**Step 1: Understand the Type of Leave**

Identify the type of leave the employee is requesting. Common types of leave include:

* Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)
* California Family Rights Act (CFRA)
* Pregnancy Disability Leave (PDL)
* Paid Sick Leave
* Workers’ Compensation Leave
* Military Leave
* Personal Leave of Absence
* Bereavement Leave

**Resources:**

* DOL - FMLA Overview
* California Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH) - CFRA
* California DIR - Pregnancy Disability Leave
* California DIR - Paid Sick Leave

**Step 2: Determine Eligibility**

Verify if the employee is eligible for the requested leave by checking:

* **Length of Employment:** Minimum service requirements (e.g., 12 months for FMLA/CFRA).
* **Hours Worked:** Ensure the employee meets the minimum hours worked requirement.
* **Employer Size:** Confirm that your company meets the threshold (e.g., 50 employees for FMLA/CFRA).

**Resources:**

* DOL - FMLA Eligibility Requirements
* California DFEH - CFRA Eligibility

**Step 3: Provide Required Notices**

Provide the employee with the necessary forms and notices, which may include:

* **Notice of Eligibility and Rights & Responsibilities (FMLA/CFRA)**
* **Medical Certification Form (if applicable)**
* **Notice to Employee - California Family Rights Act (CFRA)**
* **Pregnancy Disability Leave Notice**
* **Workers' Compensation Claim Form (if applicable)**

**Resources:**

* DOL - FMLA Forms
* California DIR - Workers’ Compensation
* DFEH - CFRA Notice Requirements

**Step 4: Review and Approve the Leave**

Once the employee submits the required documentation (e.g., medical certification), review the request and either approve or deny the leave based on eligibility and documentation.

* **Document all decisions** regarding the leave request.
* **Notify the employee** of the approval or denial in writing.

**Resource:**

* California DIR - Employer Obligations

**Step 5: Maintain Communication During Leave**

While the employee is on leave:

* **Maintain regular communication** to provide updates on their status and return-to-work expectations.
* **Notify the employee of any changes** to their benefits, employment status, or job position during the leave period.

**Resource:**

* DOL - FMLA Employer Guide

**Step 6: Prepare for the Employee’s Return**

Before the employee returns to work:

* **Coordinate with the employee** to confirm their return date.
* **Prepare any necessary accommodations** if the employee is returning with restrictions (e.g., light duty).
* **Restore the employee to their original position** or an equivalent position unless legally exempt.

**Resources:**

* DOL - Returning to Work After FMLA
* California DIR - Returning to Work After PDL

**Step 7: Document the Process**

Ensure that all steps of the leave process are thoroughly documented, including:

* **Leave request forms**
* **Medical certifications**
* **Correspondence with the employee**
* **Approval/denial notices**
* **Return-to-work agreements**

**Resource:**

* DOL - FMLA Recordkeeping Requirements

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