TIPS FOR USAGE OF PERSONAL / FAMILY ILLNESS LEAVE

Consider the following tips to manage your use of personal and family illness leave:

1. **Use it for Illness or Doctors’ Appointments**: Keep your use of personal illness and family illness leave to times when you are truly ill or need to take time off for a doctor’s appointment.

2. **Schedule Multiple Doctors’ Appointments on the Same Day**: If you are taking time off to take your children to doctor’s appointments, consider scheduling your children’s appointments on one day or on the same day, but close in time to reduce your need to take several days off work.

3. **Schedule Doctors’ Appointments Around Your Schedule**: If you are using personal or family illness leave for doctor’s appointments, consider scheduling your appointments early or near the end of the day. Doing so will allow you to perhaps, only need a few hours off work as opposed to a full day. Keep in mind that you do not have to take the first appointment that the doctor’s office suggests to you. You may inform your doctor’s office of the times of day that work best for you.

4. **Caring for Ill Family Members**: If you are taking time off work to care for a family member who is ill, consider applying for intermittent leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act. If you are approved for FMLA your absence will not be monitored in the EAMP.

5. **Stress and Mental Health**: If you take days off due to workplace stress or for mental health days, please be aware that taking several days off this nature will lead to your absence being monitored in EAMP. Consider using the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to address stress or mental health concerns. However, avoiding the workplace is not a sustainable solution to any problems that you may be experiencing.

6. **Avoid Exhausiting Your Leave**: Attempt to avoid exhausting your personal and family illness leave. There are negative employment consequences for entering an unpaid status without having an approved leave.

7. **Seek an Approved Leave of Absence**: If you are close to exhausting your personal and family illness leave, it is important that you seek an approved leave of absence (whether intermittent or continuous leave). Being in an approved leave status protects your employment status. Being in an unpaid and unapproved leave status may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

8. **Leave is an Insurance Policy**: Your personal/family illness leave is like an insurance policy. We recommend that you use it only when you truly need it as you never know what the future may bring. (i.e., terminal, and unforeseen illnesses).

9. **Do Not Negatively Impact Your Retirement**: Maintaining a positive pay status, keeps employees in good standing for retirement.