

Professional Personnel

Leaves of Absence ¹

Each of the provisions in this policy applies to all professional personnel to the extent that it does not conflict with an applicable collective bargaining agreement or individual employment contract or benefit plan; in the event of a conflict, such provision is severable and the applicable bargaining agreement or individual agreement will control.

Sick and Bereavement Leave ²

Each full-time professional staff member is granted 10 days sick leave each school year at full pay. Unused days are allowed to accumulate to 180 days. Sick leave is defined in State law as personal illness, mental or behavioral health complications, quarantine at home, serious illness or death in the immediate family or household, or birth, adoption, placement for adoption, or the acceptance of a child in need of foster care.

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¹ State or federal law controls this policy's content. This policy contains an item on which collective bargaining may be required. Any policy that impacts upon wages, hours, and terms and conditions of employment, is subject to collective bargaining upon request by the employee representative, even if the policy involves an inherent managerial right.

This policy is consistent with the minimum requirements of State law. The local collective bargaining agreement may contain provisions that exceed these requirements. The introductory paragraph recognizes that an applicable collective bargaining agreement or individual employment contract will supersede a conflicting provision of the policy. It also provides policy coverage for those professional personnel who are not included in a bargaining unit or have employment contracts with conflicting provisions. Alternatively, if the policy's subject matter is superseded by a bargaining agreement, the board policy may state, "Please refer to the applicable collective bargaining agreement(s)."

Districts must coordinate leaves provided by State law and the local bargaining agreement with the leave granted by the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) (29 U.S.C. §2612), amended by Sec. 565 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010 (Pub. L. 111-84). The FMLA grants eligible employees 12 weeks unpaid leave each year for: (1) the birth and first-year care of a child; (2) the adoption or foster placement of a child; (3) the serious health condition of an employee's spouse, parent, or child; (4) the employee's own serious health condition; (5) the existence of any qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent is on *covered active duty*; and (6) to care for the employee's spouse, child, parent, or next of kin who is a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness. Districts are permitted to count paid leave (granted by State law or board policy) taken for an FMLA purpose against an employee's FMLA entitlement. 29 C.F.R. §825.207. See sample policy 5:185, *Family and Medical Leave*.

Many State laws grant leaves to employees of the State and municipalities but are not applicable to school districts, including the Employee Blood and Organ Donation Leave Act (820 ILCS 149/), Local Government Disaster Service Volunteer Act (50 ILCS 122/), Organ Donor Leave Act (5 ILCS 327/), Civil Air Patrol Leave Act (820 ILCS 148/), and Paid Leave for All Workers Act (820 ILCS 192/). See sample policy 5:185, *Family and Medical Leave*, for a discussion of the Military Leave Act (820 ILCS 151/) and its applicability to school districts.

² The provisions in this section are required by 105 ILCS 5/24-6. Each specified number of days in this section is the statutory minimum. Before adopting this policy or applying its provisions, the district should examine any applicable bargaining agreements.

Consult the board attorney about the Employee Sick Leave Act (ESLA). 820 ILCS 191/. It prohibits employers from limiting the use of sick time to an employee's own illnesses and allows employees to use employer-provided sick leave due to illness, injury, medical appointment, or *personal care* of a *covered family member*. *Id.* at 191/10(a). *Personal care* means: (1) activities to ensure a covered family member's basic medical, hygiene, nutritional, or safety needs are met, or to provide transportation to medical appointments, for a covered family member unable to meet those needs himself or herself; and (2) being physically present to provide emotional support to a covered family member with a serious health condition who is receiving inpatient or home care. *Id.* at 191/5. The ESLA defines *covered family members* as an employee's child, stepchild, spouse, domestic partner, sibling, parent, mother- or father-in-law, grandchild, grandparent, or stepparent. *Id.* Leave may be taken under the same terms for which the employee would be permitted to take leave for his or her own illness or injury.

As a condition for paying sick leave after three days absence for personal illness or as the Board or Superintendent deem necessary in other cases, the Board or Superintendent may require that the staff member provide a certificate from: (1) a physician licensed in Illinois to practice medicine and surgery in all its branches, (2) a mental health professional licensed in Illinois providing ongoing care or treatment to the staff member, (3) a chiropractic physician licensed under the Medical Practice Act, (4) a licensed advanced practice registered nurse, (5) a licensed physician assistant who has been delegated the authority to perform health examinations by his or her supervising physician, or (6) if the treatment is by prayer or spiritual means, a spiritual adviser or practitioner of the employee's faith. If the Board or Superintendent requires a certificate during a leave of less than three days for personal illness, the District shall pay the expenses incurred by the employee.

