

## **Guidance for Supervisors When Employees Take Protected Leave**

If you have questions about protected leave, please reach out the Leaves staff at [COEBenefitsLeaveTeam@ci.eugene.or.us](mailto:COEBenefitsLeaveTeam@ci.eugene.or.us) or 541-682-5061. Leaves staff are available to consult with you regarding your questions and concerns in navigating protected leave programs with your employees. Please review the notices that are sent regarding leave eligibility and designation. These notices include information about dates of designation, medical certification due date, time coding, and an employee's rights and responsibilities. Please help to ensure your employee is accurately paid while on leave. You can assist with this by reviewing the employee's timesheet to ensure the employee is accurately recording FMLA/OFLA leave usage.

### **Remember to Check in During the Leave**

During a typical week, managers meet with their teams for check-ins. Similarly, plan to check in periodically with your team member on leave. Create an individualized schedule that works for you and your team member before they go out on leave if possible. A good starting point is checking in weekly, but of course this depends on the length of the leave. Keeping up occasional communication will help your team member feel valued and engaged, when they are out of the office, and it demonstrates your confidence in and support of their work. You can talk with your employee to find the method of communication that best suits them, whether it is via email or a phone call. If email is the preferred method, do not forget to ask for their personal email address as an employee should not be checking their work email when out on leave.

It is important to maintain the privacy of employee by not asking for details about the health condition or leave reason in your check in communications. Also, do not share details of their leave with other employees.

Please update the [Leaves staff](#) if you are notified of a change in an employee's need for leave or if an employee asks you about extending their leave.

### **Intermittent Leave**

Employees on intermittent leave are expected to perform the duties of their position when they are at work. This can be a more complex type of protected leave to navigate. It is okay to request that employees follow normal call-in requirements and procedures while on intermittent leave. Clarify with the employee if the absences are related to the protected leave or for another reason if this is not clear on their timesheet.

### **Reach Out Right Before Their Return**

You may have completed a check-in or two with your employee while they were out on leave. Even more important than a brief check-in is the communication right before the staff member returns to the office. It is important to ask about how they would like their return approached. Sometimes the employee might want to return without a lot of fanfare. It is important to honor privacy in terms of what the staff member wants to divulge. An example of a return announcement might be: "John will be back in the office on May 6." It is simple, but it gets the job done.

## **Think Through the Details of Their Return**

Consider how you can create meaningful touchpoints that create a welcoming experience. For instance, you might stop by to welcome them back after they get settled the first day. Let them know you have a meeting scheduled mid-morning to update them on project status, work transition plans and information they might have missed when they were out. Focus on providing background on projects and results. Take time to answer questions they may have. This extra time and effort will help the staff member get oriented and set them up for success to step back into their role. Schedule time for check-ins the first few weeks of their return to ensure communication during the transition. A short transition period is normal.

Employees are expected to complete the essential functions of their position upon their return unless there are accommodations in place. If an employee mentions restrictions or you have concerns that the employee is not able to complete the essential functions of their job please reach out to [ADA staff](#). Supervisors can consult with ERC if they would like assistance navigating the employee's return to work in terms of team dynamics, work assignments, or performance concerns.

### **Additional Supervisor Resources:**

- [Family and Medical Leave Webpage](#)
- [Long-Term Disability \(LTD\) Webpage](#)
- [Leave Donations Webpage](#)
- [Absence, Leaves, and Accommodations SharePoint Page](#)
- [Managing Sick Leave - FAQs](#)