



Management of Workforce - Leaves and Work from Home

In wake of the growing number of COVID-19 cases in India, constant measures are being taken by the Indian authorities with respect to the management of workforce, both within the public and private sector. These measures relate to aspects such as paid leaves, work from home etc. and have been observed to differ from State to State. While some of these measures have been given a mandatory effect, others have been issued as an advisory in larger public interest.

For instance, in the State of Karnataka, the government has directed the employers to provide 28 days of paid leave to the employees infected by COVID-19. Considering the communicable nature of the disease, it is likely that other States may soon issue similar directions.

In order to prevent and control the spread of COVID-19, various State governments in India have also been very vocal about the aspect of 'work from home'. In Gurugram (which is a commercial hub and houses various MNCs, IT firms, industries, BPOs and corporate offices), the local authorities have issued an advisory to all establishments to allow their employees to work from home until March 31, 2020. In Karnataka, the establishments registered as software technology park/ electronic hardware technology park units have been advised to consider requiring the employees to work from home. In Mumbai (commonly known as the financial capital of the country), private offices have been directed to operate at below 50% of the total attendance and allow the rest of the workforce to work from home. Further, the Chief Minister of Maharashtra has also appealed to all companies to allow their employees to work from home whenever possible in light of the rising number of cases.

Even in locations where no specific directions have been issued by the government, it has been observed that various organizations are voluntarily adopting diverse strategies relating to the facility of work from home for its employees. While some organizations are extending the facility to all employees, others are limiting it based upon the department and nature of work of a particular employee.

As a result of the ongoing crisis and the constantly changing directions and advisories issued by the Union and the State Governments to contain the spread of the pandemic, the employers in India are facing multiple issues in deciding their next course of action. While dealing with such issues, it is of utmost importance that a fine balance is maintained between ensuring the health and safety of the employees and the financial interests and continuity of business of the organization. Further, it is also essential that the decisions taken by the employers are in line with the directions of the government in order to avoid any kind of non-compliance.

We continue business as usual and our attorneys and staff are available to provide our clients uninterrupted service. Please do not hesitate to reach out with questions or concerns at any time. We hope that you and your family remain healthy and safe throughout this global health challenge.

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