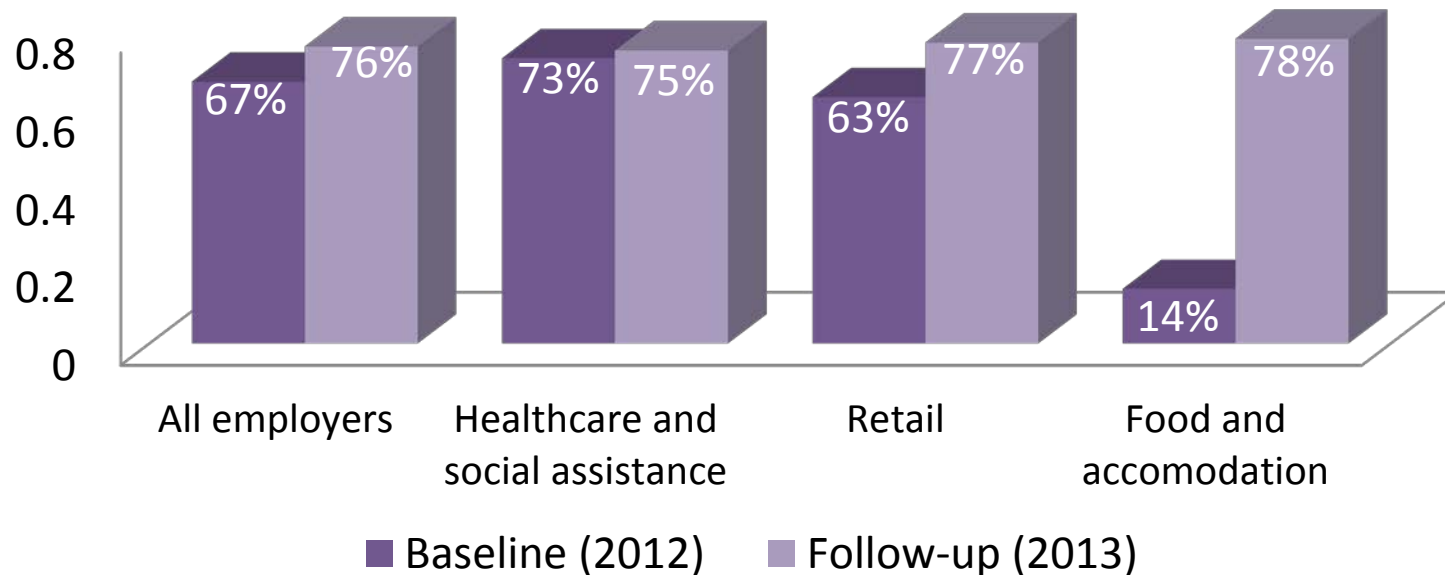
	Number of paid <b>days</b> accrued per year	or	Number of paid <b>hours</b> accrued per year
Paid sick leave			
Undesignated leave or universal "Paid time off" (PTO)			

# 1. Coverage: Most employers cover full-time and part-time workers

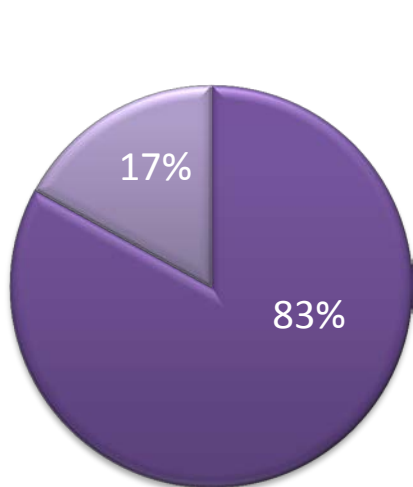


Only 26% cover temporary and seasonal workers

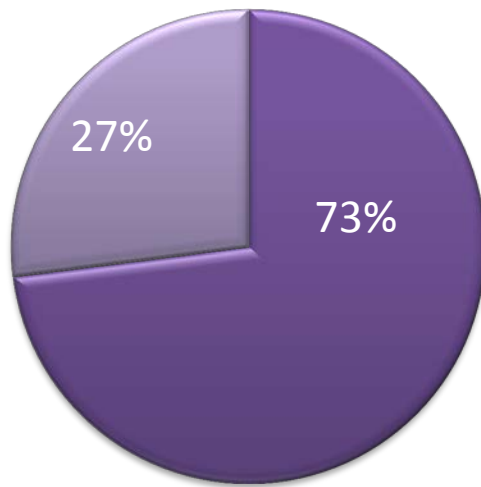
# Coverage increased over the first year



