



What's New in **BENEFITS & I** **COMPENSATION**

The leading service to keep benefits managers up to date

October 15, 2021

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HRMORNING

Keep Up To Date with the Latest HR News

With **HRMorning** arriving in your inbox, you will never miss critical stories on labor laws, benefits, retention and onboarding strategies.

HRMorning, part of the SuccessFuel Network, provides the latest HR and benefits and employment law news for HR professionals in the trenches of small-to-medium-sized businesses. Rather than simply regurgitating the day's headlines, **HRMorning** delivers actionable insights, helping HR execs understand what HR trends mean to their business.

Open enrollment: Best practices to make it easy for employees

■ *Communicate clearly and in small chunks*

Are you ready? The health insurance enrollment window starts Nov. 1 and ends Dec. 15th. However, some states are extending the end date slightly.

But with coverage starting Jan. 1, 2022, there's no time to waste.

Utilize surveys

Employee surveys of existing benefits are a great way to see where employees' needs lie.

While you still have a little time to do one, you've probably done one or two over the past year to see how you could help your employees during the pandemic. You can use information

from them to see where employees need help and where your existing benefits might be coming up short.

Best practices

To help you get the most bang for your buck, here are some best practices to help your open enrollment go off without a hitch.

1. Choose virtual over paper. Open enrollment is going to look different again this year. While you may be fully or partially back in the office, there are likely restrictions on how many people you can have in a room at one time. So ditch the paper and

(Please turn to Open enrollment ... Page 2)

EMERGENCY RULING

President Biden hands down vaccine mandate

If your firm has more than 100 employees and you don't already require COVID-19 vaccinations, get ready because now you have to.

On Sept. 9, President Biden announced, "The Department of Labor is developing an emergency rule to require all employers with 100 or more employees that together employ over 80 million workers to ensure their workforces are fully vaccinated or show a negative test at least once a week."

The mandate also includes all federal workers and contractors.

Cases on the rise

The purpose of the mandates is to combat the COVID-19 Delta variant

and improve vaccinations across the country, since cases, hospitalizations and deaths are still on the rise.

So far, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that 75.2% of American adults have at least one COVID-19 vaccine shot. Problem is community transmission is still high. And the Delta variant accounts for nearly all U.S. cases.

To help employers get their employees vaccinated or tested, the Defense Production Act is increasing the production of rapid COVID-19 tests and at-home rapid tests. They'll be available at major pharmacies in the next few months at cost.

Info: bit.ly/VaccineMandate636

Open enrollment ...

(continued from Page 1)

embrace a virtual “benefits cafe.”

Have employees grab a cup of coffee/tea and participate in a virtual benefits meeting.

Remind employees to think about major life changes they may be embarking on in 2022, before making any benefit selections. And provide them with any changes you’ve made to your benefit offerings.

In addition, tell them where they can find all the information and electronic forms they’ll need.

Note: Check the DOL’s safe harbor guidelines for electronic retirement plan communications rules (bit.ly/FedRegister636) to see if you’re required to mail paper copies of the open enrollment guide to certain people.

2. Avoid information overload. During open enrollment, 22% of employees are confused, 20% are anxious and 21% are stressed, according to an Unum study. You can avoid this by breaking information down into small digestible chunks.

There’s a lot that goes into open enrollment. So keeping things short, sweet and to the point is important.

Breaking information down by document is a good way to keep things clear. Here are some you might want to provide:

- The Basics: Why they need coverage, the different programs and costs involved
- Actions they need to take and their deadlines, and

During open enrollment, 22% of employees are confused.

- Q&A that answer the most common questions, as well as some not-so-common questions.

Also, when sending emails or naming documents, label them clearly, like “Open Enrollment Deadlines.”

3. Communicate. Here’s a sad statistic: 35% of employees don’t understand their healthcare coverage, according to a Maestro Health survey. And, 62% don’t think their employers are good resources for their healthcare questions.

