(3) encourages ORWH to continue to focus on ensuring that NIH supports biomedical research that considers sex as a biological variable across the research spectrum; and

(4) encourages the Director of the NIH to continue to consult and involve ORWH on all matters related to the influence of sex and gender on health, especially those matters pertaining to the consideration of sex as a biological variable in research with vertebrate animals and humans.

SA 2664. Ms. MIKULSKI (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 242, celebrating the 25th anniversary of the Office of Research on Women's Health at the National Institutes of Health; as follows:

In the eighteenth whereas clause, strike ''CDC'' and insert ''Centers for Disease Control and Prevention''.

SA 2665. Ms. MIKULSKI (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 242, celebrating the 25th anniversary of the Office of Research on Women's Health at the National Institutes of Health; as follows:

Amend the title so as to read: ''A resolution celebrating the 25th anniversary of the Office of Research on Women's Health at the National Institutes of Health.''.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on September 16, 2015, at 10 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Environment and Public Works be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on September 16, 2015, at 10 a.m., in room SD–406 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Oversight of the Cause, Response, and Impacts of EPA's Gold King Mine Spill.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on September 16, 2015, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''The U.S. Role and Strategy in the Middle East: Syria, Iraq, and the Fight against ISIS.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Indian Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on September 16, 2015, in room SD–628 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, at 2:15 p.m., to conduct an oversight hearing entitled ''EPA's Gold King Mine Disaster: Examining the Harmful Impacts to Indian Country.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on September 16, 2015, at 10:15 a.m., in room SD–226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Reforming the Electronic Communications Privacy Act.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on September 16, 2015, at 10 a.m., in room SD–430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Achieving the Promise of Health Information Technology: Improving Care Through Patient Access to Their Records.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on September 16, 2015, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''A Review of Regulatory Reform Proposals.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Veterans' Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on September 16, 2015, at 2:30 p.m. in room SR–418 of the Russell Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without object, it is so ordered.

NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING (NPRM OR NOTICE), AND REQUEST FOR COMMENTS FROM INTERESTED PARTIES

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the attached documentation from the Office of Compliance be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

U.S. CONGRESS,
OFFICE OF COMPLIANCE,
Washington, DC, September 16, 2015.

Hon. ORRIN G. HATCH,
President Pro Tempore, U.S. Senate,
The Capitol, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: Section 202(d) of the Congressional Accountability Act of 1995 (CAA), 2 U.S.C. §1312(d), requires the Board of Directors of the Office of Compliance (''the Board'') to issue regulations implementing Section 202 of the CAA relating to sections 101 through 105 of the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (''FMLA''), 29 U.S.C. §§2611 through 2615, made applicable to the legislative branch by the CAA. 2 U.S.C. §1312(a)(1).

Section 304(b)(1) of the CAA, 2 U.S.C. §1384(b)(1), requires that the Board issue a general notice of proposed rulemaking by transmitting ''such notice to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate for publication in the Congressional Record on the first day of which both Houses are in session following such transmittal.''

On behalf of the Board, I am hereby transmitting the attached notice of proposed rulemaking to the President Pro Tempore of the Senate. I request that this notice be published in the Senate section of the Congressional Record on the first day on which both Houses are in session following receipt of this transmittal. In compliance with Section 304(b)(2) of the CAA, a comment period of 60 days after the publication of this notice of proposed rulemaking is being provided before adoption of the rules.

Any inquiries regarding this notice should be addressed to Barbara J. Sapin, Executive Director of the Office of Compliance, Room LA-200, 110 2nd Street, S.E., Washington, DC 20540; 202-724-9250.

Sincerely,

BARBARA L. CAMENS,
Chair of the Board of Directors,
Office of Compliance.

FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE OFFICE OF COMPLIANCE

NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING (NPRM OR NOTICE), AND REQUEST FOR COMMENTS FROM INTERESTED PARTIES.

Modifications to the rights and protections under the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA), Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, as required by 2 U.S.C. §1331, Congressional Accountability Act of 1995, as amended (CAA).

Background:

The purpose of this Notice is to propose modifications to the existing legislative branch FMLA substantive regulations under section 202 of the CAA (2 U.S.C. §1302 et seq.), which applies the rights and protections of sections 101 through 105 of the FMLA to covered employees. These modifications are necessary in order to bring existing legislative branch FMLA regulations (adopted April 16, 1996) in line with recent statutory changes to the FMLA, 29 U.S.C. §2601 et seq.

What is the authority under the CAA for these proposed substantive regulations?

