

# 5 Things to Know About Your Legal Rights After a Diagnosis

## 1. If you need to take time off work, new laws may help you get paid.

Minnesota has two new laws about paid time off if you're sick or need to take care of someone:

- Earned Sick and Safe Time started on January 1, 2024. You can learn more at [dli.mn.gov/sick-leave](https://dli.mn.gov/sick-leave).
- Paid Leave starts on January 1, 2026. Visit [mn.gov/deed/paidleave/](https://mn.gov/deed/paidleave/) for details.

## 2. If you have medical debt, you have legal rights.

Starting on October 1, 2024, Minnesota has a new law called the Debt Fairness Act. It helps protect people in Minnesota who owe money because of medical debt. Under the new law:

- Your spouse will not be responsible for your medical debt
- Health care providers cannot stop treating you because of medical debt
- Unethical medical debt collection is stopped
- Patients can dispute medical coding and billing mistakes
- Medical debt cannot be reported to credit bureaus

## 3. Laws can be different in each state.

In Minnesota, you can find helpful and trusted information from:

- **Minnesota Attorney General's Office:** They help with scams, debt, consumer issues, and healthcare billing. Visit [ag.state.mn.us](https://ag.state.mn.us) or call (651) 296-3353 (in Twin Cities), (800) 657-3787 (outside Twin Cities), or (800) 627-3529 (Minnesota Relay).
- **LawHelpMN:** They have information on benefits, family issues, housing, immigration, work, taxes, and can help you find a lawyer. Visit [lawhelpmn.org](https://lawhelpmn.org).
- **Cancer Legal Care:** Provides legal help for people living in Minnesota and dealing with cancer-related issues at work, with insurance, with disability benefits, and with estate planning. Visit [cancerlegalcare.org](https://cancerlegalcare.org) or call (651) 917-9000.

## 4. If you can't work, you may be eligible for Social Security disability benefits.

Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) are for people who can't work long-term because of an illness or injury. They are not for short-term needs. You can create an account at [www.ssa.gov](https://www.ssa.gov) to see what benefits you may qualify for.

## 5. You have the right to make your wishes known now.

- Now is the best time to make your wishes known to your family, friends and healthcare team.
- Creating legal documents like a healthcare directive, financial power of attorney, and a will, often bring peace of mind to patients and their loved ones.



**CANCER LEGAL CARE**  
LAWYERS ON YOUR CANCER CARE TEAM

**For help, call (651) 917-9000 or visit us at [cancerlegalcare.org](https://cancerlegalcare.org)**