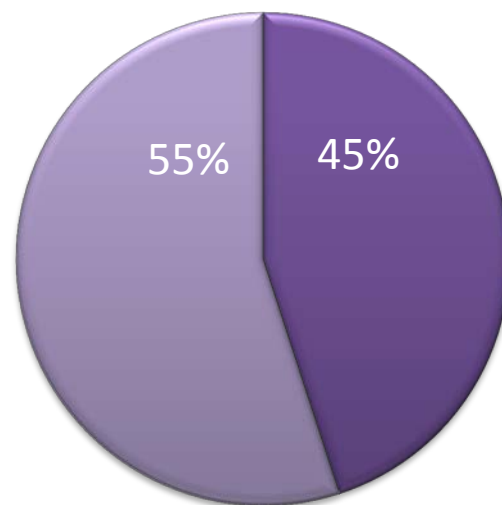
## 2. Adequacy: Smaller employers are more likely to offer enough hours/days of leave



**Tier 1 (5-49FTE)**



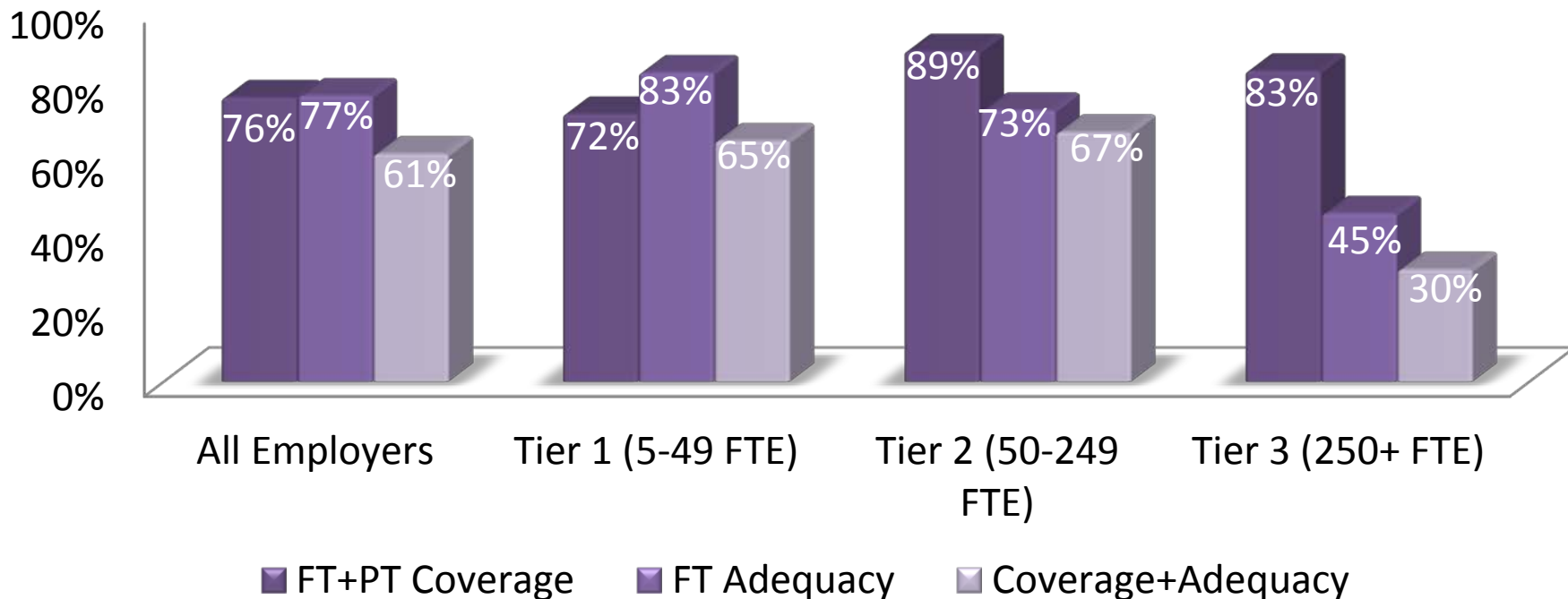
