



Mastering Oregon Leave Laws


Navigating OFLA, PLO, and Other Protected Leave of Absence with Confidence

CHRISTINE THELEN

BRENNA MCLAUGHLIN

LANE POWELL PC

Today's Agenda

- 
- Overview of Leave Laws Applicable to Oregon Employers
 - Interaction Between Leave Laws
 - Administering Leaves
 - Suggested Practices
 - Avoiding Common Pitfalls
 - Questions

Leaves Laws For Oregon Employers

Paid Leave Oregon (PLO)

Who

- All employers, all employees (with sufficient base wages)

Qualifying Reasons

- 12 weeks of PAID leave for:
 - Family Leave (child bonding, birth, adoption, foster placement)
 - Medical leave (employee's own serious health condition or a family member's)
 - Safe Leave (domestic violence, stalking, sexual harassment, bias crime)
- Additional 2 weeks of PAID leave for
 - Limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth, or a related medical condition, including lactation
- Coming in January 2025
 - Leave to effectuate the legal process required for placement of a foster child or the adoption of a child

Oregon Family Leave Act (OFLA)

Who

- Employers with 25 employees in Oregon
- Employees with 180 days of service with average of 25 hours per week*

Qualifying Reasons

- 12 weeks of UNPAID leave for:
 - Sick child leave (all illnesses, injuries, or conditions that require home care, whether or not it is a serious medical condition)
 - Care for employee's, spouse's, or domestic partner's child whose school or childcare provider has been closed due to a public health emergency
 - Bereavement leave (maximum of 4 weeks per year, up to 2 weeks per death)
- Additional 12 weeks of UNPAID leave for:
 - Pregnancy-related disability leave
- Ending December 2024:
 - Two weeks UNPAID leave to effectuate the legal process required for placement of a foster child or the adoption of a child

Federal Family & Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

Who

- Employers with 50 or more employees
- Employees with 1 year of service, 1250 hours, working at location with 50 employees in 75-mile radius

Qualifying Reasons

- 12 weeks UNPAID leave for
 - Birth, adoption, or fostering of a child within one year of birth or placement
 - Care for the employee's spouse, child, or parent with serious health condition
 - Employee's own serious health condition
 - Qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that the employee's spouse, child, or parent is a covered military member (called to duty or on leave from duty)
- 26 weeks UNPAID leave for (combined with other FMLA leave)
 - Care for a spouse, child, parent, or next of kin who is a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness (military caregiver leave)

Workers' Compensation Leave



Who

- All employers, all employees*

Length of Leave

- Based on doctor's orders

Qualifying Reasons

- Have a work-related injury or illness

Leave as a Reasonable Accommodation for Disability

Who

- Federal ADA : Employers with 15 or more employees
- Oregon Law: Employers with 6 or more employees

Length of Leave

- Based on doctor's orders, provided does not result in undue hardship

Qualifying Reasons

- Physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, history or record of such an impairment, or perceived by others as having such an impairment

Pregnant Workers' Fairness Act (PWFA)

Who

- Employers with 15 or more employees

Length of Leave

- Based on doctor's orders, provided does not result in undue hardship

Qualifying Reasons

- Qualified employees affected by pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. For example:
 - Current or past pregnancy
 - Lactation*
 - Fertility or infertility treatments
 - Menstruation
 - Endometriosis
 - Miscarriage, stillbirth, abortion
 - Any pre-existing condition exacerbated by pregnancy or childbirth



Oregon Pregnancy Accommodation Law

- Employers with 6 or more employees

Bonus Leaves!

