

Legal Update

Brought to you by: Evolution of Benefits



Illinois Domestic Violence Leave to Cover All Victims of Violence

Illinois has [amended](#) the state Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act to provide **victims of violent crime** the same employee rights to **unpaid leave** the Act already provides to victims of domestic, sexual and gender violence. The changes also expand some of the law's definitions. The amendments take effect **Jan. 1, 2022**.

Reasons for Leave

The amendments allow employees who themselves—or whose family or household members—are victims of **any crime of violence** (as defined by the amendments) to take off work for the reasons already permitted for employee victims of domestic, sexual and gender violence, namely:

- Medical attention for or recovery from physical or psychological injuries;
- Services from a victim services organization;
- Psychological or other counseling; and
- Safety planning, relocating or other actions to increase safety or ensure economic security.

Leave Amount

The amount of leave required by the Act depends on employer size, as follows:

- 1-14 employees: four weeks of unpaid leave per year
- 15-49 employees: eight weeks of unpaid leave per year
- 50 employees or more: 12 weeks of unpaid leave per year

Definition Changes

The changes added to the definition of family or household member grandparents, grandchildren, others sharing a relationship through a child, parties to civil unions, and family equivalents. Sexual violence is now defined as sexual assault.



Highlights

- The Illinois legislature expanded the state law that allows employee leave for domestic violence victims.
- Victims of all violent crimes, as specified in the law, are now allowed unpaid leave from work, along with their family and household members.
- Required annual leave amounts range from four to 12 weeks, depending on employer size.
- Notice and certification rules apply.

Employees may take leave for medical treatment, recovery, counseling, victim services, and planning for safety and economic security.