

AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending WSR 19-16-081, filed 7/31/19, effective 8/31/19)

WAC 192-700-005 When is an employee entitled to employment restoration after leave ends? (1) Subject to RCW ((50A.04.025)) 50A.35.010(3), an employee who meets the criteria listed in RCW ((50A.04.025)) 50A.35.010 (6)(a) who takes leave under Title 50A RCW is entitled, on return from the leave, to be restored by the employer to:

(a) The position of employment held by the employee when the leave commenced; or

(b) An equivalent position with equivalent employment benefits, pay, and other terms and conditions of employment.

(i) "Equivalent position" means a position that is nearly identical to the employee's former position as if the employee did not take extended leave. This includes pay, benefits and working conditions, privileges, perks, location, and status. It must involve the same or substantially similar duties and responsibilities, which must entail substantially equivalent skill, effort, responsibility, and authority.

(ii) "Employment benefits" includes all benefits provided or made available to employees by an employer such as:

(A) Insurance;

(B) Paid time off;

(C) Educational benefits; or

(D) Retirement benefits.

(2) An employee is entitled to such reinstatement even if the employee has been replaced or the employee's position has been restructured to accommodate the employee's absence unless the employer can demonstrate the circumstances fall within WAC 192-700-010(1).

(3) The protections provided in RCW ((50A.04.025)) 50A.35.010 and this section apply to the employee beginning with the date the employee starts taking leave.

AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending WSR 19-16-081, filed 7/31/19, effective 8/31/19)

WAC 192-700-010 Can an employer deny employment restoration?

(1) An employee is not entitled to employment protection under Title 50A RCW if:

(a) An employer exercises its right to deny restoration under RCW ((50A.04.025)) 50A.35.010 (6)(b) and the employee has elected not to return to employment after receiving notice under subsection (2) of this section; or

(b) The employer is able to show that an employee would not otherwise have been employed at the time of reinstatement.

(2) An employer that chooses to deny restoration under subsection (1)(a) or (b) of this section to an employee on paid medical or family leave must notify the employee in writing as soon as the employer decides to deny restoration. The employer must serve this notice to the employee either in person or by certified mail. The notice must include:

(a) A statement that the employer intends to deny employment restoration when the leave has ended;

(b) The reasons behind the decision to deny restoration;

(c) An explanation that health benefits will still be paid for the duration of the leave; and

(d) The date in which eligibility for employer-provided health benefits ends.

(3) Employers that choose to deny restoration are required to adhere to the continuation of health benefits in RCW ((~~50A.04.245~~) 50A.35.020) for the remainder of the employee's approved leave.