State and Federal
Military Leave

Military Family
Leave

Veterans Day
Observance for
Veterans

Bone Marrow
Donor Leave

Domestic Violence,
Harassment,
Sexual Assault,
Stalking, Bias
Crime Leave

Crime Victim Leave

Juvenile Court
Appearance Leave

Emergency
Responder Leave*

Legislative Leave

State Board or
Commission Leave

Olympics Leave

Oregon Paid Sick Time

Length of Leave

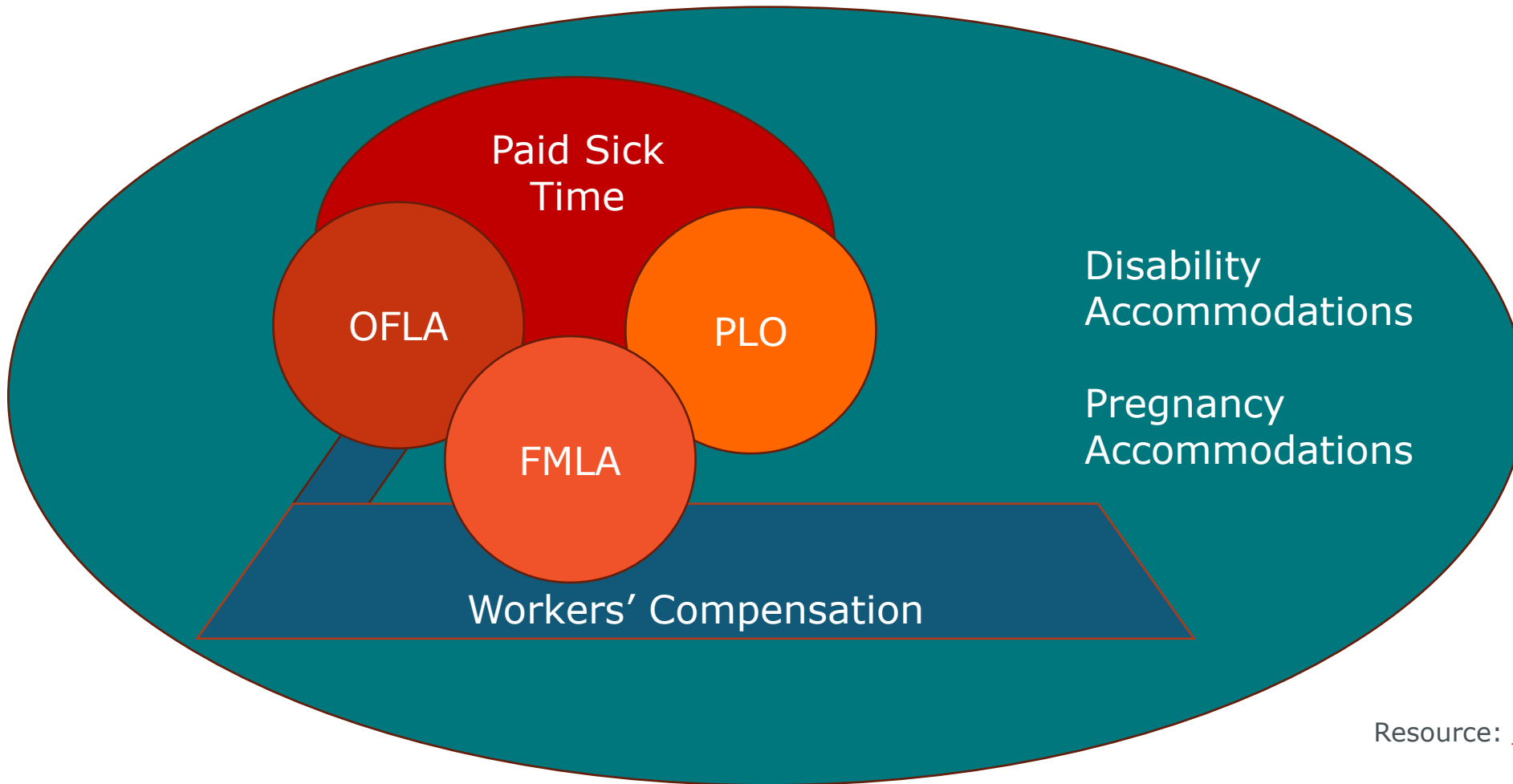
- Accrue 1 hour of sick time for every 30 hours worked, up to 40 hours per year, OR frontload 40 hours per year

Qualifying Reasons

- Preventive medical care, medical diagnosis, or care and treatment of employee's mental or physical illness, injury or health condition
- Care of employee's family member with a mental or physical illness, injury or health condition, including a serious health condition, who needs preventive medical care, medical diagnosis, or care and treatment
- To care for a child who is suffering from an illness, injury, or condition that requires home care, or who requires home care due to the closure of the child's school or childcare provider because of a public health emergency
- To grieve, arrange for, and attend a funeral or memorial service, and to attend to other related-family matters related to the death of a family member
- Any reasons that qualify under OFLA or PLO
- Absences related to domestic violence, harassment, sexual assault, bias, or stalking
- Public health emergencies, including:
 - Closure by a public official of an employee's place of business or the school or place of care of an employee's child, or a determination by a public health authority or health care provider that the presence of an employee or employee's family member presents a health risk to others
 - If a public official determines the air quality index or heat index are at a level where continued exposure to such levels would jeopardize the health of the employee
 - An employee's home or workplace is in a Level 2 or 3 evacuation zone

