



February 2014

## Domestic Violence Leave for Victims and Family Members

### The new law allows:

- **Victims of domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking to take reasonable leave from work for legal or law-enforcement assistance, medical treatment or counseling.**
- **Family members may also take reasonable leave to help a victim obtain needed treatment or services.**
- **Leave is with or without pay.**
- **Family member includes child, spouse, parent, parent-in-law, grandparent, or person the employee is dating.**
- **All employers, public and private, are covered, regardless of size.**
- **An employee must give advance notice, when possible.**
- **Effective April 1, 2008**

### What is the new law?

A new law that went into effect on April 1, 2008, allows victims of domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking to take reasonable or intermittent leave from work – paid or unpaid – to take care of legal or law enforcement needs or get medical treatment, social-services assistance or mental-health counseling.

Family members of a victim may also take reasonable leave to help the victim obtain treatment or seek help.

An employee may choose to use sick leave and other paid-time off, compensatory time or unpaid leave time. The leave under this law is in addition to other rights to take leave available to employees under other regulations.

### Is verification required?

An employer may require verification from an employee who is requesting leave. If so, an employee may provide one or more of the following:

- A police report indicating the employee or employee's family member was a victim.
- A court order providing protection to the victim.
- Documentation from a healthcare provider, advocate, clergy, or attorney.
- An employee's written statement that the employee or employee's family member is a victim and needs assistance. Family relationship may be determined by birth certificate, court document or other similar record or a statement from the employee.

### 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 Employment Standards Program toll free at 1-866-219-7321 or e-mail to [esgeneral@Lni.wa.gov](mailto:esgeneral@Lni.wa.gov) .

Updates regarding this new law will be posted on [www.Lni.wa.gov/WorkplaceRights/LeaveBenefits/FamilyCare](http://www.Lni.wa.gov/WorkplaceRights/LeaveBenefits/FamilyCare)