



Connecticut Employment Protections for Victims of Family Violence

Public Act 10-144 in Connecticut, effective October 1, 2010, provides employment protections and leave time for victims of family violence. Connecticut law already prohibited employers from terminating, penalizing, threatening, or otherwise coercing employees with respect to their employment because they: are subpoenaed in a criminal proceeding; are a crime victim attending a court proceeding or participating in a criminal investigation; or have a restraining or protective order issued on their behalf. Effective October 1, 2010, those prohibitions extend to employees who are victims of family violence or who attend or participate in civil proceedings related to cases in which they are victims of family violence.

Important Definitions:

- Family violence occurs when there is an incident between family or household members that results in threatened or actual physical harm, bodily injury or assault.
- Family or household member includes current and former spouses; parents and children; individuals who are at least 18 years old and related by blood or marriage; individuals that currently reside or formerly resided together and are at least 16 years old; individuals that have a child in common; and individuals that are in, or have recently been in, a dating relationship.

Covered Employers: Connecticut employers with three or more employees

Time Off Requirement: Covered employers must provide 12 days of unpaid leave per calendar year and cannot require employees to use this type of leave concurrently with other federal or state leave.

Reasons for Leave:

- To seek medical care or counseling for physical injuries, psychological injuries or disabilities
- Obtain services from a victim services organization
- Relocate because of family violence
- Participate in civil or criminal proceedings related to or resulting from family violence

Notice and Recordkeeping Requirements: Employees may be required to provide 7 days notice for foreseeable absences and may be required to sign a written statement certifying that the need for leave is due to a reason allowed by the law. Employers may request a police or court record, or a signed written statement from a licensed professional or victim services organization to support the need for leave. All records must be kept confidential unless the disclosure is authorized in advance by the employee, is required by state or federal law, or is necessary to protect the employee's safety in the workplace.

Penalties for Violation: Penalties include damages and reasonable attorney's fees as well as an order to rescind the action of the employer.

The Bottom Line - What Employers Should Do Now: Connecticut employers should begin reviewing and updating policies, procedures and handbooks now to ensure compliance with the new law and train managers and supervisors on what to do when an employee requests time off.