



May 2009

Leave for spouses of deployed military personnel

The new law allows:

- **Spouses of military personnel called to active duty, ordered to be deployed or on leave from deployment during times of military conflict to take 15 days unpaid leave from work.**
- **Leave is without pay, but accrued leave may be substituted at the employee's choice.**
- **The 15 days of leave is per deployment.**
- **All employers, public and private, are covered, regardless of size.**
- **An employee is one who works on average 20 or more hours a week.**
- **Effective June 12, 2008**

What is the new law?

A new law that became effective on June 12, 2008, allows spouses of military personnel to take up to 15 days unpaid leave to spend time with their spouse before their spouse leaves for deployment or while their spouse is on leave from deployment, during times of military conflict declared by the President or Congress.

An employee must provide his or her employer with notice of the employee's intention to take leave within five business days of the employee's spouse receiving official notice that of an impending call to active duty or notice of leave during a deployment.

An employee may substitute accrued leave for any part of the family military leave.

An employee who takes family military leave is entitled to job protection and the same benefits as under the state Family Leave Act.

Who is covered?

An employee is defined as a person who works an average of 20 or more hours weekly, excluding independent contractors.

An employer is any person, firm, corporation, partnership or other business entity, state agencies and institutions, and local government.

What is L&I's role?

L&I's role is to inform employers and workers about the new law through outreach and education. Complaints filed by employees will be investigated, and L&I will enforce job protection for employees who need this leave.

Additional information may be obtained by calling David Johnson at 360-902-4930 or e-mail to jodc235@Lni.wa.gov, or by calling the L&I Employment Standards Program toll-free at 1-866-219-7321.

Updates regarding this new law will be posted on www.Lni.wa.gov/WorkplaceRights/LeaveBenefits/FamilyCare