The key to fixing this problem? Create a communication strategy.

Start with targeted open enrollment communications. For instance, when you send out a benefit survey to employees, segment the questions according to qualifying life events. Then when you get the info back, it’ll already be organized for you.

Next send recommended plans to each lifestyle group (single, married with children, close to retirement, etc.).

Finally, send call-to-action messages to employees letting them know they need to “take the next step” in the open enrollment process. Make sure the actions and deadlines are specific and in bold.

Info: bit.ly/OpenEnrollment636

SHARPEN YOUR BENEFITS JUDGMENT

This feature provides a framework for decision making that helps keep you and your company out of trouble. It describes a recent legal conflict and lets you judge the outcome.

Reasonable accommodation? Worker requests relocation

Benefits Manager Betty Murphy looked up from her computer to see employee Rebecca Nolan outside her office.

“Hi Rebecca, come on in,” said Betty. Rebecca entered, coughing as she did so. “You OK?”

“No,” responded Rebecca as she sat down. “My asthma is out of control lately. I feel like I can’t breathe half the time.”

Betty frowned. “I’m sorry to hear that. How can I help?”

“I’d like my desk moved,” Rebecca replied. “I’m right by the door, so every time it opens, I get all that dirt and pollen in my face.”

Can’t be moved

“I’m sorry, but we can’t move you,” Betty said. “A big part of your job is greeting guests and clients as soon as they come in.

“What we could do is get an air purification system,” Betty went on. “I could also offer you periodic breaks to step away and get some fresh air.”

Rebecca shook her head. “I’ll still be very uncomfortable throughout the day. My desk needs to be moved.”

“That’s just not possible,” Betty replied. “It’s essential for your desk to be where it is.”

When Rebecca sued the company for failing to accommodate her disability, the company fought to get the case dismissed.

Did it win?

- *Make your decision, then please turn to Page 6 for the court’s ruling.*

HR MORNING'S
What's New in **BENEFITS & COMPENSATION**

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Stealing from employees is never a good idea, just ask these companies

This regular feature highlights recent case settlements, court awards and fines against companies. It serves as a reminder to keep benefits policies in order.

Bar owner makes staff work for tips only

What happened: BHMK Enterprises LLC – operator of Bottle Bar East in Philadelphia – violated the minimum wage, overtime, and recordkeeping requirements of the FLSA.

What people did: The DOL investigation found the employer:

- failed to pay bartenders and servers any cash wages, causing them to work for tips only
- required workers to attend quarterly staff cleaning meetings, but didn't pay front-of-house employees for the time they spent there, and
- paid employees straight-time wages for all the hours that they worked, including those in excess of 40 hours in a workweek.

Result: BHMK Enterprises LLC had to pay \$246,457.99 in back wages and an equal amount in liquidated damages to 73 bartenders, servers, cooks and dishwashers. The court also ordered the employer to pay \$25,729 in civil money penalties.

Info: bit.ly/BottleShop636

Father-daughter team steal employees' retirement cash

What happened: In Green Bay, WI, Pinnacle Machine LLC COO Donald Miller and his daughter, Jennifer Miller – then Pinnacle's director of human resources and accounting – failed to forward employee contributions in a timely manner to the company's savings and retirement plan.

What people did: The DOL's Employee Benefits Security Administration investigated and

found these actions took place from January 2016 to September 2019. After neither defendant filed an answer to the DOL's complaint, a U.S. District Court Judge signed a default judgment in the case. It bars the Millers from serving as fiduciaries of an Employee Retirement Income Security Act covered plan in the future.

Result: The Millers have to restore \$41,869 in employee payroll-deducted retirement contributions and lost opportunity costs to the plan.

Info: bit.ly/Retirement636

Court case garners \$68M for 200 benefit plans

What happened: In 2003, the DOL's Employee Benefits Security Administration Philadelphia Regional Office began an investigation of John J. Koresko V, of Bridgeport, the Regional Employers Assurance Leagues Voluntary Employees' Beneficiary Association Trust and other affiliated companies.