Staff members are entitled to use up to 30 days of paid sick leave because of the birth of a child that is not dependent on the need to recover from childbirth. Such days may be used at any time within the 12-month period following the birth of the child. Intervening periods of nonworking days or school not being in session, such as breaks and holidays, do not count towards the 30 working school days. As a condition of paying sick leave beyond the 30 working school days, the Board or Superintendent may require medical certification.³

For purposes of adoption, placement for adoption, or acceptance of a child in need of foster care, paid sick leave may be used for reasons related to the formal adoption or the formal foster care process prior to taking custody of the child or accepting the child in need of foster care, and for taking custody of the child or accepting the child in need of foster care. Such leave is limited to 30 days, unless a longer leave is provided in an applicable collective bargaining agreement, and need not be used consecutively once the formal adoption or foster care process is underway. The Board or Superintendent may require that the employee provide evidence that the formal adoption or foster care process is underway.⁴

Family Bereavement Leave⁵

State law allows a maximum of 10 unpaid work days for eligible employees (Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, 20 U.S.C. §2601 et seq.) to take family bereavement leave. The purpose, requirements,

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³ 105 ILCS 5/24-6 overturned the Illinois Supreme Court's decision in Dynak v. Bd. of Educ. of Wood Dale Sch. Dist. 7, 444 Ill.Dec. 651 (Ill. 2020) (finding that a teacher was not entitled to use 30 days of sick leave for birth consecutively before and after an intervening summer break). It is unclear from the language of the statute if an employee can be prohibited from *intermittent* use of 30 working sick days for birth, e.g., such as taking leave once a week. Consult the board attorney for guidance on this issue.

⁴ 105 ILCS 5/24-6.

⁵ Family Bereavement Leave Act, 820 ILCS 154/; 56 Ill.Admin.Code Part 252. These paragraphs discuss family bereavement leave. 820 ILCS 154/5 defines an *eligible employee* under the same terms as an employee under FMLA (29 U.S.C. §2601 et seq.). See f/n 1 above. The employer may require reasonable documentation as specified in 820 ILCS 154/10(d) but may not require that an employee identify which specific category under item (4) in the first paragraph of this subhead pertains to the leave. Note the term *Significant Event* does not appear in the statute; it is included in this sample policy as a shorthand term to refer to those events listed in 820 ILCS 154/10(a)(4).

Domestic partner, when used to refer to an unmarried employee, includes: (1) the person recognized as the domestic partner of the employee under any domestic partnership or civil union law of a state or political subdivision of a state, or (2) an unmarried adult who is in a committed, personal relationship with the employee, who is not a domestic partner as described in item (1) and who the employee designates as that employee's domestic partner. 820 ILCS 154/5.

The Act also provides that the leave must be completed within 60 days of the employee learning of the death of his or her *covered family member*, as defined by 820 ILCS 154/5. However, that 60-day limitation does not apply when more than one covered family member dies in a 12-month period. There may be times when an employer may want to grant more than 10 unpaid work days, e.g., when a deceased covered family member lived in a foreign country, etc. Consult the board attorney to resolve the complexities of determining whether an employee is an eligible employee under the FMLA that would trigger this Act.

scheduling, and all other terms of the leave are governed by the Family Bereavement Leave Act. Eligible employees may use family bereavement leave, without any adverse employment action, for: (1) attendance by the bereaved staff member at the funeral or alternative to a funeral of a covered family member, which includes an employee's child, stepchild, spouse, domestic partner, sibling, parent, mother-in-law, father-in-law, grandchild, grandparent, or stepparent (2) making arrangements necessitated by the death of the covered family member, (3) grieving the death of the covered family member, or (4) absence from work due to a Significant Event, which includes: (i) miscarriage, (ii) an unsuccessful round of intrauterine insemination or of an assisted reproductive technology procedure, (iii) a failed adoption match or an adoption that is not finalized because it is contested by another party, (iv) a failed surrogacy agreement, (v) a diagnosis that negatively impacts pregnancy or fertility, or (vi) a still birth. An employee qualifying for leave due to a Significant Event will not be required to identify which specific reason applies to the employee's request.

The leave must be completed within 60 days after the date on which the employee received notice of the death of the covered family member or the date on which an event under item (4) above occurs. However, in the event of the death of more than one covered family member in a 12-month period, an employee is entitled to up to a total of six weeks of bereavement leave during the 12-month period, subject to certain restrictions under State and federal law. Other existing forms of leave may be substituted for the leave provided in the Family Bereavement Leave Act. This policy does not create any right for an employee to take family bereavement leave that is inconsistent with the Family Bereavement Leave Act.