Section 202(a) of the CAA provides that the rights and protections established by sections 101 through 105 of the FMLA (29 U.S.C. §§2611–2615) shall apply to covered employees.

Section 202(d)(1) and (2) of the CAA require that the Office of Compliance (OOC) Board of Directors (the Board), pursuant to section 1384 of the CAA, issue regulations implementing the rights and protections of the FMLA and that those regulations shall be ''the same as substantive regulations promulgated by the Secretary of Labor to implement the statutory provisions referred to in the subsection (a) [of section 202 of the CAA] except insofar as the Board may determine, for good cause shown . . . that a modification of such regulations would be more effective for the implementation of the rights and protections under this section.'' The modifications to the regulations issued by the Board herein are on all matters for which section 202 of the CAA requires regulations to be issued.

Are there currently FMLA regulations in effect?

Yes. On January 22, 1996, the OOC Board adopted and submitted for publication in the Congressional Record the original FMLA final regulations implementing section 202 of the CAA, which applies certain rights and protections of the FMLA. On April 15, 1996, pursuant to section 304(c) of the CAA, the House and the Senate passed resolutions approving the final regulations. Specifically, the Senate passed S. Res. 242, providing for approval of the final regulations applicable to the Senate and the employees of the Senate; the House passed H. Res. 400 providing for approval of the final regulations applicable to the House and the employees of the House; and the House and the Senate passed S. Con. Res. 51, providing for approval of the final regulations applicable to employing offices and employees other than those offices and employees of the House and the Senate. After the Senate and the House passed these resolutions, the OOC Board formally issued the FMLA regulations on April 19, 1996.

What does the FMLA provide?

The FMLA entitles eligible employees of covered employers to take job-protected, unpaid leave, or to substitute appropriate accrued paid leave, for up to a total of 12 workweeks in a 12-month period: for the birth of the employee's son or daughter and to care for the newborn child; for the placement of a son or daughter with the employee for adoption or foster care; to care for the employee's spouse, parent, son, or daughter with a serious health condition; when the employee is unable to work due to the employee's own serious health condition; or for any qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent is a military member on covered active duty (''qualifying exigency leave''). An eligible employee may also take up to 26 workweeks of FMLA leave during a ''single 12-month period'' to care for a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness, when the employee is the spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin of the servicemember.

FMLA leave may be taken in a block, or under certain circumstances, intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule basis. In addition to providing job-protected family and medical leave, employers must also maintain any preexisting group health plan coverage for an employee on FMLA-protected leave under the same conditions that would apply if the employee had not taken leave. 2 U.S.C. §1312(a)(1) (incorporating 29 U.S.C. §2614). Once the leave period is concluded, the employer is required to restore the employee to the same or an equivalent position with equivalent employment benefits, pay, and other terms and conditions of employment. *Id*. Under the FMLA statute, but not applicable to the legislative branch, if an employee believes that his or her FMLA rights have been violated, the employee may file a complaint with the Department of Labor (DOL) or file a private lawsuit in federal or state court. Under the CAA, a covered employee of the legislative branch may be awarded damages if the employing office has violated the employee's FMLA rights. The employee is entitled to reimbursement for any monetary loss incurred, equitable relief as appropriate, interest, attorneys' fees, expert witness fees, and court costs. Liquidated damages also may be awarded. *See* 29 U.S.C. §2617.

What changes do the proposed amendments make?

First, these proposed amendments add the military leave provisions of the FMLA enacted under the National Defense Authorization Acts (NDAA) for Fiscal Years 2008 and 2010 (Pub.L. 110–181, Div. A, Title V §§585(a)(2), (3)(A)–(D) and Pub.L. 111–84, Div. A, Title V §565(a)(1)(B) & (4)), which: extend the availability of FMLA leave to family members of the Regular Armed Forces for qualifying exigencies arising out of a servicemember's deployment; define those deployments covered under these provisions; extend FMLA military caregiver leave for family members of current servicemembers to include an injury or illness that existed prior to service and was aggravated in the line of duty on active duty; and extend FMLA military caregiver leave to family members of certain veterans with serious injuries or illnesses. This NPRM also sets forth a proposed revision to the regulation defining ''spouse'' under the FMLA in light of the DOL's February 25, 2015 Final Rule on the definition of spouse and the United States Supreme Court's decision in *Obergefell, et al., v. Hodges*, No. 14–556, 2015 WL 2473451 (U.S. June 26, 2015), which requires a state to license a marriage between two people of the same sex and to recognize a marriage between two people of the same sex when their marriage was lawfully licensed and performed out-of-state.

Why are these changes to the FMLA regulations necessary?

