

the employee’s health care provider has advised the employee to stay home when the pollen count exceeds a certain level. An employee who is pregnant may be unable to report to work because of severe morning sickness.

§§ 825.116–825.118 [Reserved]

§ 825.119 Leave for treatment of substance abuse.

(a) Substance abuse may be a serious health condition if the conditions of §§ 825.113 through 825.115 are met. However, FMLA leave may only be taken for treatment for substance abuse by a health care provider or by a provider of health care services on referral by a health care provider. On the other hand, absence because of the employee’s use of the substance, rather than for treatment, does not qualify for FMLA leave.

(b) Treatment for substance abuse does not prevent an employer from taking employment action against an employee. The employer may not take action against the employee because the employee has exercised his or her right to take FMLA leave for treatment. However, if the employer has an established policy, applied in a non-discriminatory manner that has been communicated to all employees, that provides under certain circumstances an employee may be terminated for substance abuse, pursuant to that policy the employee may be terminated whether or not the employee is presently taking FMLA leave. An employee may also take FMLA leave to care for a covered family member who is receiving treatment for substance abuse. The employer may not take action against an employee who is providing care for a covered family member receiving treatment for substance abuse.

§ 825.120 Leave for pregnancy or birth.

(a) *General rules.* Eligible employees are entitled to FMLA leave for pregnancy or birth of a child as follows:

(1) Both the mother and father are entitled to FMLA leave for the birth of their child.

(2) Both the mother and father are entitled to FMLA leave to be with the healthy newborn child (*i.e.*, bonding time) during the 12-month period be-

ginning on the date of birth. An employee’s entitlement to FMLA leave for a birth expires at the end of the 12-month period beginning on the date of the birth. If state law allows, or the employer permits, bonding leave to be taken beyond this period, such leave will not qualify as FMLA leave. *See* § 825.701 regarding non-FMLA leave which may be available under applicable State laws. Under this section, both the mother and father are entitled to FMLA leave even if the newborn does not have a serious health condition.

(3) A husband and wife who are eligible for FMLA leave and are employed by the same covered employer may be limited to a combined total of 12 weeks of leave during any 12-month period if the leave is taken for birth of the employee’s son or daughter or to care for the child after birth, for placement of a son or daughter with the employee for adoption or foster care or to care for the child after placement, or to care for the employee’s parent with a serious health condition. This limitation on the total weeks of leave applies to leave taken for the reasons specified as long as a husband and wife are employed by the “same employer.” It would apply, for example, even though the spouses are employed at two different worksites of an employer located more than 75 miles from each other, or by two different operating divisions of the same company. On the other hand, if one spouse is ineligible for FMLA leave, the other spouse would be entitled to a full 12 weeks of FMLA leave. Where the husband and wife both use a portion of the total 12-week FMLA leave entitlement for either the birth of a child, for placement for adoption or foster care, or to care for a parent, the husband and wife would each be entitled to the difference between the amount he or she has taken individually and 12 weeks for FMLA leave for other purposes. For example, if each spouse took 6 weeks of leave to care for a healthy, newborn child, each could use an additional 6 weeks due to his or her own serious health condition or to care for a child with a serious health condition. Note, too, that many State pregnancy disability laws specify a period of disability either before or after the birth

of a child; such periods would also be considered FMLA leave for a serious health condition of the mother, and would not be subject to the combined limit.

(4) The mother is entitled to FMLA leave for incapacity due to pregnancy, for prenatal care, or for her own serious health condition following the birth of the child. Circumstances may require that FMLA leave begin before the actual date of birth of a child. An expectant mother may take FMLA leave before the birth of the child for prenatal care or if her condition makes her unable to work. The mother is entitled to leave for incapacity due to pregnancy even though she does not receive treatment from a health care provider during the absence, and even if the absence does not last for more than three consecutive calendar days. For example, a pregnant employee may be unable to report to work because of severe morning sickness.

(5) The husband is entitled to FMLA leave if needed to care for his pregnant spouse who is incapacitated or if needed to care for her during her prenatal care, or if needed to care for the spouse following the birth of a child if the spouse has a serious health condition. See § 825.124.

(6) Both the mother and father are entitled to FMLA leave if needed to care for a child with a serious health condition if the requirements of §§ 825.113 through 825.115 and 825.122(c) are met. Thus, a husband and wife may each take 12 weeks of FMLA leave if needed to care for their newborn child with a serious health condition, even if both are employed by the same employer, provided they have not exhausted their entitlements during the applicable 12-month FMLA leave period.

(b) *Intermittent and reduced schedule leave.* An eligible employee may use intermittent or reduced schedule leave after the birth to be with a healthy newborn child only if the employer agrees. For example, an employer and employee may agree to a part-time work schedule after the birth. If the employer agrees to permit intermittent or reduced schedule leave for the birth of a child, the employer may require the employee to transfer tempo-

rarily, during the period the intermittent or reduced leave schedule is required, to an available alternative position for which the employee is qualified and which better accommodates recurring periods of leave than does the employee's regular position. Transfer to an alternative position may require compliance with any applicable collective bargaining agreement, federal law (such as the Americans with Disabilities Act), and State law. Transfer to an alternative position may include altering an existing job to better accommodate the employee's need for intermittent or reduced leave. The employer's agreement is not required for intermittent leave required by the serious health condition of the mother or newborn child. See §§ 825.202 through 825.205 for general rules governing the use of intermittent and reduced schedule leave. See § 825.121 for rules governing leave for adoption or foster care. See § 825.601 for special rules applicable to instructional employees of schools.

§ 825.121 Leave for adoption or foster care.

(a) *General rules.* Eligible employees are entitled to FMLA leave for placement with the employee of a son or daughter for adoption or foster care as follows:

(1) Employees may take FMLA leave before the actual placement or adoption of a child if an absence from work is required for the placement for adoption or foster care to proceed. For example, the employee may be required to attend counseling sessions, appear in court, consult with his or her attorney or the doctor(s) representing the birth parent, submit to a physical examination, or travel to another country to complete an adoption. The source of an adopted child (*e.g.*, whether from a licensed placement agency or otherwise) is not a factor in determining eligibility for leave for this purpose.

(2) An employee's entitlement to leave for adoption or foster care expires at the end of the 12-month period beginning on the date of the placement. If state law allows, or the employer permits, leave for adoption or