Child Extended Bereavement Leave ⁶

Unpaid leave from work is available to employees who experience the loss of a child by suicide or homicide. The Child Extended Bereavement Leave Act governs the duration, scheduling, continuity of benefits, and all other terms of the leave. Accordingly, if the District employs 250 or more employees on a full-time basis, an employee is entitled to a total of 12 weeks of unpaid leave within one year after the employee notifies the District of the loss.⁷ An employee may elect to substitute other forms of leave to which the employee is entitled for the leave provided under the Child Extended Bereavement Leave Act.

Sabbatical Leave ⁸

Sabbatical leave may be granted in accordance with the School Code.

Personal Leave ⁹

Professional staff members are granted one personal leave day per year. A personal leave day is defined as a day to allow professional personnel time to conduct personal business (but not vacation, travel, or work stoppage), which is impossible to schedule at a time other than during a school day. Any unused personal leave day in a school year will be credited to the cumulative sick leave.

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⁶ 820 ILCS 156/, added by P.A. 103-466. Delete this subhead and the Legal Reference to 820 ILCS 156/, Child Extended Bereavement Leave Act, if the district has fewer than 50 full-time employees.

⁷ If the district employs at least 50 but fewer than 250 employees on a full-time basis, substitute the following sentence: "Accordingly, if the District employs at least 50 but not more than 249 employees on a full-time basis, an employee is entitled to a total of six weeks of unpaid leave within one year after the employee notifies the District of the loss." 820 ILCS 156/10, added by P.A. 103-466.

⁸ State law provides guidelines for sabbatical leaves but does not require boards to offer them. 105 ILCS 5/24-6.1.

⁹ State law does not address personal leave. It is not uncommon for professional staff to be granted more than one day of personal leave per year.

The use of a personal day is subject to the following conditions:

1. Except in cases of emergency or unavoidable situations, personal leave requests should be submitted to the Building Principal three days in advance of the requested date,
2. No personal leave days may be used immediately before or immediately after a holiday unless the Superintendent grants prior approval,
3. Personal leave may not be used in increments of less than one-half day,
4. Personal leave days are subject to a substitute's availability,
5. Personal leave days may not be used during the first and/or last five days of the school year,
6. Personal leave days may not be used on in-service and/or institute training days, and
7. Personal leave may not be used by more than 10% of the teaching staff in each building at the same time.

Leave of Absence Without Pay ¹⁰

The Board may grant a leave of absence without pay to tenured professional staff members who have rendered satisfactory service and desire to return to employment in a similar capacity at a time determined by the Board.

Each leave of absence shall be of the shortest possible duration required to meet the leave's purpose consistent with a reasonable continuity of instruction for students.

Leave to Serve as an Election Judge ¹¹

Any staff member who was appointed to serve as an election judge under State law may, after giving at least 20-days' written notice to the District, be absent without pay for the purpose of serving as an election judge. The staff member is not required to use any form of paid leave to serve as an election judge. No more than 10% of the District's employees may be absent to serve as election judges on the same Election Day.

Child-Rearing Leave ¹²

The Board shall grant a professional staff member's request for a non-paid, child-rearing leave, not to exceed the balance of the school year plus one additional school year (but in no event shall such leave exceed three semesters), provided the request complies with this policy. Nothing in this section shall prohibit a professional staff member from using paid sick days as provided in this policy. ¹³

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¹⁰ State law does not address leaves of absence without pay other than stating that a mutually agreed leave will not affect a teacher's contractual continued service. 105 ILCS 5/24-13.

¹¹ This paragraph restates 10 ILCS 5/13-2.5. The statute does not state whether the notice requirement is *calendar* days or *business* days. Support for it being *calendar* days is found in 10 ILCS 5/1-6; support for it being *business* days is found in 10 ILCS 5/1-3.

Rather than duplicate the statute's requirements in separate policies, sample policy 5:330, *Sick Days, Vacation, Holidays, and Leaves*, grants the leave to support personnel on the terms applicable to professional staff.

¹² The School Code does not address child-rearing. FMLA grants eligible employees a combined total of 12 weeks each year, with exceptions for teachers at the end of the school year, for, among other things, a child's: (1) birth and first-year care, and (2) adoption or foster placement (see sample policy 5:185, *Family and Medical Leave*). Districts not covered by the FMLA must treat a request for child-care leave to care for an adopted infant on terms comparable to those given biological mothers. *McWright v. Alexander*, 982 F.2d 222 (7th Cir. 1992).