The CAA requires that the FMLA regulations applicable to the legislative branch and promulgated by the OOC, be the same as substantive regulations issued by the Secretary of Labor, unless good cause is shown for deviation therefrom. On March 8, 2013, the DOL issued its Final Rule implementing its amended FMLA regulations (77 FR 8962), which provide for military caregiver leave for a veteran, qualifying exigency leave for parental care, and special leave calculations for flight crew employees. The OOC Board is required pursuant to the CAA to amend its regulations to achieve parity unless there is good cause shown to deviate from the DOL's regulations.

In addition, the FMLA amendments providing additional rights and protections for servicemembers and their families were enacted into law by the NDAA for Fiscal Years 2008 and 2010. The Congressional committee reports accompanying the bills containing these provisions do not comply with Section 102(b)(3) of the CAA in that, while the bills do contain sections relating ''to terms and conditions of employment,'' the accompanying reports do not ''describe the manner in which the provision of the bill [relating to terms and conditions of employment] . . . apply to the legislative branch'' or ''include a statement of the reasons the provision does not apply [to the legislative branch]'' (in the case of a provision not applicable to the legislative branch). 2 U.S.C. §1302(3); House Committee on Armed Services, H.Rpt. 110–146 (May 11, 2007), H.Rpt. 111–166 (June 18, 2009). Consequently, when the FMLA was amended to add these additional rights and protections, Congress failed to make clear its intent as to whether these additional rights and protections apply to the legislative branch.[1] Therefore, as there is no provision in the CAA that states that the CAA will be considered amended whenever the FMLA is amended, these proposed amendments to the regulations are necessary to resolve any ambiguity regarding the applicability of the 2008 and 2010 FMLA amendments to the legislative branch by ensuring that protections under the CAA are in line with existing public and private sector protections under the FMLA.[2] Accordingly, while these regulations may technically require employing offices to do more than what section 202 of the CAA currently requires, the Board recommends that Congress use its rulemaking authority to clarify that the rights and protections for legislative branch servicemembers and their families have been expanded in a manner consistent with the 2008 and 2010 amendments to the FMLA.

What do the military family leave provisions provide?

Section 585(a) of the NDAA for Fiscal Year 2008 amends the FMLA to provide leave to eligible employees of covered employers to care for injured servicemembers and for any qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that a covered family member is on active duty or has been notified of an impending call to active duty status in support of a contingency operation (collectively referred to herein as ''military family leave''). The provisions of this amendment providing FMLA leave to care for a covered servicemember became effective on January 28, 2008, when the law was enacted. The provisions of this amendment providing for FMLA leave due to a qualifying exigency arising out of a covered family member's active duty (or call to active duty) status were effective on January 16, 2009.

Section 565(a) of the NDAA for Fiscal Year 2010, enacted on October 28, 2009, amends the military family leave provisions of the FMLA. Pub. Law 111–84. The Fiscal Year 2010 NDAA expands the availability of qualifying exigency leave and military caregiver leave. Qualifying exigency leave, which was made available to family members of the National Guard and Reserve components under the Fiscal Year 2008 NDAA, is expanded to include family members of the Regular Armed Forces. The entitlement to qualifying exigency leave is expanded by substituting the term ''covered active duty'' for ''active duty'' and defining covered active duty for a member of the Regular Armed Forces as ''duty during the deployment of the member with the Armed Forces to a foreign country'' and for a member of the Reserve components of the Armed Forces as ''duty during the deployment of the member with the Armed Forces to a foreign country under a call or order to active duty under a provision of law referred to in section 101(a)(13)(B) of title 10, United States Code.'' 29 U.S.C. §2611(14). Prior to the Fiscal Year 2010 NDAA amendments, there was no requirement that members of the National Guard and Reserves be deployed to a foreign country.

The Fiscal Year 2010 NDAA amendments expand the definition of a serious injury or illness for military caregiver leave for current members of the Armed Forces to include an injury or illness that existed prior to service and was aggravated in the line of duty on active duty. 29 U.S.C. §2611(18)(A). These amendments also expand the military caregiver leave provisions of the FMLA to allow family members to take military caregiver leave to care for certain veterans. The definition of a ''covered servicemember,'' which is the term the Act uses to indicate the group of military members for whom military caregiver leave may be taken, is broadened to include a veteran with a serious injury or illness who is receiving medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy, if the veteran was a member of the Armed Forces at any time during the period of five years preceding the date of the medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy. 29 U.S.C. §2611(15)(B). The amendments define a serious injury or illness for a veteran as a ''qualifying (as defined by the Secretary of Labor) injury or illness that was incurred by the member in the line of duty on active duty in the Armed Forces (or existed before the beginning of the member's active duty and was aggravated by service in the line of duty on active duty in the Armed Forces) and that manifested itself before or after the member became a veteran.'' 29 U.S.C. §2611(18)(B).