What people did: The DOL found Koresko and others had diverted tens of millions in plan assets for their personal benefit through a variety of illegal transactions. And now 18 years later, the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania issued a final order closing the case, and added nearly \$4 million to costs previously assessed against Koresko, resulting in a judgment of more than \$42 million against Koresko and his companies.

Result: The court's order follows the final distribution in 2021 of \$17.7 million to more than 200 employee benefit plans nationwide harmed by Koresko and others – bringing the total distribution to the affected plans to \$68 million.

Info: bit.ly/BenefitsPlans636

■ Digital health tools: The pandemic impact & challenges

At the height of the pandemic, telehealth became a very popular healthcare option for those not wanting to risk leaving the house. And with the rise of telehealth popularity came other digital health tools, too.

A recent report released by IQVIA Institute for Human Data Science examined all facets of digital health, including the pandemic's impact, continued usage, challenges and what the future looks like for digital health care.

Increased usage

Here's a rundown of all the benefits of digital health tools the report identified:

- Several different digital health tools helped people during the pandemic, and there was an increase in app downloads for telehealth, exercise and mental health
- 90,000 new digital health apps were created in 2020, with more than 350,000 now available
- More people are wearing devices that monitor steps taken and calories burned, and
- The use of software to treat, prevent and manage specific conditions has increased.

Continued challenges

However it's not all smooth sailing for digital health tools. Here are some problems that still exist, according to a study done by the University of Michigan:

- Telehealth grew during the pandemic, but total health care remains at the same level, meaning people used telehealth as a substitute for in-person visits
- Rural areas have low rates of telehealth usage
- Those using telehealth were more likely to be women without major health conditions, and
- Older people and minorities were less likely to use telehealth.

Cite: bit.ly/telehealth636

Do you have to pay or not? Absences due to hurricanes

Parts of the U.S. got slammed by hurricane Ida when it passed through. And while the physical and emotional toll was devastating, you also must think about your company.

And we aren't talking about an emergency preparedness plan. We're talking about legal issues.

For example, if you require employees to come to work when a hurricane is forecasted to hit, can you fire them for not showing up?

Legally, you probably can. But do you want to?

In today's job market, people want to work for companies that value their employees' safety.

Exempt vs. non-exempt

Now, let's say you don't require employees to come to work during a hurricane. Do you have to pay them?

If the employee is hourly and "non-exempt" from FLSA for hours not worked, you don't have to pay them.

What if your business is open, but that same hourly employee doesn't show up because of the hurricane?

Again, you don't have to pay them for non-working time.

However, if the workplace is closed due to a hurricane, the employer is required to pay exempt employees, but only if the business is closed for less than a full week. You may require them to use their paid leave benefits.

What if an employee can't make it in after a storm because roads are bad, or trains and buses aren't running?

Under DOL regs this is an absence for personal reasons, and you don't have to pay non-exempt workers. As for exempt employees, you can make a deduction from their salary for a full-day absence due to weather or require they use paid time off for the absence. You can't make a deduction for anything other than a full-day absence.

If remote work is an option, non-exempt employees must be paid for their time worked. And exempt employees, must receive their regular salary. You can require them to take PTO for partial days.

Info: bit.ly/EmployeePay636

Communicating less? A sign you can't ignore these days

If you have an employee who seems to be incommunicado these days, it might be time to sit down and communicate more.

It's just one sign a good employee is about to quit.

The Prodoscore Research Council recently found, in the five weeks before quitting, employees:

- **Communicate less.** They send 51% fewer email messages and fill their calendars 33% less than normal.
- **Do less.** Their productivity rate drops 33%.
- **Interact less.** They cut the time they meet and talk with colleagues in half.

If you notice these signs, you'll want to talk with employees about motivation, workload and other ways to rebuild engagement.