¹³ Districts offering a child-rearing or maternity leave must be very careful not to violate anti-discrimination laws. Districts can prohibit pregnant teachers from combining paid disability leave with an unpaid maternity leave, provided that non-pregnant teachers are likewise prohibited from combining a paid disability leave with an unpaid general leave of absence. *Maganuco v. Leyden Comm. High Sch. Dist. 212*, 939 F.2d 440 (7th Cir. 1991); *U.S. v. Consol. High Sch. Dist. 230*, 983 F.2d 790 (7th Cir. 1993); *E.E.O.C. v. Elgin Teachers' Ass'n.*, 780 F.Supp. 1195 (N.D.Ill. 1991). A sick leave bank exclusion of maternity benefits violates Title VII. *U.S. v. Consol. High Sch. Dist. 230*, *supra*.

A teacher should request, if possible, a child-rearing leave by notifying the Superintendent in writing no later than 90 days before the requested leave's beginning date.¹⁴ The request should include the proposed leave dates. The leave shall end before a new school year begins or before the first day of school after winter recess. ¹⁵

Subject to the insurance carrier's approval, the teacher may maintain insurance benefits at his or her own expense during a child-rearing leave.

A professional staff member desiring to return before the leave's expiration will be assigned to an available vacancy for which the teacher is qualified, subject to scheduling efficiency and instruction continuity.

Leaves for Service in the Military ¹⁶

Leaves for service in the U.S. Armed Services or any of its reserve components and the National Guard, as well as re-employment rights, will be granted in accordance with State and federal law. A professional staff member hired to replace one in military service does not acquire tenure.

General Assembly Leave ¹⁷

Leaves for service in the General Assembly, as well as re-employment rights, will be granted in accordance with State and federal law. A professional staff member hired to replace one in the General Assembly does not acquire tenure.

Leave for Employment in Department of Defense ¹⁸

The Board may grant teachers a leave of absence to accept employment in a Dept. of Defense overseas school.

School Visitation Leave

An eligible professional staff member is entitled to eight hours during any school year, no more than four hours of which may be taken on any given day, to attend school conferences, behavioral meetings, or academic meetings related to the teacher's child, if the conference or meeting cannot be scheduled during non-work hours.¹⁹ Professional staff members must first use all accrued vacation leave, personal

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¹⁴ The length of the notice - here 90 days - is *not* covered by State or federal law. If an employee fails to provide this notice, the employee still has the right to request a family and medical leave which has a much shorter notice requirement (see sample policy 5:185, *Family and Medical Leave*), and could be followed by a child-rearing leave.

¹⁵ For a high school, omit "the first day of school after winter recess" and insert "at the semester break." Alternatively, the board may want to be more flexible by stating:

Every effort shall be made to have the leave minimally interrupt instructional continuity by ending . . .

¹⁶ Required by the School Code (105 ILCS 5/10-20.7b, 5/24-13, and 5/24-13.1); the Service Member Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (330 ILCS 61/, streamlining several job-related protection laws into one statute, mandating leave for *active service*, and requiring the public employer to make up the difference between military pay and regular compensation); and the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (38 U.S.C. §4301 *et seq.*).

¹⁷ Required by 105 ILCS 5/24-13.

¹⁸ State law provides guidelines for Dept. of Defense leaves but does not require boards to offer them. 105 ILCS 5/24-13.1.

¹⁹ 820 ILCS 147/15.

leave, compensatory leave, and any other leave that may be granted to the professional staff member, except sick, and disability leave. ²⁰

The Superintendent shall develop administrative procedures implementing this policy consistent with the School Visitation Rights Act. ²¹

Leaves for Victims of Domestic Violence, Sexual Violence, Gender Violence, or Other Crime of Violence ²²

An unpaid leave from work is available to any staff member who: (1) is a victim of domestic violence, sexual violence, gender violence, or any other crime of violence or (2) has a family or household member who is a victim of such violence whose interests are not adverse to the employee as it relates to the domestic violence, sexual violence, gender violence, or any other crime of violence. The unpaid leave allows the employee to seek medical help, legal assistance, counseling, safety planning, and other assistance, and to grieve and attend to matters necessitated by the death of a family or household member who is killed in a crime of violence, without suffering adverse employment action.

The Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act (VESSA) governs the purpose, requirements, scheduling, and continuity of benefits, and all other terms of the leave. Accordingly, if the District employs at least 50 employees, and subject to any exceptions in VESSA, an employee is entitled to a total of 12 work weeks of unpaid leave during any 12-month period.²³ Neither the law nor this policy creates a right for an employee to take unpaid leave that exceeds the unpaid leave time allowed under,

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²⁰ *Id.* The school visitation leave entitlement applies to both professional and educational support personnel. Rather than duplicate its requirements in separate policies, sample policy 5:330, *Sick Days, Vacation, Holidays, and Leaves*, grants the leave on the same terms applicable to professional staff.

²¹ 820 ILCS 147/. Parents of children with *serious health conditions* may also be eligible to use FMLA leave for individualized education program (IEP) meetings. See U.S. Dept. of Labor *Wage and Hour Division Opinion Letter*, FMLA 2019-2-A (8-8-19), available at: www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/WHD/legacy/files/2019_08_08_2A_FMLA.pdf.

²² Required by the Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act, (VESSA) (820 ILCS 180/ and 56 Ill.Admin.Code Part 280). *Gender violence* means: (1) one or more acts of violence or aggression that is a criminal offense under State law committed, at least in part, on the basis of a person's actual or perceived sex or gender, (2) a physical intrusion or invasion of a sexual nature under coercive conditions that is a criminal offense under State law, or (3) a threat to commit one of these acts. 820 ILCS 180/10(12.5). *Other crime of violence* means conduct prohibited by 720 ILCS 5/9 (homicide), 720 ILCS 5/11 (sex offenses), 720 ILCS 5/12 (bodily harm), 720 ILCS 5/26.5 (harassing and obscene communications), 720 ILCS 5/29D (terrorism), and 720 ILCS 5/33A (armed violence), or similar provisions of the Criminal Code of 1961. 820 ILCS 180/10(2.5). *Sexual violence* is not specifically defined in VESSA. While the law applies to all school districts (820 ILCS 180/10(10)), the number of employees determines the number of total workweeks of leave available during any 12-month period (820 ILCS 180/20(a)(2)). The term *employee* includes part-time workers. The Ill. Dept. of Labor must furnish to all employers a notice summarizing the law's requirements (*Your Rights Under Illinois Employment Laws* at: <https://labor.illinois.gov/employers/posters.html>). All districts must post this notice in a conspicuous place where notices to employees are customarily posted.

²³ If the district employs fewer than 50 employees, it may substitute the following sentence: "Accordingly, if the District employs at least 15 but not more than 49 employees, and subject to any exceptions in VESSA, an employee is entitled to a total of eight work weeks of unpaid leave during any 12-month period." 820 ILCS 180/20(a)(2), amended by P.A. 103-314.

If the district employs at least one but not more than 14 employees, it may substitute the following sentence: "Accordingly, if the District employs at least one but not more than 14 employees, and subject to any exceptions in VESSA, an employee is entitled to a total four (4) work weeks of leave during any 12-month period." *Id.*

Under 820 ILCS 180/20(a)(4) an employee is not entitled to more than two work weeks (10 work days) if the leave is to attend a wake or funeral (or an alternative event), make end-of-life arrangements, or grieve due to the death of a family or household member killed in a crime of violence. In these circumstances, the leave must be completed within 60 days after the date on which the employee receives notice of the death. Employees may qualify for unpaid leave under both VESSA and the Family Bereavement Leave Act; leave taken under one act does not diminish the availability of leave under the other. *Id.*

or is in addition to the unpaid leave time permitted by, the federal Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (29 U.S.C. §2601 et seq.).²⁴

Leaves to Serve as an Officer, Trustee, or Representative of a Specific Organization

Upon request, the Board will grant: (1) an unpaid leave of absence to an elected officer of a State or national teacher organization that represents teachers in collective bargaining negotiations,²⁵ (2) up to 20 days of paid leave of absence per year to a trustee of the Teachers' Retirement System in accordance with 105 ILCS 5/24-6.3,²⁶ (3) a paid leave of absence for the local association president of a State teacher association that is an exclusive bargaining agent in the District, or his or her designee, to attend meetings, workshops, or seminars as described in 105 ILCS 5/24-6.2,²⁷ and (4) up to 10 days of paid leave per school term for teachers elected to represent a statewide teacher association in federal advocacy work in accordance with 105 ILCS 5/24-3.5.²⁸

COVID-19 Paid Administrative Leave²⁹

When applicable, paid administrative leave related to COVID-19 will be granted to eligible employees in accordance with State law.