What is the effect of amending the definition of "spouse"?

Amending the definition of ''spouse'' brings the regulations in line with the DOL's February 25, 2015 Final Rule and the United States Supreme Court's decision in *Obergefell et al.* v. *Hodges*.

On February 25, 2015, the DOL published its Final Rule for 29 CFR 825 in the Federal Register, Vol. 80, No. 37, 9989. This Final Rule changed the definition of ''spouse'' under the FMLA in light of the United States Supreme Court's decision in *United States* v. *Windsor*, which found section 3 of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) to be unconstitutional. The DOL's Final Rule amends the definition of spouse so that eligible employees in legal same-sex marriages will be able to take FMLA leave to care for their spouse or family member, regardless of where they live.

Also, on June 26, 2015, the United States Supreme Court issued *Obergefell et al.* v. *Hodges*, which requires a state to license a marriage between two people of the same sex and to recognize a marriage between two people of the same sex when their marriage was lawfully licensed and performed out-of-state.

To date, the DOL has not indicated whether it plans to further amend the definition of spouse in light of the United States Supreme Court's decision in *Obergefell et al.* v. *Hodges*. Therefore, the Board invites comment regarding whether the Board should adopt the DOL's current definition of spouse or revise the definition of spouse as the Board has proposed in sections 825.102 and 825.122.

Minor editorial changes are proposed to sections 825.120, 825.121, 825.122, 825.127, 825.201 and 825.202 to make gender neutral references to husbands and wives, and mothers and fathers where appropriate so that they apply equally to opposite-sex and same-sex spouses. The OOC proposes using the terms ''spouses'' and ''parents,'' as appropriate, in these regulations. These editorial changes do not change the availability of FMLA leave but simply clarify its availability for all eligible employees who are legally married.

Procedural Summary:

How are substantive regulations proposed and approved under the CAA?

Pursuant to section 304 of the CAA, 2 U.S.C. §1384, the procedure for proposing and approving substantive regulations provides that:

(1) the Board of Directors proposes substantive regulations and publishes a general notice of proposed rulemaking in the Congressional Record;

(2) there be a comment period of at least 30 days after the date of publication of the general notice of proposed rulemaking;

(3) after consideration of comments by the Board of Directors, the Board adopts regulations and transmits notice of such action (together with the regulations and a recommendation regarding the method for Congressional approval of the regulations) to the Speaker of the House and President Pro Tempore of the Senate for publication in the Congressional Record;

(4) there be committee referral and action on the proposed regulations by resolution in each House, concurrent resolution, or by joint resolution; and

(5) there be final publication of the approved regulations in the Congressional Record, with an effective date prescribed in the final publication.

For more detail, please reference the text of 2 U.S.C. §1384. This Notice of Proposed Rulemaking is step (1) of the outline set forth above.

What is the approach taken by these proposed substantive regulations?

The Board will follow the procedures as enumerated above and as required by statute. The Board will review and respond to any comments received under step (2) of the outline above, and make any changes necessary to ensure that the regulations fully implement section 210 of the CAA and reflect the practices and policies particular to the legislative branch.

Are there substantive differences in the proposed regulations for the House of Representatives, the Senate and other employing offices?

No. The Board of Directors has identified no ''good cause'' for varying the text of these regulations. Therefore, if these regulations are approved as proposed, there will be one text applicable to all employing offices and covered employees. *See* 2 U.S.C. §1331(e)(2).

Are these proposed regulations also recommended by the Office of Compliance's Executive Director, the Deputy Executive Director for the Senate, and the Deputy Executive Director for the House of Representatives?

As required by section 304(b)(1) of the CAA, 2 U.S.C. §1384(b)(1), the substance of these regulations is also recommended by the Executive Director, the Deputy Executive Director for the Senate and the Deputy Executive Director for the House of Representatives.

Are these proposed substantive regulations available to persons with disabilities in an alternate format?

This Notice of Proposed Regulations is available on the OOC's web site, www.compliance.gov, which is compliant with section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, 29 U.S.C. §794(d). This Notice can also be made available in large print or Braille. Requests for this Notice in an alternative format should be made to: Annie Leftwood, Executive Assistant, Office of Compliance, 110 2nd Street, S.E., Room LA–200, Washington, D.C. 20540; 202–724–9250; TDD: 202–426–1912; FAX: 202–426–1913.