**Tier 2 (50-249FTE)**



**Tier 3 (250+FTE)**

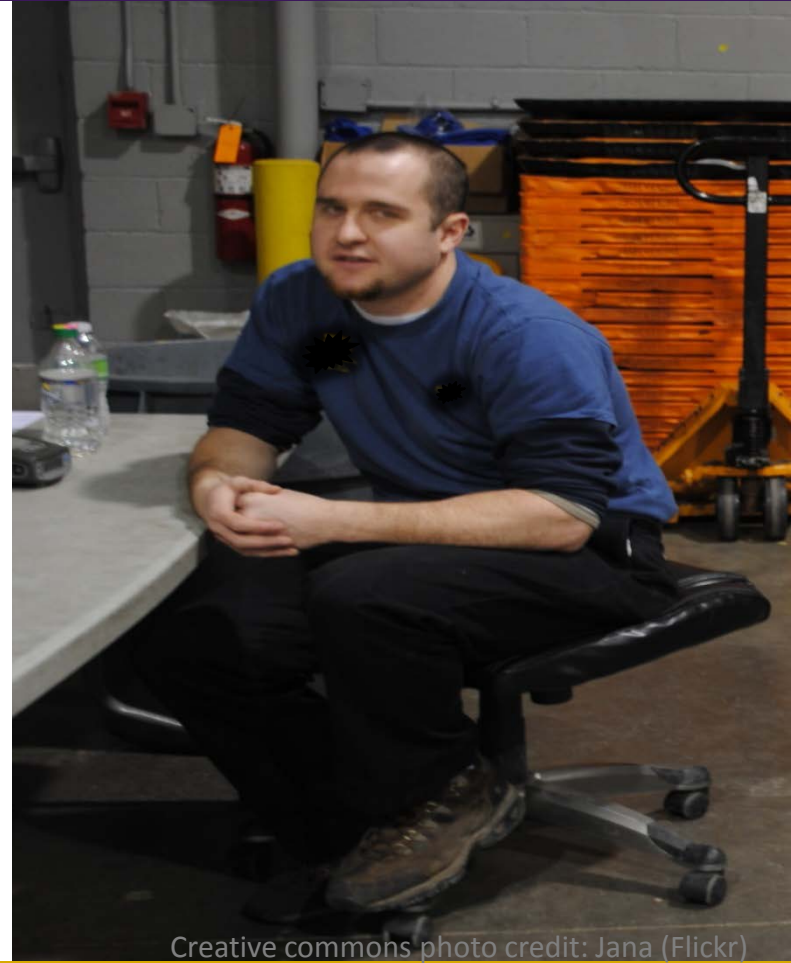
- Provides adequate leave to full-time employees
- Does not provide adequate leave

