

News & Resources

Legal Alert: New **Florida Law Requires Employers to Provide Leave to Victims of Domestic Violence**

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Under a law signed by Florida Governor Charlie Crist June 12, 2007, as of July 1, 2007, Florida employers must give employees up to three days of leave in a twelve-month period if the employee or a family or household member is a victim of domestic violence.

Who is Covered by the Law?

The law covers employers in Florida who employ 50 or more employees. It covers employees who have worked for the employer for three months or longer.

Is the Leave Paid or Unpaid?

Under the new law, the requested leave may be paid or unpaid, at the employer's discretion.

What Types of Activities Does the Law Cover?

The law covers leave for specific activities including:

- seeking an injunction for protection against domestic violence or repeat violence, dating violence, or sexual violence;
- obtaining medical care or mental health counseling or both for the employee or a family or household member to address injuries resulting from domestic violence;
- obtaining services from victims' services organizations such as a domestic violence shelter or rape crisis center;
- making the employee's home secure from the perpetrator of domestic violence or finding a new home to escape the perpetrator;
- seeking legal assistance to address issues arising from domestic violence or attending or preparing for court-related proceedings arising from the act of domestic violence.

Must the Employee Give Notice of the Need for Leave?

Yes, the employee must provide the employer with "appropriate advance notice of the leave as required by the employer's policy" except in cases of imminent danger to the health or safety of the employee or a family member. The employer may also require documentation of the act of domestic violence. Thus, it is important for an employer to address these issues in its leave policy.