60-DAY COMMENT PERIOD REGARDING THE PROPOSED REGULATIONS

How long do I have to submit comments regarding the proposed regulations?

Comments regarding the OOC's proposed regulations set forth in this Notice are invited for a period of sixty (60) days following the date of the appearance of this Notice in the *Congressional Record*.

How do I submit comments?

Comments must be made in writing to the Executive Director, Office of Compliance, 110 Second Street, S.E., Room LA–200, Washington, D.C. 20540–1999. Those wishing to receive confirmation of the receipt of their comments are requested to provide a self-addressed, stamped post card with their submission. It is requested, but not required, that an electronic version of any comments be provided either on an accompanying computer disk or e-mailed to the OOC via its web site. Comments may also be submitted by facsimile to the Executive Director at 202–426–1913 (a non-toll-free number).

Am I allowed to view copies of comments submitted by others?

Yes. Copies of submitted comments will be available for review on the OOC's web site at www.compliance.gov, and at the Office of Compliance, 110 Second Street, S.E., Washington, D.C. 20540–1999, on Monday through Friday (non-federal holidays) between the hours of 9:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

Summary:

The Congressional Accountability Act of 1995 (CAA), PL 104–1, was enacted into law on January 23, 1995. The CAA, as amended, applies the rights and protections of thirteen federal labor and employment statutes to covered employees and employing offices within the legislative branch of the federal government. Section 202 of the CAA applies to employees covered by the CAA, the rights and protections established by sections 101 through 105 of the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA), 29 U.S.C. §§2611–2615. The above provisions of section 202 became effective on January 1, 1997. 2 U.S.C. §1312.

The Board of Directors of the Office of Compliance (OOC) is now publishing proposed amended regulations to implement section 202 of the CAA, 2 U.S.C. §§1301–1438, as applied to covered employees of the House of Representatives, the Senate, and certain Congressional instrumentalities listed below.

The purpose of these amended regulations is to implement section 202 of the CAA. In this Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM or Notice) the Board proposes that virtually identical regulations be adopted for the Senate, the House of Representatives, and the six Congressional instrumentalities. Accordingly:

(1) *Senate*. It is proposed that the amended regulations as described in this Notice be included in the body of regulations that shall apply to entities within the Senate, and this proposal regarding the Senate entities is recommended by the OOC's Deputy Executive Director for the Senate.

(2) *House of Representatives*. It is further proposed that the amended regulations as described in this Notice be included in the body of regulations that shall apply to entities within the House of Representatives, and this proposal regarding the House of Representatives entities is recommended by the OOC's Deputy Executive Director for the House of Representatives.

(3) *Certain Congressional instrumentalities*. It is further proposed that the amended regulations as described in this Notice be included in the body of regulations that shall apply to the Office of Congressional Accessibility Services, the Capitol Police, the Congressional Budget Office, the Office of the Architect of the Capitol (including the Botanic Garden), the Office of the Attending Physician, and the Office of Compliance; and this proposal regarding these six Congressional instrumentalities is recommended by the OOC's Executive Director.

Dates: Comments are due within 60 days after the date of publication of this Notice in the *Congressional Record*.

Section-by-Section Discussion of Proposed Changes to the FMLA Regulations

The following is a section-by-section discussion of the proposed revisions. Where a change is proposed to a regulatory section, that section is discussed below. However, as the DOL has significantly reorganized its FMLA regulations, which the OOC's proposed regulations mirror, many of the sections are moved into other areas of the subpart. The OOC as a result will use the proposed section and numbers to provide explanation and analysis of changes. In addition, even if a section is not discussed, there may be minor editorial changes or corrections that do not warrant discussion. The titles to each section of the existing regulations are in the form of a question. The proposal would reword each question into the more common format of a descriptive title, and the OOC invites comments on whether this change is helpful. In addition, several sections have been restructured and reorganized to improve the accessibility of the information (*e.g.*, guidance on leave for pregnancy and birth of a child is addressed in one consolidated section; an employing office's notice obligations are combined in one section).

Section by Section Discussion

Subpart A—COVERAGE UNDER THE FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

Section 825.102 Definitions.

For the reasons stated below, the Board finds good cause to depart from the DOL regulations with respect to some of the definitions. For example, the term ''Act'' as defined in the DOL regulations and referring to the FMLA can be confused with the Congressional Accountability Act (CAA). Accordingly, the definition of ''Act'' is excluded from the Board's proposed regulations. In addition, to avoid any confusion, the definition for ''Administrator'' in the DOL regulations has been deleted. Similarly, as there is no airline flight crew covered under the CAA, the definition of ''airline flight crew employee'' has been deleted in the Board's proposed regulations as have all references to ''airline flight crew employee.''

