LEAVES OF ABSENCE

Unpaid Leave Checklist (Family Care & Personal Leave)

Pre-Leave

We know that there are times when you may need to care for a sick loved one or take a personal leave of absence, and we are here to support you through those situations. Here's what you need to know and do for your upcoming leave:

- ☐ **Reach out to Benesch's Benefits team at benefits@beneschlaw.com to schedule a meeting to discuss your leave at least 30 days in advance, but preferably a few months in advance.**
- ☐ Meet with Benesch's Benefits team to learn about eligibility, policy guidelines, and an overview of the leaves process.
- ☐ Receive a follow-up email from Benesch's Benefits team with the leave policy and plan document as well as instructions for submitting a leave claim to Lincoln Financial Group (LFG), our leaves administrator.
- ☐ **Let your manager or practice leader/department head and the critical people you work with (colleagues, partners, those whom you do a lot of work for, etc.) know about your leave and the timeframe you'll be out as soon as possible.**
- ☐ **File a leave of absence claim online at lincolnfinancial.com or by phone at 888-202-4307. If filing online and registering for the first time on Lincoln's site, be sure to input the code LF1329BEN. Filing by phone is recommended, as an intake specialist will enter all the information for you. Filing online leaves more room for error, which can delay your application.**
- ☐ **Submit any necessary documentation that Lincoln requests from you, if applicable. Comply with the timeframes required in the leave process.**
- ☐ If you are eligible for state family care leave, you will be asked to submit a state leave claim by LFG. Follow the instructions provided to you to file that claim. State leave will typically run concurrently with Benesch's leave, such as FMLA.
- ☐ Receive approval or denial of the leave, provided that all documentation is complete and sufficient.
- ☐ Your LFG case manager will be your point of contact for your leave; however, for any issues or questions during the leave process, you may contact the Benefits Team at benefits@beneschlaw.com.
- ☐ **Before you go out, make sure your work is covered if enough time allows.**
  - ☐ If you're staff, have a transition plan created for your work. Create this in collaboration with your manager and teammates, and ensure cross-training on your critical accountabilities.
  - ☐ If you're an attorney, work with your client relationship owners to ensure that your work is transitioned and that your matters are covered. Offer to meet with those who will be covering for you to transition the work.
- ☐ **Notify LFG and Benesch's Benefits team if your leave date changes.**

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During Leave

After you go out on leave, here are the next steps:

- ☐ **Notify LFG and benefits@beneschlaw.com when you go out on leave especially if the dates are different than what you initially applied for.**
- ☐ If you are supplementing your leave with PTO you will continue to be paid by Benesch. If state leave applies, your pay will come from the state. Benefit premiums will be withdrawn from your paycheck if you're using PTO to get paid for some or all of your leave. If your leave is unpaid, you must pay premiums through a direct billing process. You will be sent more information if the direct billing process applies.
- ☐ Dependent Care FSA and Commuter FSA contributions will be suspended during the leave of absence and reinstated upon return to work.
- ☐ **If you are on an intermittent leave of absence, you MUST enter time away from work in LFG's portal within 5 days of taking the leave. Please note: Failure to track time taken within 5 days will result in PTO being used instead of Intermittent STD/FMLA. There is no need to log time in any other system, the Human Resources and Payroll teams will do this for you.**
- ☐ There is no need for those on continuous leave to enter time in any system; the Human Resources and Payroll teams will do this for you.

Post-Leave

As your leave ends and you come back to work:

- ☐ **Confirm return to work date with Benefits and your manager or practice leader at least one week in advance.**
- ☐ If you're an attorney, consider reaching out to those who own client relationships on bigger matters where you assumed a case was still in progress, and let them know that you're coming back this date if they want to set up a meeting once you are back.
- ☐ Show up on day 1 ready to go.
- ☐ If applicable, reach out to Kristin Duff in Finance if you want an update on your billable hours expectation.

Questions, concerns or issues?

Reach out to **benefits@beneschlaw.com** if you need anything along the way. We're here for you!