Info: bit.ly/3gjnpg

Not in the office? Replicate 'By the way' moments now

Work from home has eliminated a small, but important, part of working together – the "by the way" moment.

It's those times when people walk out of your benefits meetings and comment late on something that came up – and that turns into the breakthrough solution. Or it's when one employee pops her head into a colleague's cubicle and asks for feedback on an idea – and it's the next best idea. Another one: when a boss notices and comments on good work – and it makes the employee feel great for the day.

These are important, says Michael Wade, author of *All I Said Was*. They happen best in-person – hallways, meetings, water coolers, etc.

In the absence of those, you'll want to ask employees virtually, "Is there anything else you want to mention?"

Info: bit.ly/ByTheWay636

Talent wars

What are you doing to help attract candidates?



Source: Willis Towers Watson survey; bit.ly/Attract646

Benefits also play a vital role in retaining employees: Thirty-five percent said they were planning to change their health and wellbeing benefits to keep staff.

WHAT WORKED FOR OTHER COMPANIES

Our readers come from a broad range of companies, both large and small. In this regular section, three of them share success stories you can adapt to fit your needs.

1 **Breaking bad pandemic habits in the office**

Mention bad pandemic habits, and you might imagine people working in slippers, skipping daily showers and sleeping on Zoom calls.

But that wasn't our case (although, no one knows the truth about the slippers).

Many of our employees picked up habits that weren't healthy. They worked longer hours and took on more responsibility than necessary, placing more stress on their shoulders.

While we applauded their

dedication to their jobs, we didn't want them to burn out.

Implemented new healthy rules

So before we even returned to the office, we decided we needed to implement a couple of new rules to help everyone step back and regain their perspective on healthy work habits.

For one, we called Friday afternoon "Quiet Time." No one was allowed to schedule meetings or video calls. In an emergency, employees could make phone calls, but that was it.

We also called for one "Quiet Week" per year, and the same rules.

That also helped employees take vacations, knowing they wouldn't miss meetings and that others would be out, too.

This has helped our workers get their work/life balance back in a time when stress is ongoing.

(Ann Powell, Executive VP & HR Officer, Bristol Myers Squibb, spoke at The Conference Board's Organizational Impact on Social Change Issues online conference)

**REAL
PROBLEMS
REAL
SOLUTIONS**

2 **How, why we made mental health priority**

In our industry, we keep close tabs on employee health needs – and it hasn't been a pretty picture lately.

Across industries and company sizes, we witnessed a 100% increase in behavioral and mental health requests once the pandemic hit.

More people than ever looked for guidance on accessing mental health benefits – and our company wasn't an exception.

We witnessed the same uptick in

requests for behavioral and mental health advice and consultation.

Reluctant employees tried, too

To help employees get what they needed as quickly as possible, we offered access to virtual tools. It was especially helpful when people were working from home.

Even if those tools were available before the pandemic, many employees weren't as familiar with them as they were with traditional health care.

So we communicated more about

how to access mental and behavioral health experts, plus the stress-reducing benefits we offered such

as meditation and yoga.

Employees used the benefits. We even found that people who might have once been reluctant to get virtual care were open to – and embraced – it during the pandemic.

Now we're happy to see employees using benefits that work for them.

(Rob LaHayne, CEO, TouchCare, New York)

3 **Used COVID necessity as great onboarding tool**

Like many companies, we sent most employees home to work when COVID-19 hit.

Fortunately, the pandemic didn't hurt our business terribly, so we still needed to recruit and onboard employees.

We adapted, became increasingly flexible and eventually created a good process for finding and bringing in new hires.

When it was time to go on site

and resume traditional recruiting and onboarding, we decided to look at our remote process for better practices.

Immediate celebration

We wanted to take the best from both situations to make a great new process that our people would enjoy.

For instance, one thing stood out with remote onboarding: Our recruiter made Zoom calls to tell prospects they got the job.