Because the DOL definitions of ''commerce and industry or activity affecting commerce'' and ''applicable monthly guarantee'' involve concepts that do not apply to employing offices covered by the CAA, the Board finds good cause to exclude these definitions from the proposed regulations.

Because the DOL's definition of ''eligible employee'' (paragraphs ii(3)(4)(5)(6)(7) in section 825.102) is not consistent with the definition of ''eligible employee'' in CAA section 202(a)(2)(B), the Board finds good cause to keep the definition of ''employee'' that is used in the current version of the OOC FMLA regulations and to exclude the definition in the DOL regulation.

Likewise, because the definition of ''employer'' in CAA section 202(a)(2)(A) is inconsistent with the definition in the DOL regulations, the Board finds good cause to keep the definition of ''employing office'' found in the current regulations.

In the paragraphs defining ''health care provider,'' to avoid confusion, the Board is substituting ''the Secretary'' with ''the Department of Labor.'' Thus, the OOC FMLA regulations include in the definition of ''health care provider'' as ''any other person determined by the *Department of Labor* to be capable of providing health care services.'' 825.102(1)(ii) (emphasis added).

Because these terms are not applicable to employing offices covered by the CAA, the Board has also found good cause to exclude from the proposed OOC regulations the DOL definitions of ''person'' and ''public agency.''

Under the paragraph defining ''physical or mental disability,'' the Board has replaced the language from the DOL regulations indicating that 29 CFR part 1630 *defines* these terms with language that states that regulations at 29 CFR part 1630 issued by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), 42 U.S.C. §12101 *et seq*., as amended, *provide guidance* to these terms. (Italics added).

The Board is proposing to adopt the following definition of ''spouse'':

Spouse means a husband or wife. For purposes of this definition, husband or wife refers to all individuals in lawfully recognized marriages. This definition includes an individual in a same-sex marriage. This definition also includes an individual in a common law marriage that either: (1) was entered into in a State that recognizes such marriages or, (2) if entered into outside of any State, is valid in the place where entered into and could have been entered into in at least one State.

Section 825.105 Counting employees for determining coverage.

This section does not apply to the CAA and will remain reserved in the OOC's regulations.

Section 825.106 Joint Employer Coverage.

As joint employment relationships are treated differently under the CAA than by the DOL, the Board finds good cause to keep the language in the current OOC regulations in paragraphs (b) through (e) of this section. Also, as it is not applicable under the CAA, the Board finds good cause to exclude from its definitions language relating to Professional Employer Organizations (PEOs) as joint employers. As the DOL has noted, PEOs contract with private small businesses to provide services that large businesses can afford, but small businesses cannot, such as compliance with government standards, employer liability management, retirement benefits, and other employment benefits. Congress already provides these services for its employees.

Sections 825.107–825.109 Successor in interest coverage; Public agency coverage; Federal agency coverage.

These sections do not apply to the CAA and will remain reserved in the OOC's regulations. However, the Board invites comment with respect to whether the DOL section 825.107, Successor in interest coverage, should be adopted for the legislative branch.

Section 825.110 Eligible employee.

The Board sees good cause to exclude from this section the following language from the DOL regulations, which is not applicable to the CAA:

''(3) Is employed at a worksite where 50 or more employees are employed by the employer within 75 miles of that worksite. (*See* § 825.105(b) regarding employees who work outside the U.S.)''

Similarly, the Board sees good cause to exclude from the OOC regulations the following paragraph:

''(e) Whether 50 employees are employed within 75 miles to ascertain an employee's eligibility for FMLA benefits is determined when the employee gives notice of the need for leave. Whether the leave is to be taken at one time or on an intermittent or reduced leave schedule basis, once an employee is determined eligible in response to that notice of the need for leave, the employee's eligibility is not affected by any subsequent change in the number of employees employed at or within 75 miles of the employee's worksite, for that specific notice of the need for leave. Similarly, an employer may not terminate employee leave that has already started if the employee-count drops below 50. For example, if an employer employs 60 employees in August, but expects that the number of employees will drop to 40 in December, the employer must grant FMLA benefits to an otherwise eligible employee who gives notice of the need for leave in August.''

Section 825.111 Determining whether 50 employees are employed within 75 miles.

This section does not apply to the CAA and will remain reserved in the OOC regulations.

Section 825.120 Leave for pregnancy or birth.

References in the DOL's regulations to state law in this section and other sections throughout the DOL's regulations have not been adopted by the Board because state law does not apply to the legislative branch.

