

Small Employer Advisory Committee (SEAC)

Objectives:

- Create definition of “need” for the PFML program from small employers’ perspective
- Form a venue to discuss best practices for leave management
- Identify complete claim life cycle from the employee and employer perspective
- Ensure compliance with the administration of private exemption plans and PFML
- Provide a channel for user testing that encompasses both the happy path and unhappy path

Priorities:

Department of Family and Medical Leave (DFML)

- Ensure benefit system is consistent with industry practices and policies around leave management
- Determine small employer need for information on employee leave eligibility and behavior
- Provide program fidelity that ensures security, privacy, and confidentiality
- Understand ideal characteristics of a leave management system from the employer’s perspective
- Realize employer need for communications regarding benefits leave administration
- Anticipate systems for tracking and communicating leave effectively across all stakeholders
- Manage the integration between payroll and benefits (wage replacement vs job protection/leave entitlement)

Proposed Collaborators: NFIB, MA Food Association, Retailers Association, Package Store Association, Restaurant Association

Proposed Group Composition: 15 employers from across the following industries – food services, healthcare, daycare, manufacturing, construction, retail, professional services, and convenience stores

The group will be composed of employers that:

- Participate in the Commonwealth’s Paid Family and Medical Leave program or
- Have an exemption from the program, both as a self-insured entity and a privately insured company
- Represent a diversity in terms of wages and manager and non-managerial employees
- Are located across the state in areas that include but are not limited to gateway cities
- Will be applying for all types of leave benefits offered under PFML, including military leave

Proposed Meeting Cadence: Monthly 1-hour meetings for three (3) months to start; will check-in with the group at the end of the 3 months to conduct a retrospective on the process and identify if the group should continue

Potential Topics for Discussion:

- Compliance (minimum standards, security, reporting)
- Time management (vendors, systems, processes)
- Managing healthcare costs
- In-house vs outsourced administration (TPAs/PEOs)
- Technology

- Role of employer in helping employees understand leave benefits (intersection with workers comp, disability, etc.)
- Training for HR in a changing market
- How are benefits administration responsibilities balanced with other daily duties (recruitment, workplace safety, etc.)?
- How do you cater and support different demographics within workforce?
- How are managers and supervisors trained/held responsible for leave identification and enforcement?
- How is the impact of navigation and interacting with multiple benefits assessed?
- How are issues with abuse and program integrity reviewed?
- DFML's communication strategy and cadence with employers