Leave Interaction

Overlapping Leave Laws



- Military Family Leave
- Domestic Violence Leave
- Bone Marrow Donation Leave

Resource: [Paid-Leave-OFLA-FMLA-Chart-EN.pdf](#)

PLO and FMLA Together

Concurrent Leaves



Birth or placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care*



Care for a **child, spouse, or parent** who has a serious health condition

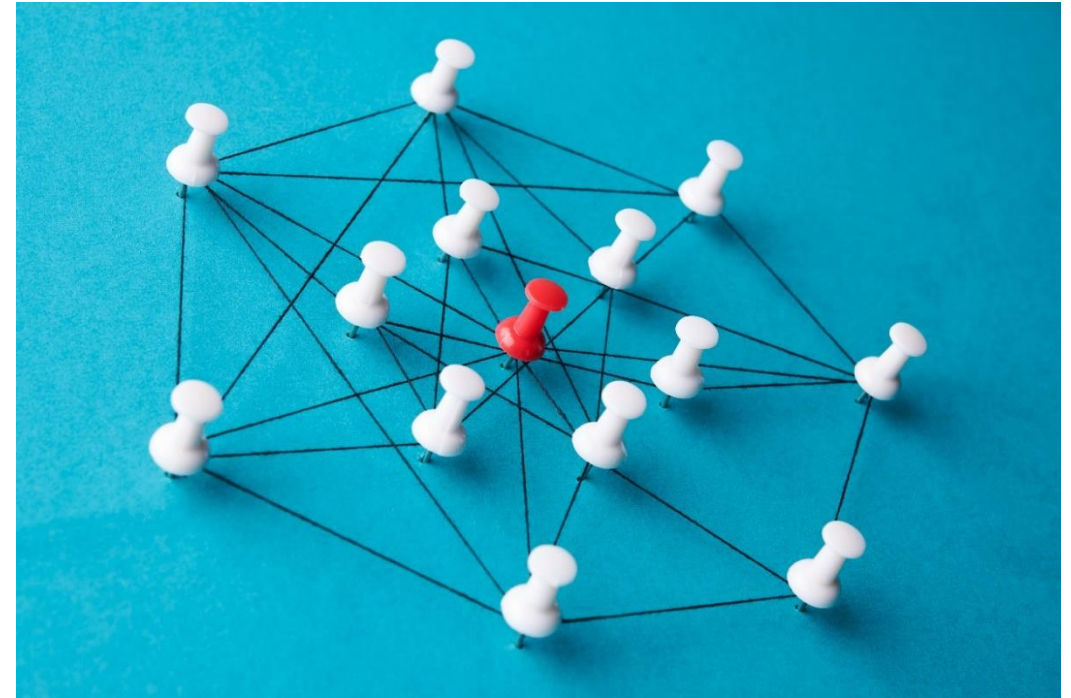


Employee's own serious health condition

- FMLA runs concurrently with PLO when an employee has a need for leave that qualifies under both
 - Remember:
 - PLO's definition of "family member" is much more expansive than FMLA's
 - FMLA's military exigency and caregiver leaves do not run concurrently
- When notified an employee is taking PLO, proceed with your normal FMLA certification process, including required notices and medical certifications
- Policy Consideration:
 - Update your FMLA period so it runs concurrently with PLO: period of 52 consecutive weeks beginning on the Sunday immediately preceding the date on which leave commences

PLO and Short-term Disability?