Further, in this section and other sections throughout the DOL regulations, any references to spouses who are employed at two different worksites of an employer located more than 75 miles from each other have not been adopted by the Board because such scenarios are not applicable to the legislative branch.

Subpart B—EMPLOYEE LEAVE ENTITLEMENTS UNDER THE FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

Section 825.206 Interaction with the FLSA.

Although the DOL amended its FMLA regulations to add computer employees to the list of exempt employees who do not lose their FLSA exempt status despite being provided unpaid FMLA leave, the Board finds good cause not to include ''computer employees'' to the list of employees who may qualify as exempt from the overtime and minimum wage requirements of the FLSA. In light of the fact that the Board's September 29, 2004 Proposed Regulations implementing exemptions from the overtime pay requirements under the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (FLSA) were never enacted into law and the existing OOC FLSA Regulations do not include exemptions for computer employees, the OOC's FMLA regulations should not include these employees in this section. The Board specifically seeks comments to this departure from the DOL regulations.

Further, any references in this section and other sections throughout the DOL regulations which place limitations on an employee who works for an employing office with fewer than 50 employees have not been adopted by the Board because such limitations do not apply to the legislative branch. *See* 825.111.

Section 825.207 Substitution of paid leave.

The DOL regulations under section 825.207(f) permit an employer to require that an employee's use of paid compensatory time for a FMLA reason can be used against the employee's FMLA leave entitlement.

As the Board does not know whether or under what circumstances, employing offices currently allow or require that paid compensatory time be used for a FMLA reason and be counted against the employee's FMLA leave entitlement, the Board proposes that the comparable OOC FMLA regulation read as follows:

Under the FLSA, an employing office always has the right to cash out an employee's compensatory time or to require the employee to use the time. Therefore, if an employee requests and is permitted to use accrued compensatory time to receive pay for time taken off for an FMLA reason, or if the employing office requires such use pursuant to the FLSA, the time taken may be counted against the employee's FMLA leave entitlement.

The Board seeks comments from interested parties as to whether such a provision is appropriate for the legislative branch.

Section 825.209 Maintenance of employee benefits.

The Board has changed what it believes to be a typographical error in the DOL regulations and cross references this section with section 825.102 and not section 825.800 when referring to the definition of ''group health plan.''

Section 825.215 Equivalent position.

Any references from the DOL regulations in this section and other sections to the Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA) have not been adopted by the Board because ERISA does not apply to the legislative branch.

Section 825.216 Limitations on employee's right to reinstatement.

The Board questions whether the following language in section 825.216(a)(3) of the DOL regulations applies to the legislative branch: ''On the other hand, if an employee was hired to perform work on a contract, and after that contract period the contract was awarded to another contractor, the successor contractor may be required to restore the employee if it is a successor employer. *See* § 825.107.''

The Board proposes that the OOC regulations contain the following language and requests comments from interested parties, especially with respect to caucus or committee

employees: ''On the other hand, if an employee was hired to perform work for one employing office for a project for a specific time period, and after that time period has ended, the same employee was assigned to work at another employing office on the same project, the successor employing office may be required to restore the employee if it is a successor employing office.''

Section 825.217 Key employee, general rule.

For the reasons stated above, the Board finds good cause not to follow the DOL changes to section 825.217(b) which exempts computer employees from the minimum wage and overtime requirements of the FLSA. As the language in the FLSA is inconsistent with the OOC FLSA regulations, the Board believes that this exemption should not be included. The Board requests comments from interested parties on this deletion.

Section 825.220 Protection for employees who request leave or otherwise assert FMLA rights.

Except for the paragraph related to settlements, as noted below, the Board proposes to adopt the DOL amendments with respect to this section. Section 825.220 provides protection for employees who request leave or otherwise assert FMLA rights and includes new language discussing remedies when an employing office interferes with an employee's rights under the FMLA. This section further clarifies that the prohibition against interference includes prohibitions against retaliation as well as discrimination. The Board believes that there is good cause to make changes to the DOL's clarification of the settlement provision in paragraph (d) of this section. Sections 1414 and 1415 of the CAA govern awards and settlements made as a result of parties proceeding through an OOC process. While the Board recognizes that parties will now have the right to settle or release FMLA claims without the approval of the OOC or a court, parties seeking to release claims which were raised in an OOC process pursuant to CAA sections 1414 and 1415 must still comply with those provisions. Therefore, the Board proposes to insert the following language: ''Except for settlement agreements covered by 1414 and/or 1415 of the Congressional Accountability Act, this does not prevent the settlement or release of FMLA claims by employees based on past employing office conduct without the approval of the Office of Compliance or a court.''