New employees said they loved this because they had someone to celebrate the win with them. The recruiter

enjoyed seeing people's happiness, too.

It was a way to use Zoom for a fun reason instead of just associating it with work meetings.

So we kept with Zoom when informing new hires, rather than using phone calls – and the process is still fun!

It's been a real morale booster for our new people and has helped them be even more excited to start with us.

(Annie Lin, VP of People, Lever, San Francisco)

HEALTH PLANS

Surcharge for unvaccinated workers?

Delta made headlines recently after the airline revealed employees who were enrolled in the health plan would have to pay a \$200 surcharge if they didn't get the COVID-19 vaccine.

This decision caused a lot of conversation, and many employers found themselves asking if they could implement that too.

The quick answer is yes, employers can charge these employees more to be a part of their health plan – but it's a complicated issue.

Health contingent program

The best way to approach making a policy like this is to treat the surcharge as a health contingent wellness program, says employment law attorney Lyndsey Barnett of the firm Graydon Head & Ritchey LLP. Legally, this is the safest way to proceed.

To be compliant, a health contingent wellness program must meet a number of requirements.

1. **The surcharge amount can't exceed 30% of the cost of single coverage.** Using the Delta surcharge as an example, an employer could charge unvaccinated employees \$200 if the cost of your health plan (including

employee and employer contributions) is \$600 or more.

It's important to remember any rewards given to employees – for example, for obtaining certain health metrics – count toward the 30% limit.

2. **You must offer a reasonable alternative to avoid the surcharge.**

Some employees are going to have medical conditions that make it difficult for them to receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

You can ask these employees to get confirmation from their doctor in order to avoid the surcharge. It's a good idea to extend this to those refusing the vaccine for sincerely held religious beliefs.

Further complications

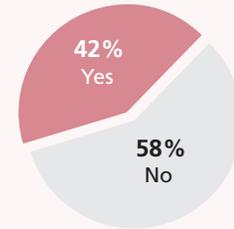
There's another stumbling block for large employers (50 or more employees). Under the ACA, large employers are required to provide affordable health plan coverage.

When determining if your health plan is affordable, you have to use the regular cost plus the surcharge, even for vaccinated employees who wouldn't pay the surcharge.

A lot of employers have difficulty

Employees rethink benefits

Will the pandemic have an impact on your 2022 benefits selection?



Source: Haven Life Insurance Agency LLC; bit.ly/Selection636

When the same 1,000 full-time employees were asked about the Delta variant and other possible strains, 71% said they were worried and 45% said it would affect their selection during open enrollment.

(Each issue of WNB&C contains a current survey to give benefits officers insight into what their peers nationwide are thinking and doing.)

offering an affordable plan under the ACA's requirements, so a surcharge might not be realistic.

A surcharge for unvaccinated workers could be a very effective strategy to increase vaccination rates in your workplace, but it must be implemented very thoughtfully to avoid legal issues and penalties.

Info: bit.ly/surcharge636

SHARPEN YOUR JUDGMENT – THE DECISION

(See case on Page 2.)

Yes. The company won when a court dismissed Rebecca's failure-to-accommodate claim.

Rebecca's attorney argued the only thing that would help her asthma was to be moved, and that the company's alternative suggestions wouldn't work. Therefore, the company didn't fulfill its ADA duties, the attorney said.

The company's attorney argued it did fulfill its duties because it offered Rebecca a number of different accommodations that would help her situation and she rejected all of them.

The court agreed that the company fulfilled its ADA duties. It said Rebecca's accommodation request was unreasonable, as it was an essential part of her job to greet people at the front door.

Furthermore, the company offered Rebecca reasonable alternatives, which she didn't accept.

Employers aren't required to alter essential job duties for those with disabilities, the court said.

Accommodation must be reasonable

This case shows that employees don't get to hand-pick any accommodation they want. It has to be reasonable, and in this instance, Rebecca's request would interfere with an essential function of her job.