# Compliance (coverage + adequacy) is highest among smaller employers



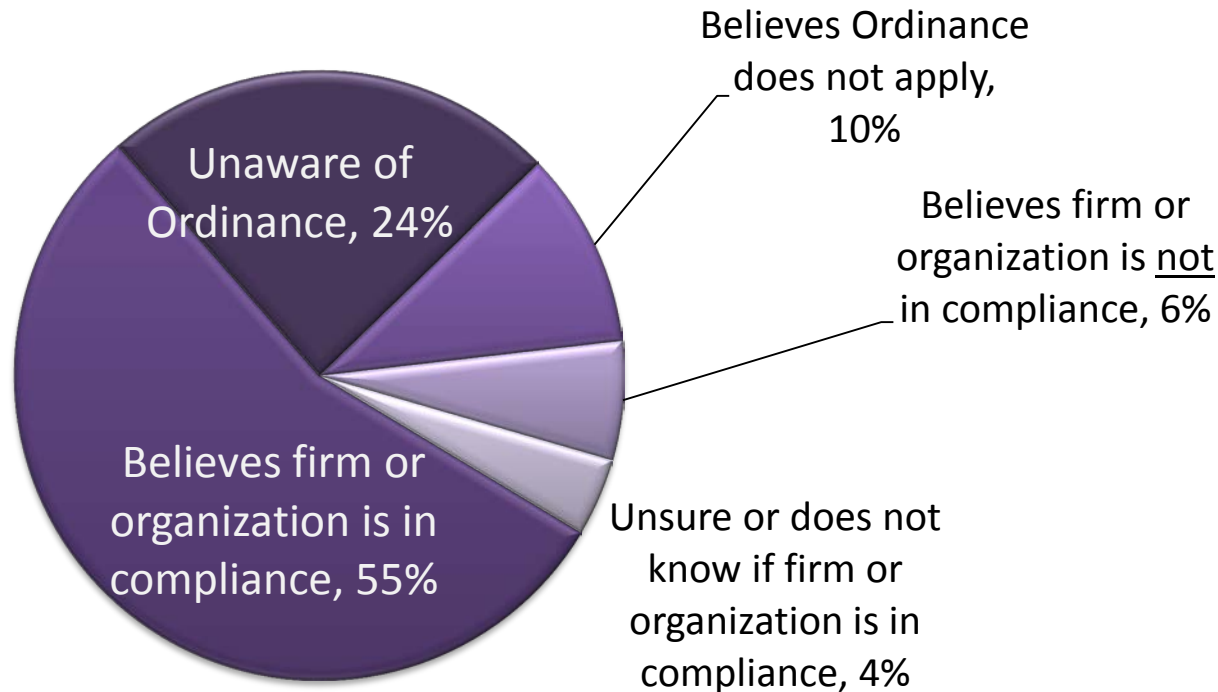
*I took the last week off because I was sick. I mean – I'm getting time off now, but I don't have paid sick leave.*