Family Neonatal Intensive Care Leave³⁰

An unpaid leave from work is available to any staff member whose child³¹ is a patient in a neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) in accordance with the requirements of the Family Neonatal Intensive Care Leave Act. If the District employs at least 51 employees, an employee is entitled to a total of 20 days

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²⁴ VESSA states that an employee does not have a right to take unpaid leave that exceeds the unpaid leave time allowed under the FMLA. 820 ILCS 180/20(a)(2). Section 25 creates an ambiguity by stating, “[t]he employer may not require the employee to substitute available paid or unpaid leave for [leave available to victims of domestic violence, sexual violence, or gender violence],” 820 ILCS 180/25. Contact the board attorney for advice about resolving this ambiguity.

²⁵ Required by 105 ILCS 5/24-13.

²⁶ Required by 105 ILCS 5/24-6.3(a). See sample policy 5:330, *Sick Days, Vacation, Holidays, and Leaves*, for the leave for an elected trustee for the Ill. Municipal Retirement Fund.

²⁷ Required by 105 ILCS 5/24-6.2.

²⁸ 105 ILCS 5/24-3.5, added by P.A. 103-308. The statewide teacher association is required to reimburse a district for substitute teaching costs incurred due to the teacher's absence. *Id.*

²⁹ 105 ILCS 5/10-20.83. Whether some or all of the COVID-19 related reasons listed in 105 ILCS 5/10-20.83(b) and (c) apply will depend upon current health guidance and/or rules. The law prohibits districts from rescinding the paid leave if the definition of “fully vaccinated against COVID-19” is later updated by the CDC or IDPH to include recommended booster doses. *Id.*

Consult the board attorney for guidance about whether the board must accommodate an employee's religion or disability by exempting the employee from the COVID-19 vaccination prerequisite in 105 ILCS 5/10-20.83, and/or if the board and union may agree that this leave will extend to all unvaccinated employees. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 requires employers to accommodate an employee's sincere religious objection to an employer vaccination requirement unless doing so would be an “undue hardship” on the employer. 42 U.S.C §2000e(j). Similarly, the Americans with Disabilities Act requires an employer to exempt an employee with a disability (including pregnancy-related disability) from a safety-related standard, such as a vaccination requirement, unless the employee poses a *direct threat* to the health or safety of the employee or others while on the job. 29 C.F.R. §1630.2(r). See also the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission guidance document, *What You Should Know About COVID-19 and the ADA, the Rehabilitation Act, and Other EEO Laws*, at: www.eeoc.gov/wysk/what-you-should-know-about-covid-19-and-ada-rehabilitation-act-and-other-eeo-laws.

³⁰ 820 ILCS 157/, added by P.A. 104-259, eff. 6-1-26. This leave is separate from FMLA leave, and an employer must allow the employee to take the leave in addition to FMLA leave. The term *employee* includes part-time workers.

³¹ *Child* means an employee's son or daughter who is a biological, adopted, or foster child, a stepchild, a legal ward, or a child of a person standing in loco parentis.

of unpaid leave while a child of the employee is a patient in a NICU.³² The District may require reasonable verification of the employee's child's length of stay in a NICU.³³

LEGAL REF.: 105 ILCS 5/10-20.83, 5/24-6, 5/24-6.1, 5/24-6.2, 5/24-6.3, 5/24-13, and 5/24-13.1.
10 ILCS 5/13-2.5, Election Code.
330 ILCS 61/, Service Member Employment and Reemployment Rights Act.
820 ILCS 147/, School Visitation Rights Act.
820 ILCS 154/, Family Bereavement Leave Act.
820 ILCS 156/, Child Extended Bereavement Leave Act.
820 ILCS 157/, Family Neonatal Intensive Care Leave Act.
820 ILCS 180/, Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act.

CROSS REF.: 5:180 (Temporary Illness or Temporary Incapacity), 5:185 (Family and Medical Leave), 5:330 (Sick Days, Vacation, Holidays, and Leaves)

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³² A district that employs 15 or fewer employees is not subject to the requirements of 820 ILCS 157/. A district that employs 50 or fewer employees may substitute the following sentence: "If the District employs at least 16 but not more than 50 employees, an employee is entitled to a total 10 days of unpaid leave while a child of the employee is a patient in a NICU." 820 ILCS 157/10, added by P.A. 104-259, eff. 6-1-26.

³³ An employer may not request confidential information protected by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act or other law when asking for reasonable verification. Consult the board attorney for guidance on acceptable forms of verification.