

ILLINOIS

Illinois Adds Bereavement Leave to Employee Rights Under VESSA

On July 28, 2023, Gov. J.B. Pritzker signed into law [House Bill 2493](#), a bill providing two weeks of unpaid bereavement leave to employees whose family or household members are killed during a violent crime. The law amends the Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act (VESSA) and takes effect Jan. 1, 2024.

New Leave Entitlement

The amendments to VESSA require all employers to allow an employee up to two workweeks (10 days) of unpaid leave when the employee's family or household member is killed in a crime of violence, to:

- Attend the person's funeral, funeral alternative or wake;
- Make arrangements necessitated by the death; or
- Grieve the death.

Leave must be completed within 60 days of the worker's learning of the death.

Certification

Employers may require certification of the family or household member's death. If required, the employee must provide a sworn statement of the death, along with a death certificate; published obituary; or written verification of death, burial or memorial services from a mortuary, funeral home, burial society, crematorium, religious institution or government agency documenting that the victim was killed in a crime of violence, if the employee has such a document.

VESSA

VESSA requires all employers to provide four to 12 weeks of unpaid leave (depending on the employer's size) to employees who are victims of domestic, sexual or gender violence or crimes of violence and to employees whose family or household members are victims. Leave must be used for specified purposes.

Highlights

VESSA Leave Expanded

A new law amends VESSA to allow employees to take leave for the death of their family or household member from a violent crime.

Two Weeks' Unpaid Leave

The amendments require employers to provide two workweeks of unpaid leave for specific purposes relating to the death.

Employees who experience the death of a family or household member from a violent crime may take leave under VESSA.

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