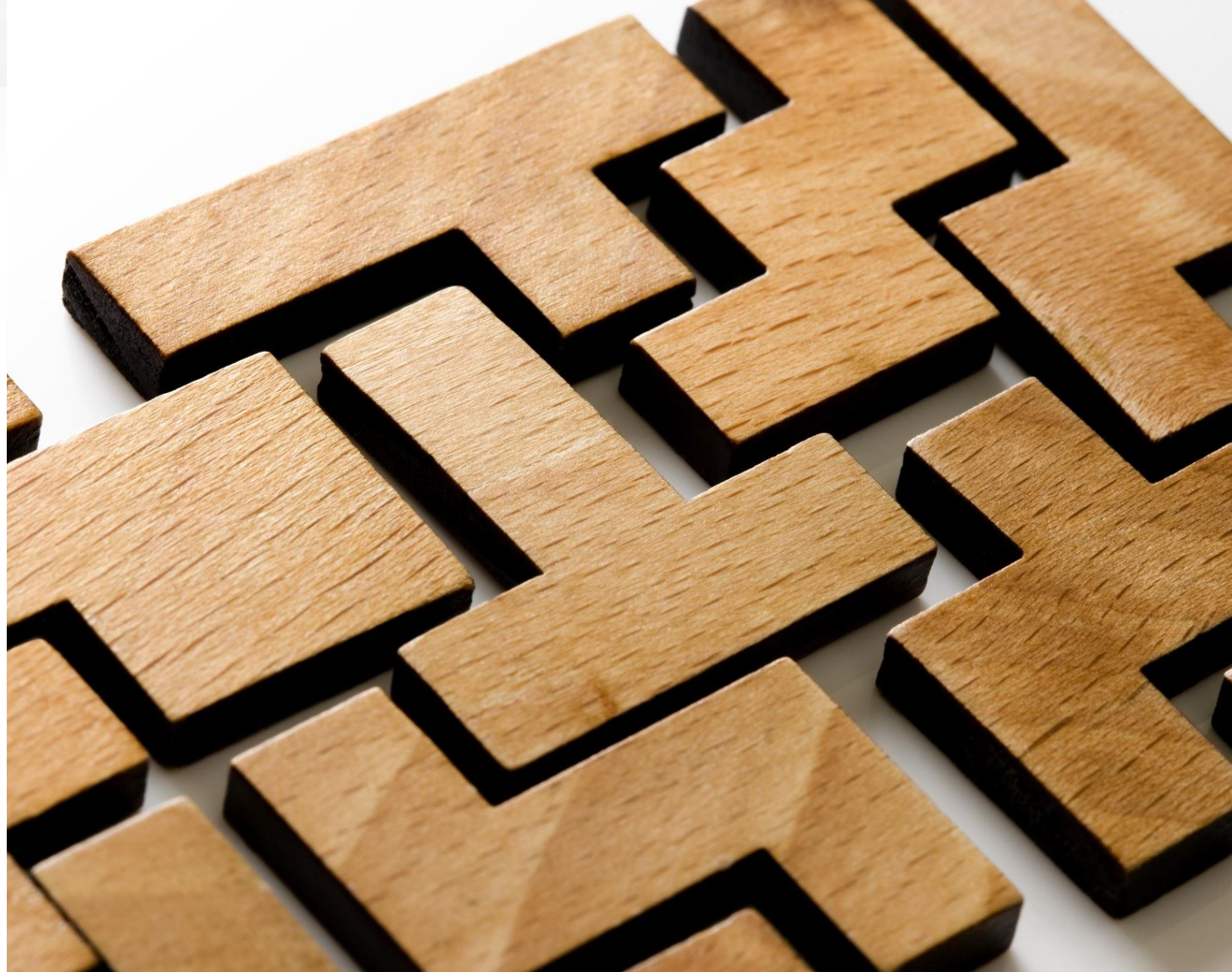
- They're different!
- PLO is a public benefits program; Short-Term Disability (STD) is not
- Eligibility for STD depends on your plan documents
- Employees can be eligible for PLO and STD at the same time
- STD \neq PLO Equivalent Plan
- Confirm with STD provider how they interact



Administering Leaves of Absence

Break It Down

Assess each applicable
law separately



Using Paid Time Off

PLO

Entitled to use paid sick time, vacation or any other paid time offered in addition while on PLO benefits up to 100% of regular full wages during PLO period

Can allow PLO benefits + paid time off pay to exceed 100% of regular full wages during PLO period

Cannot require use of paid sick time, vacation or other paid time off while on PLO leave

FMLA

Can require concurrent use of any paid time off

OFLA

Can require concurrent use of any paid time off

Disability
Accommodation

Can require concurrent use of any paid time off

Paid Sick Time

Can require use for absences due to qualifying reasons

Insurance Benefits

Health Insurance Must Be Continued

PLO (employees with 90 days employment)