As long as the employer makes a good faith effort to accommodate the employee – even if the accommodation doesn't work out – a court will typically consider its ADA responsibilities fulfilled.

Cite: *Rodda v. University of Miami*, U.S. Dist. Ct. S.D. FL, No. 19-25301-CIV-MORENO, 6/4/21. Dramatized for effect.

Unique benefits program sets firm apart from competition

■ Building strong working relationships boosts retention

We wanted to make sure our retention rates stayed well-below the industry average.

After all, when turnover becomes an issue, it often results in a domino effect of problems that can eventually lead to disaster.

So we created a unique benefits program that really helps set our company apart from the competition.

Two of the major areas of our benefits focus:

- mentoring, and
- individualized rewards.

One-on-one mentoring

Our one-on-one mentoring benefit teams up new employees (all full-time new hires are automatically enrolled for the first year) with a mentor based on the staffer's interests, as well as his or her position at the company.

Mentors answer a battery of questions on topics such as their own past mentors, communication styles and learning goals.

Then their responses are checked with new hires' interest forms, and mentors are assigned accordingly.

The mentoring program consists of an enrollment period, a kick-off event and bi-monthly mentoring meetings.

Plus, there are bi-quarterly meetings just for mentors, so they can discuss how the program is going and what else they can do.

Mentoring gives new hires several advantages. For one, it gives staffers someone besides their boss they can ask about cultural nuances and unwritten rules of the company.

But it also helps new hires find their niche more quickly. For example, some employees rely on their mentors to learn about a specific department

they hope to be promoted into – or new skills or training they'd like to develop.

Meaningful recognition

In addition to mentoring, we created an individualized rewards benefits program.

On the surface, our system is pretty simple: When employees do something that warrants some type of recognition, we reward that person in a manner that's individualized to connect with that person's unique interests.

Here are some examples of individualized rewards we've given in the past:

- One employee was extremely passionate about the Beatles, so the reward was an autographed photo of Paul McCartney, and

- In response to one staffer's love of "big events," we got her tickets to the Grammy Awards.

Not only does this type of recognition work wonders for employee morale, it also forces supervisors to really get to know their employees.

This in turn creates stronger working relationships.

Above industry marks

We fully believe that our mentoring and individualized rewards benefits programs have helped keep our retention rate well above the industry average.

And our dedication to employees got us named as one of the best small and medium workplaces by Fortune.

(Cydney Koukol, chair of corporate global branding, Talent Plus Inc., Lincoln, NE)

Case Study:

WHAT WORKED, WHAT DIDN'T

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

■ What benefits are millennials looking for in a company?

In nine years it's estimated that 75% of the workforce will be millennials. Making sure your benefits package speaks to them is important.

Do you know what millennials value most in benefits? Test your knowledge by answering *True* or *False* to the following:

1. Millennials are extremely interested in companies that not only offer them career advancement, but new skills training, too.
2. While millennials have student loan debt, they're very good at managing it and just want help paying it back.
3. Millennials want to work for firms that believe in and advance social issues and global causes.
4. They don't want rigid 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. work schedules.

ANSWERS

1. **True.** Millennials want to know you have a solid career advancement program. While they're ambitious and have the drive to move up, they also want to improve and learn new skills. So if you can show them you're serious about helping them advance, you'll have a better chance retaining them.
2. **False.** Millennials are sick and tired of being broke. They want a company that not only helps them pay back their debt, but teaches them how to reduce it, manage their assets and save.
3. **True.** While many people see millennials as only being focused on themselves and their career, they want to be a part of something bigger.
4. **True.** When given a flexible schedule, millennials are likely to work even harder.
- Info: bit.ly/Millennials636

■ Answers to the quiz

LATEST BENEFITS NEWS

COVID-19 home testing: Eligible medical expense

Here's something the IRS wants you to tell your employees about.

