

NOTICE TO EMPLOYEES

AN ACT RELATIVE TO PARENTAL LEAVE EFFECTIVE April 7, 2015

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same as follows:

SECTION 1. Chapter 149 of the General Laws is hereby amended by striking out section 105D, as appearing in the 2012 Official Edition, and inserting in place thereof the following section:-

Section 105D. (a) For the purposes of this section, an “employer” shall be defined as in subsection 5 of section 1 of chapter 151B.

(b) An employee who has completed the initial probationary period set by the terms of employment, not to exceed 3 months, or, if there is no such probationary period, has been employed by the same employer for at least 3 consecutive months as a full-time employee, shall be entitled to 8 weeks of parental leave for the purpose of giving birth or for the placement of a child under the age of 18, or under the age of 23 if the child is mentally or physically disabled, for adoption with the employee who is adopting or intending to adopt the child; provided, however, that any 2 employees of the same employer shall only be entitled to 8 weeks of parental leave in aggregate for the birth or adoption of the same child. The employee shall give at least 2 weeks’ notice to the employer of the anticipated date of departure and the employee’s intention to return, or provide notice as soon as practicable if the delay is for reasons beyond the individual’s control. The employee shall be restored to the employee’s previous, or a similar, position with the same status, pay, length of service credit and seniority, wherever applicable, as of the date of the leave. An employee on parental leave for the adoption of a child shall be entitled to the same benefits offered by the employer to an employee on parental leave for the birth of a child. The parental leave may be with or without pay at the discretion of the employer. If the employer agrees to provide parental leave for longer than 8 weeks, the employer shall not deny the employee the rights under this section unless the employer clearly informs the employee, in writing, prior to the commencement of the parental leave, and prior to any subsequent extension of that leave, that taking longer than 8 weeks of leave shall result in the denial of reinstatement or the loss of other rights and benefits.

(c) The employer shall not be required to restore an employee on parental leave to the previous or a similar position if other employees of equal length of service credit and status in the same or similar positions have been laid off due

to economic conditions or other changes in operating conditions affecting employment during the employee's parental leave; provided, however, that the employee on parental leave shall retain any preferential consideration for another position to which the employee may be entitled as of the date of the leave.

(d) The parental leave shall not affect the employee's right to receive vacation time, sick leave, bonuses, advancement, seniority, length of service credit, benefits, plans or programs for which the employee was eligible at the date of the leave or any other advantages or rights of employment incidental to the employment position; provided, however, that the parental leave shall not be included, when applicable, in the computation of the benefits, rights and advantages; and provided further, that the employer need not provide for the cost of any benefits, plans or programs during the parental leave unless the employer provides for such benefits, plans or programs to all employees who are on a leave of absence. Nothing in this section shall be construed to affect any bargaining agreement or company policy which provides for greater or additional benefits than those required under this section.

(e) Every employer shall post and keep posted in a conspicuous place upon its premises a notice describing this section and the employer's policies related to this section.

SECTION 2. Section 4 of chapter 151B of the General Laws, as so appearing, is hereby amended by striking out subsection 11A and inserting in place thereof the following subsection:-

11A. For an employer, or an employer's agent, to refuse to restore certain employees to employment following an absence by reason of a parental leave taken pursuant to section 105D of chapter 149 or to otherwise fail to comply with that section, or for the commonwealth and any of its boards, departments and commissions to deny vacation credit to an employee for the fiscal year during which the employee is absent due to a parental leave taken pursuant to said section 105D of said chapter 149, or to impose any other penalty as a result of a parental leave of absence.

Approved, January 7, 2015.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING PARENTAL LEAVE, PLEASE CONTACT HERTA DANE, HUMAN RESOURCES COORDINATOR, IN THE SELECTMEN'S OFFICE AT 413-596-2800 EXTENSION 100 OR VIA EMAIL AT HDANE@WILBRAHAM-MA.GOV.