FMLA

OFLA

Domestic violence leave

Health Insurance Not Continued

Disability accommodation

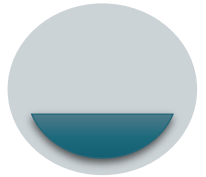
Workers' compensation leave

Change in employee election

Must Other Benefits Be Continued

Depends on plan terms

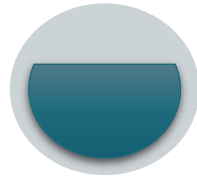
Return to Work/Fitness for Duty Certification



No

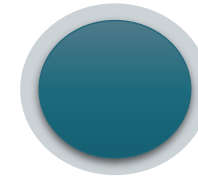
PLO

Leave unrelated to health condition



Maybe

Disability Accommodation
Pregnancy Accommodation



Yes

FMLA & OFLA
(subject to uniform practice)
Workers' Compensation

Job Protection

FMLA

All employees*
Same or equivalent
job

OFLA

All employees*
Same position
If not exist,
equivalent position
within 50-mile
radius of former
location, at closest
to former location

PLO

Employed for 90
calendar days*
Same position, if
exists.
If same position
does not exist

- 25 employees or more:
equivalent position
within 50-mile radius of
former location, at
closest to former
location
- Less than 25
employees: employer's
discretion, based on
business necessity, to
provide similar position,
same benefits and pay

Disability Accommodation

All employees*
Same position,
with
accommodation as
necessary
If unable to
perform same
position, a vacant
position for which
qualified, without
competing with
other applicants

Job Protection – Workers' Compensation

3-YEAR REINSTATEMENT/RE-EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS

Reemployment

- Available, suitable position until able to perform former position, if*
 - 6 or more employees at the time of injury or demand for reinstatement
 - Injured worker is disabled from performing duties of former position
 - Medically released to perform the duties of the available, suitable position
 - Timely demand is made
- Temporary light duty as part of return-to-work program is acceptable
- Employee must be given opportunity to discuss position first
- Must follow the employer's reporting policy until offered position.

Reinstatement

- To former position if:*
 - 21 or more employees at the time of injury or demand for reinstatement
 - It still exists (and is available under CBA)
 - Injured worker is not disabled from performing the duties
 - Timely demand is made
- Must follow the employer's reporting policy until offered position.

Suggested Practices

Have Policies

- What
 - Default Leave of Absence Rules
 - Individual Leave Policies
- Where
 - Employee Handbook
 - Stand alone policies
- How much



Documentation & Process

- Follow policies and coordinate with payroll and benefits
- Issue required notices
- Document efforts to comply
- Document employee agreements
 - Invite employees to respond if they disagree
- Have patience
- Be consistent
- Consider consulting legal counsel



Train Managers

- Know qualifying reasons for leave
- Connect employees to HR
- Partner with HR
- Be empathetic
- Focus on ability to do the job
- Work with HR on performance issues



- Contacting employees while on leave
- Creating false expectations
- Talking about medical issues
- Disparaging leave use
- Retaliation

Managing Intermittent Leave

- Have a plan for last minute absences
- Can require adherence to notification rules
- Can usually require “reasonable efforts” to schedule around employer needs
- Be clear about expectations
- Monitor attendance against medical certification



Avoiding Common Pitfalls

Different Expectations and Understandings



- Leave designations and status
- Expectations/standards and consequences
 - Notice of absences
 - Check-ins while on leave
 - Return to work requirements
 - Job duty and/or schedule changes
- Invite employees to respond if they disagree
- Consider consulting legal counsel

Addressing Performance

- Put employee on notice – early
- Document and address separately
- Have good performance documentation
- Prepare accurate performance reviews
- Ensure absences or reasons for leave are not implicated in reasons for discipline
- Allow for employee input
- Carefully document intent to take action
- Consider consulting legal counsel



Avoiding Retaliation Complaints



- Double check your concerns – avoid emotional decisions
- Document performance issues timely and completely
- Do not disparage use of leave
- Allow for employee input
- Consider downgrading disciplinary action
- Time lessens risk

Questions?



Thank You



CHRISTINE THELEN

SHAREHOLDER

1.503.778.2139

thelenc@lanepowell.com



BRENNA MCLAUGHLIN

ASSOCIATE

1.503.778.2114

mclaughlinb@lanepowell.com



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