-Merchandiser, retail chain





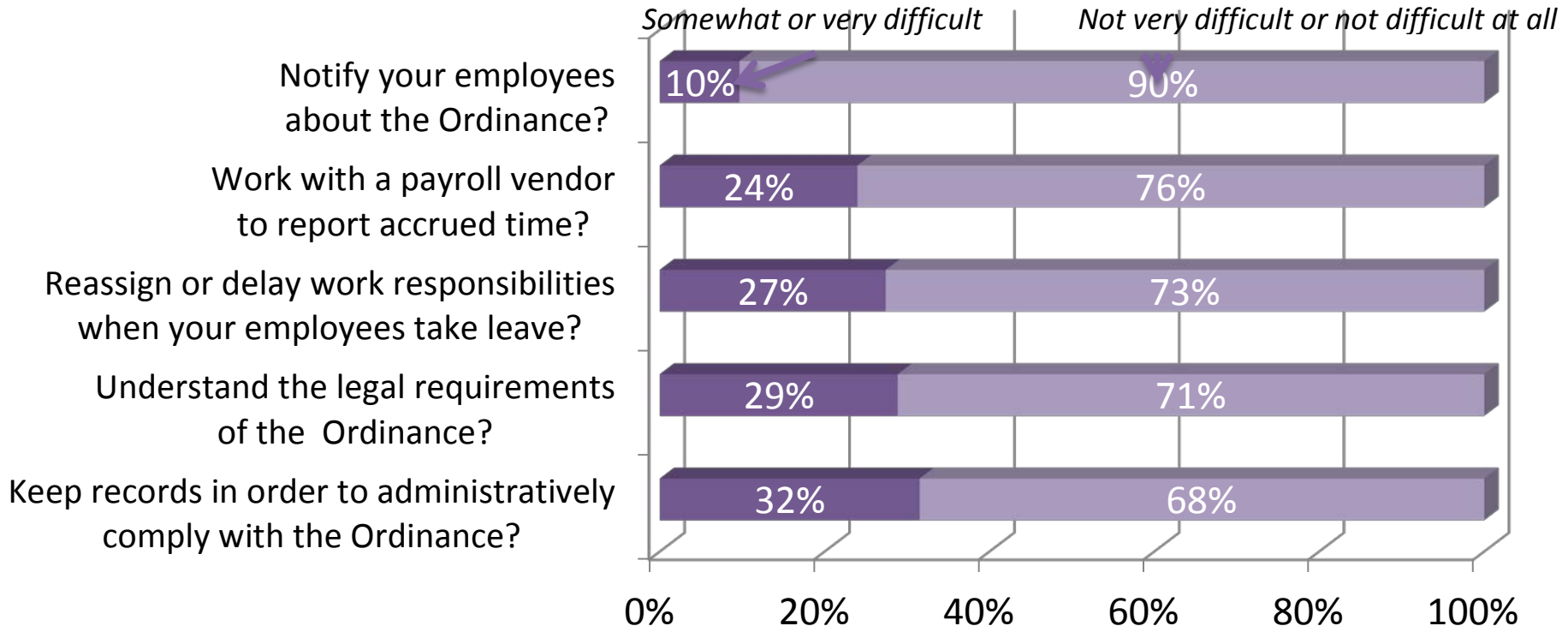
# Many non-compliant employers believe they are complying



Implementation was easy for some  
employers and caused temporary  
hassles for others

# Most employers made changes easily

How difficult has it been for your business or organization to ...





*The bumpiest part  
was the beginning.  
Anytime you're doing  
something new. Now  
it's kind of just part of  
the routine.*

-HR manager, Tier 2 retailer

Impacts on employers were  
modest to negligible

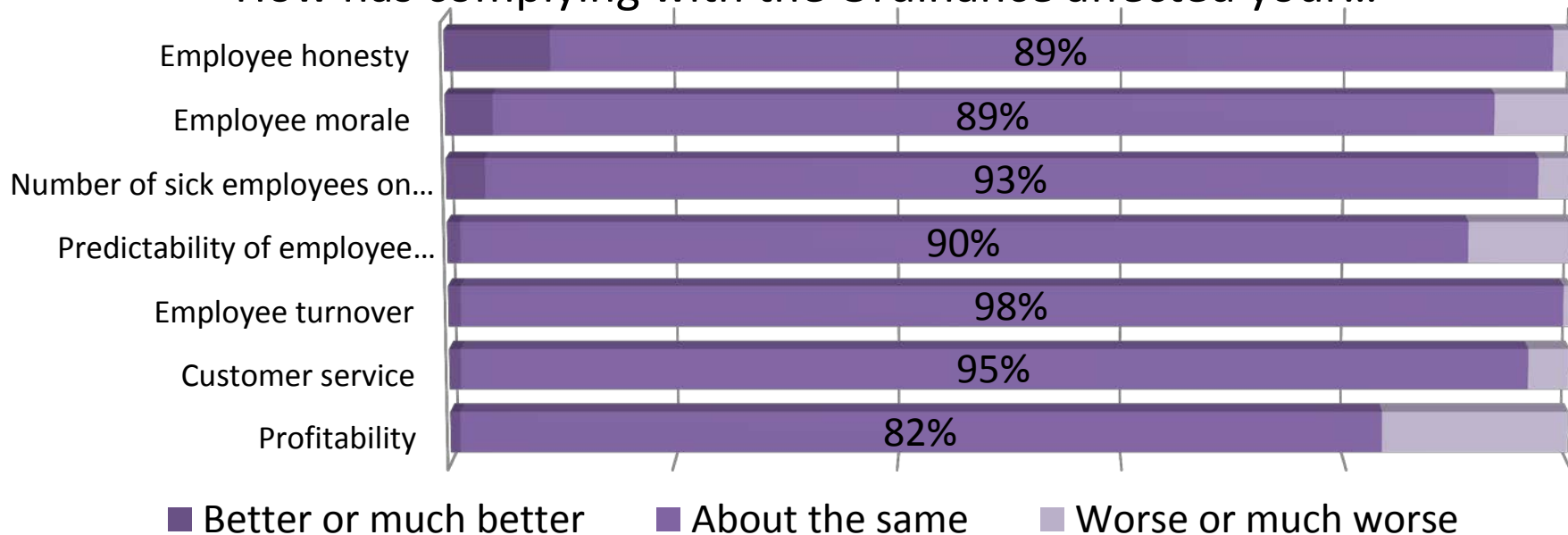
*Quite frankly, I've only had one person – maybe two people – use the sick/safe hours. So it really hasn't impacted us a lot.*

