

Nine Components of an Effective Integrated Absence Management Solution

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Employee absence can occur for a variety of reasons – from taking paid sick/vacation time to leaves that qualify under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), or from Short-Term Disability (STD) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Workers can also be absent due to workers compensation-related injuries. Each type of absence is managed according to a separate leave or claims management program. Often, these programs are managed separately.

Managing leave programs individually – whether through different teams and/or vendors or by individual office or division – can pose difficulties for an organization as a whole. For example, a lack of coordination across leave programs can lead to inappropriate use, overuse of leave, or even abuse of leave programs. This can also result in missed opportunities to reduce absence and the associated costs, which can be mitigated by coordinating leaves in order to ensure they run concurrently.

Dealing with multiple vendors can create a difficult, confusing process for employees and increase the administrative burden on Human Resources (HR) teams. Inconsistent management of leave throughout a company can lead to failures to comply with the more than 450 regulations governing federal and state leave programs. That, in turn, can lead to investigations by and fines from the Department of Labor (DOL) or U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).

Most importantly, disparate leave program management makes it challenging to obtain a comprehensive view of absence across an organization. Without a total view of absence, it is difficult to assess, manage and reduce the associated costs and impact.

To effectively and efficiently manage absence, many companies are choosing to implement an integrated absence management solution. Integrated absence management can increase compliance, reduce direct and indirect costs of absence, help you understand and manage employee absence across your organization, and improve the employee experience.

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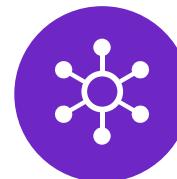
1. Single-source intake and streamlined reporting

- Telephonic, web, and mobile app options for reporting all leaves (e.g., vacation time, STD, ADA, FMLA, company leaves, workers compensation)
- Confirmation of eligibility at the point of intake supported by jurisdictionally compliant technology that minimizes the potential for error
- Prevent duplicate claims and integrate leaves that run concurrently
- Improve the overall employee experience through effective communication, simplified reporting, information accuracy, employee advocate-provided guidance, and reporting privacy



2. Prompt leave eligibility verification, notification, and guidance

- Advise employees of leave and/or disability eligibility based on events
- Coordinate leaves that run concurrently
- Inform employees of available benefit options in order to make informed decisions
- Initiate required forms and secure medical certification as required within guidelines and company policies



3. Centralized database

- Accurate and comprehensive leave reporting
- Jurisdictionally compliant to support all state, federal, and company-specific leaves
- Support of report generation for identification of trends and review of leave-related detail



4. Proper evaluation of reported absence or requested leave

- Facilitate completion of paperwork required by specific various leave programs and leave management vendors
- Single point of contact for employees regardless of the leave being initiated or used



5. Consistent management and ongoing communication

- Engage with employees to provide effective communication and guidance through the process
 - Leave procedures/applicable policies
 - Required forms and timelines
 - Additional requirements
- Encourage/support return-to-work and stay-at-work strategies
- Consistent administration across all organization locations

If you are interested in outsourcing your absence management program, check out our article in @Work magazine, “14 Questions to Help You Find the Right Absence Management Partner.” You can also find other informative articles in our resource library.



6. Early and appropriate utilization of effective case management

- Quickly identify strategic approach to managing absence
 - Return to work or stay at work
 - Occupational and non-occupational
- Confirm and align appropriate medical treatment, explore modified duty options, and design safe return-to-work
- Early intervention, utilizing appropriate resources to gain best possible outcomes for employees



7. Implementation and management of return-to-work/stay-at-work options

- Occupational and non-occupational injuries
- Faster, more efficient return-to-work
- Reduce absence-related burden on organization/colleagues
- Improve productivity



8. Consistent compliance with ADA requirements for return-to-work efforts

- Reduce fines and penalties
- Help avoid additional, multi-year scrutiny or audits
- Utilize interactive process for all leaves



9. Easy access to data and reports

- Provides a holistic view of total absence across the organization
- Facilitates identification and proactive management of trends
- Supports the use of benchmarking and KPIs to track and demonstrate the impact and value of an absence management program

Many employers who choose to integrate their absence management solution turn to a vendor to implement an efficient and cost-effective program. Employers with more than 1,000 employees and/or more than five locations, organizations with call centers, and those in the retail/wholesale, telecommunications, and energy industries are strong proponents of outsourcing leave management. As the information presented above shows, any company within any industry can benefit from implementing an integrated absence management solution.

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Connect With Us

If you would like to meet with one of ESIS' team of leave management experts to discuss how we can partner with you to build an effective, integrated leave management solution for your organization, please contact:

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