Home testing for COVID-19 is an eligible medical expense that can be paid or reimbursed under:

- health flexible spending arrangements (health FSAs)
- health savings accounts (HSAs)
- health reimbursement arrangements (HRAs), or
- Archer medical savings accounts (Archer MSAs).

The reason is because the cost to diagnose COVID-19 is an eligible medical expense for tax purposes.

In addition, personal protective equipment (masks, hand sanitizer and sanitizing wipes) used specifically to prevent the spread of COVID-19 is also an eligible medical expense paid or reimbursed under health FSAs, HSAs, HRAs or Archer MSAs.

Info: bit.ly/IRSPPEExpense636

What will employees give up for remote work?

You've heard a lot about what unique benefits you can offer to retain employees. But did you know some employees are willing to give up certain benefits if they're allowed to continue to work remotely?

It's true. One thousand adults, employed or looking for remote work, were asked by Breeze what benefits they'd give up to work remotely full time. Here's what the majority said:

- 64% fitness benefits
- 50% vision insurance
- 48% student loan repayment assistance
- 47% mental health benefits
- 45% disability insurance
- 44% dental insurance
- 44% paid parental leave
- 39% health insurance, and
- 36% 401(k) or other retirement plan.

Some other sacrifices the respondents were willing to take on:

- 65% would take a 5% pay cut, and
- 53% would work an extra 10 hours per week.

We're not saying you should cut benefits, but you may want to survey your employees to find out which ones they value the least.

Info: bit.ly/Sacrifice636

Guidance available for reporting leave wages

Help is now available for firms reporting on Form W-2 the amount of sick and family leave wages paid to employees for leave taken in 2021.

The Treasury Department and the IRS issued Notice 2021-53, which provides guidance on:

- the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA), as amended by the COVID-Related Tax Relief Act of 2020, and
- the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.

You must report these totals to employees on Form W-2, Box 14, or in a separate statement provided with the Form W-2. And the guidance even gives you "model language" to use as part of the instructions for employee.

Info: bit.ly/SickFamilyLeave636

FMLA leave on a holiday week: How it's handled

The last quarter of the year brings on the holidays. So here's a question for you: If an employee takes FMLA leave during a holiday week does the holiday count as part of FMLA leave?

Take Thanksgiving week as an example. If Peggy is out Monday through Wednesday on FMLA leave, then Thanksgiving is on Thursday, and she's still out on Friday, it's counted as five days of FMLA leave.

However, if she is out Monday through Wednesday, then Thanksgiving is on Thursday, but her back miraculously gets better Friday and she goes to work, you can only count Monday through Wednesday as leave.

Info: bit.ly/FMLAHolidays636

HOT APPS & WEBSITES

■ 2021 best benefits, perks

Nowadays recruiting and retaining talent is hard. Check out this article for the 20 best employee benefits and work perks for 2021.

Click: bit.ly/BenefitsPerks636

■ Retirement savings calculator

You may want to share this website with your employees. Not only does it provide calculators for everything from taxes to investments to loans, it has over 50 retirement savings and planning calculators.

Click: bit.ly/Dinkytown636

■ State wage and hourly laws

Everything you need to know about current state wage and hourly laws is a click away, thanks to the DOL.

Click: bit.ly/MinimumWageLaws636

If you have a benefits-related question, email it to Renee Cocchi at: rcocchi@HRMorning.com

LIGHTER SIDE

■ Should you require a dress code during Zoom meetings?

After attending so many virtual meetings over the past year, you may finally be able to tune out your co-workers' surroundings.

One woman attempted to find out just how closely her co-workers observed her during Zoom meetings.

Starting as a prank, the woman decided to wear a Hawaiian print shirt with pineapples and flowers to every Zoom meeting.

In all, she donned the shirt for 264 different video meetings.

When she finally confessed, none of her co-workers knew what she was talking about since they hadn't noticed.

Lesson learned: What you wear to work doesn't matter (within reason)!

Info: bit.ly/Shirt636