-HR manager, health and social services organization

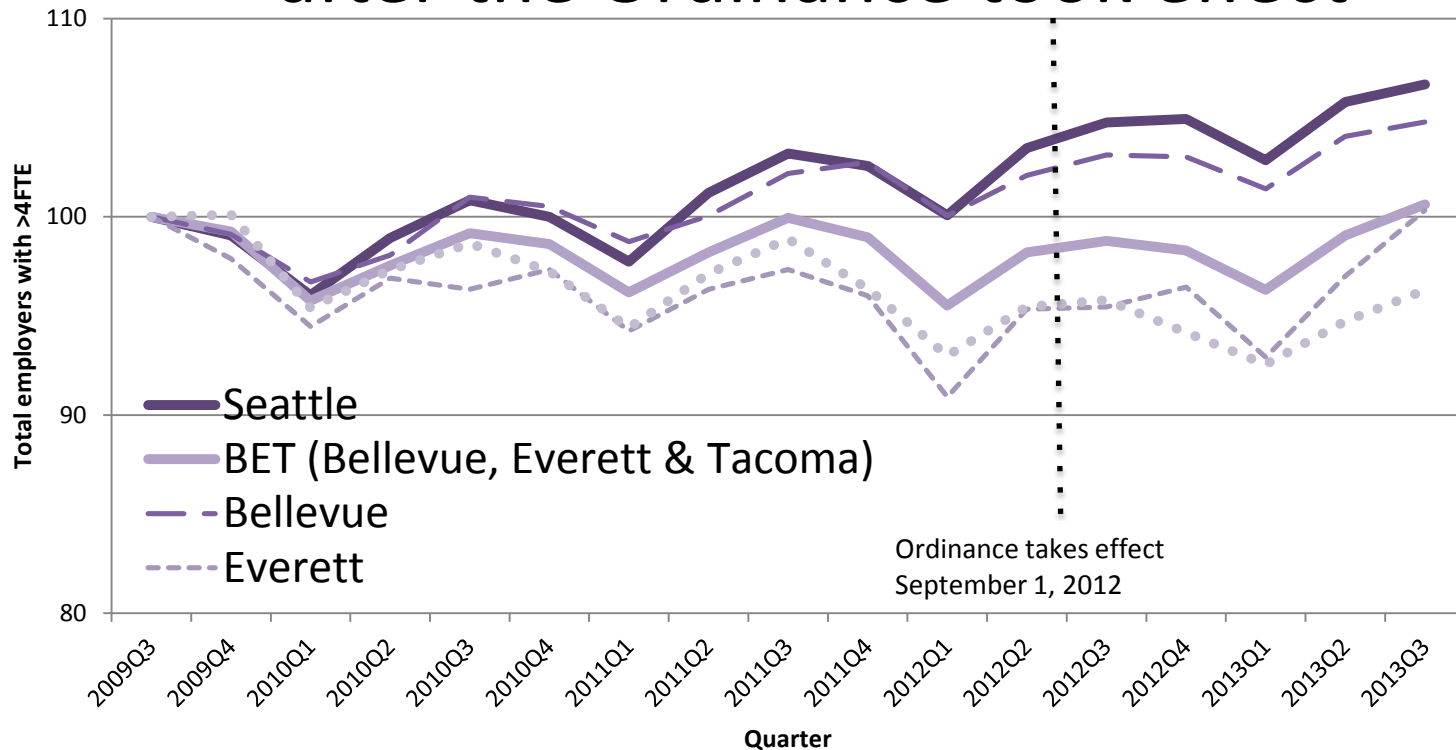


# Employers perceived few impacts

How has complying with the Ordinance affected your...



# Number of Seattle employers continued to grow after the Ordinance took effect



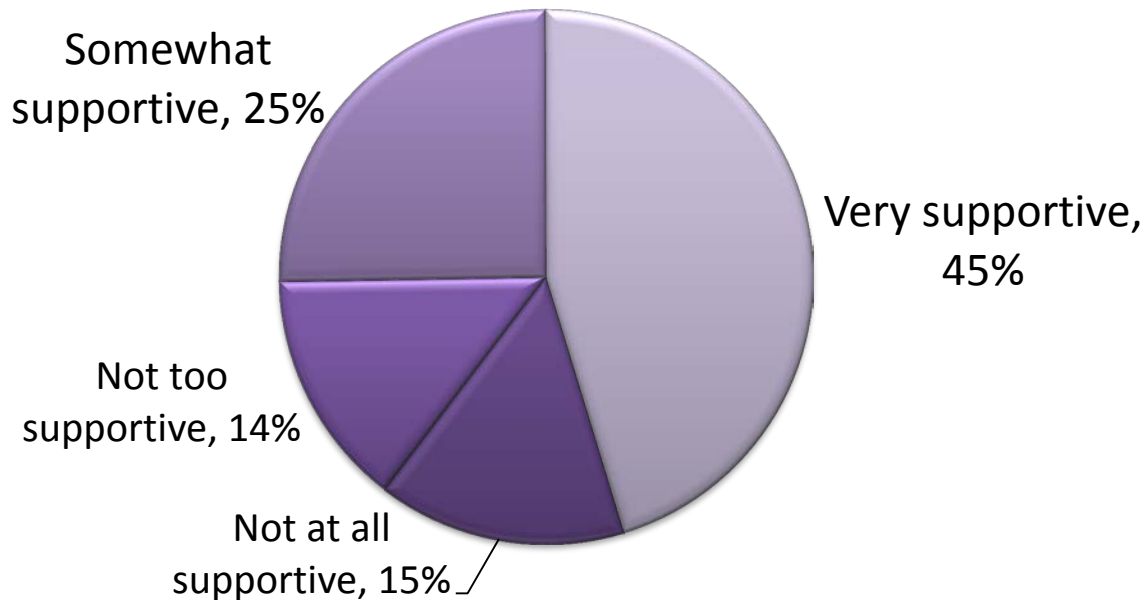


# Costs to employers are modest and smaller than expected

- One-time implementation costs: 0.13% of total revenue
- Annual cost of providing leave: 0.41% of total revenue



# Many employers support the Ordinance





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*I understand the spirit behind what it was trying to do. And – and I support the fact that if you are ill or you have to take care of somebody, you should stay home.... [That's] a principle that I think we practiced always.... So I – I can support that.*

**-General Manager, Retail**

*It's good. I, you know, I like it. I think it – because I know there were companies in Seattle that offered no sick time whatsoever and so now it's very equal.*

-Customer service worker,  
Tier 3 discount retailer



# Thank you

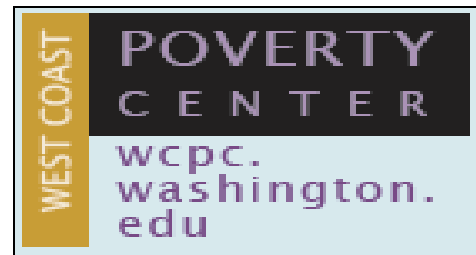
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