

# Memo from the Office of District Lodge 19

Date: December  
To: Members of District Lodge 19  
From: District Office  
RE: FMLA Changes effective January 16, 2009

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Following are the changes to the Family Medical Leave act that will take effective on January 16, 2009.

## **LEAVE FOR MILITARY:**

Military family members will for the first time be able to take up to 26 weeks off in a 12-month period to care for a service member with a serious duty-related injury. An estimated 130,000 family members a year are expected to take advantage of this leave. This change also applies to family members of the National Guard and Reserves.

## **DOCTOR VISITS:**

This change clarifies the rules on how often and when employees must see doctors. Previously, the law required employees to see a doctor twice during their leave.

The new rules stipulate that those two doctor visits must take place within 30 days of beginning leave. The first visit must occur within the first seven days.

## **PAID LEAVE:**

Employees who use paid leave at the same time as family leave must follow employer rules on paid time off.

Employees can't just take vacation time to get paid time off during an unplanned leave; instead, they must follow company time-off rules.

## **LEAVE REQUESTS:**

Before, employees could notify employers of plans to take family leave two days after their first absence. Now employees must follow the employer's usual call-in rules for reporting an absence, except in emergencies.

## **MEDICAL CERTIFICATION:**

An employer, but not a direct supervisor, can contact an employee's health care provider, with the worker's consent because of medical privacy rules, to verify a medical condition is authentic. Previously only employer's medical professionals could contact the doctor.