



## New MA Law Updates Veterans Day Leave Entitlements

Do you have military veterans among your employees? Massachusetts employers have always been required to grant leave to military veterans who want to participate in Veterans Day or Memorial Day exercises. However, under a new law, which took effect July 14, 2016, employers with 50 or more employees are required to provide veterans with *paid leave* to participate in Veterans Day events in their town of residence.

### What Does This Mean for Employers?

The new Veterans Day leave requirements will not apply to all companies. There are still no paid leave requirements for Veterans Day at companies with fewer than 50 employees, nor are there paid leave requirements for Memorial Day requests. In these cases, employers can choose to provide paid leave at their own discretion.

To qualify for this paid leave, an employee needs to meet the Massachusetts law definition of a veteran or a member of a department of war veterans. This new leave requirement will not apply to employees whose services are deemed “essential and critical to the public health or safety” and “determined to be essential to the safety and security” of the employer.

### Next Steps

The new Veterans Day entitlements join other Massachusetts leave laws that have also been updated in the past year, including parental leave, domestic abuse leave, and sick leave. Employers should update their policies and handbooks to reflect the new leave entitlements and be sure to communicate the changes to their employees. HR Knowledge is here to help any employers or employees needing further clarification on these leave entitlements. Please feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns.

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