

# Managing Team Productivity When a Co-Worker Takes Leave: Guidance for Employers

To help employers develop leave strategies that sustain productivity with minimal impacts to staff workloads, morale, and personnel costs, IBI sought input from experts at leading healthcare, benefits and absence management firms. A summary of their guidance follows



## MAKE TEAM PRODUCTIVITY A PRIORITY

- Consider the impact of extended leaves on team productivity when adopting new policies.
- Work with HR, benefits professionals, legal counsel, and leaders of different business units to develop standing continuity plans for maintaining mission critical operations during leaves.

## DEVELOP A COORDINATED BENEFITS STRATEGY

- Review your company's benefits package and administration practices for ways to close gaps in coverage, minimize overlapping benefits, and ensure leave policies don't disrupt other priorities.
- Leverage existing benefits such as EAP, childcare and eldercare, and flexible work policies to minimize co-workers' disruptions from extended leaves.

## REMEMBER THAT ABSENT EMPLOYEES ARE STILL TEAM MEMBERS

- Engage employees in planning for their return to work before and during their leave.
- When possible and permissible, share information about an employee's return-to-work (RTW) plan with the entire team.
- Consider how mutually beneficial accommodations allowed under the ADA can help keep an employee engaged with the team as their return nears.



## CLEARLY COMMUNICATE HOW LEAVE POLICIES WORK

- Keep employees informed about their rights and responsibilities under both the law and company policy.
- Review formal leave rules and clearly define expectations for every member of the team.
- Signal your company's commitment to anti-discrimination and anti-retaliation policies.
- Share successful team adaptations to extended leaves as case studies for maintaining productivity.
- Check in regularly with employees who remain on the job during a co-worker's extended leave.

Read the full guidance, as well as the report:

What Really Happens When A Co-Worker Takes Extended Leave? on [ibiweb.org/impacts-of-coworkers-leaves](https://ibiweb.org/impacts-of-coworkers-leaves)