Subpart C—EMPLOYEE AND EMPLOYING OFFICE RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE FMLA, AS MADE APPLICABLE BY THE CAA.

Section 825.300 Employing office notice requirements.

The Board proposes to follow the DOL regulations insofar as they consolidate the employing office notice requirements from sections 825.300, 825.301, 825.110 and 825.208 into one comprehensive section addressing an employing office's notice obligations. However, the Board finds good cause not to adopt the DOL regulations in section 825.300(a) General notice, but instead to keep the requirements found in the current OOC regulations under section 825.301(a). The DOL regulations, at section 825.300(a), address the requirement that employing offices post a notice on employee rights and responsibilities under the law and the civil monetary penalty provision in the law for employing offices who willfully violate the posting requirement. In 1995, while developing the current FMLA regulations, the OOC Board determined that ''while the CAA incorporates certain specific sections of the FMLA, the CAA explicitly did not incorporate the notice posting and recordkeeping requirements of sections 109 and 106(b) of the FMLA. For the reasons discussed with respect to the FLSA, as the CAA has not incorporated the notice posting and recordkeeping requirements of the FMLA, the Board will not do so.'' As a result, we find no authority that would require employing offices covered under the CAA to provide notice postings of employees' FMLA rights in the workplace. *See* November 28, 1995 OOC Notice of Proposed Rulemaking S17628. As to the remainder of the paragraphs in this section, the Board finds no reason to depart from the amendments adopted by the DOL.

The Board proposes to adopt section 825.300 regarding the eligibility notice (825.300(b)); the rights and responsibility notice (825.300(c)); the designation notice (825.300(d)); and the consequences of failing to provide notice (825.300(e)).

(b) *Eligibility notice.*

The Board proposes to adopt the DOL amendments with respect to this section. The Board also proposes to adopt the DOL regulations consolidating existing eligibility notice requirements in current sections 825.110 and 825.301 into one section, section 825.300(b) of the OOC regulations and to strengthen and clarify them. For example, section 825.300(b)(1) of the DOL regulations requires an employer to advise an employee of his or her eligibility status when the employee requests leave under the FMLA. The regulations extend the time frame for an employer to respond to an employee's request for FMLA leave from two business days to five business days. Further, the DOL regulations in section 825.300(b)(2) specify what information an employer must convey to an employee as to eligibility status. The Board also proposes in its regulations that an employing office must provide reasons to an employee if he or she is not eligible for FMLA leave, as do the DOL regulations. The regulations limit that notification to any one of the potential reasons why an employee fails to meet the eligibility requirements.

Further, the proposed OOC regulations require employing offices to include in the eligibility notice an explanation of conditions applicable to the use of paid leave that runs concurrently with unpaid FMLA. While this requirement is in the current regulations, it is expanded to require that employing offices also notify employees of their continuing entitlement to take unpaid FMLA leave if they do not comply with an employing office's required conditions for use of paid leave.

(c) *Rights and responsibilities notice.*

The Board is following the DOL regulations separating the notice of rights and responsibilities from the notice of eligibility. Accordingly, if the employee is eligible for FMLA leave, section 825.300(c) of the OOC regulations require the employing office to provide the employee with specific notice of his or her rights and obligations under the law and the consequences of failing to meet those obligations.

To simplify the timing of the notice of rights and responsibilities and to avoid unnecessary administrative burden on employing offices, section 825.300(c)(1) of the Board's proposed regulations requires employing offices to provide this notice to employees at the same time they provide the eligibility notice. Additionally, if the information in the notice of rights and responsibilities changes, section 825.300(c) requires the employing office to notify the employee of any changes within five business days of the first notice of the need for FMLA leave subsequent to any change. This timing requirement will ensure that employees receive timely notice of the expectations and obligations associated with their FMLA leave each leave year and also receive prompt notice of any change in those rights or responsibilities when leave is needed during the leave year.

In this section, employing offices are required to notify employees of the method used for establishing the 12-month period for FMLA entitlement, or, in the case of military caregiver leave, the start date of the ''single 12-month period.''

Employing offices are not, however, required to provide the certification form with the notice of rights and responsibilities. Notice of any changes in the rights and responsibilities notice must be provided within five business days of the first notice of an employee's need for leave subsequent to any change. Electronic distribution of the notice of rights and responsibilities is allowed, so long as the employing office can demonstrate that the employee (who may already be on leave and who may not have access to employing office-provided computers) has access to the information electronically.

(d) *Designation notice.*

The Board proposes to adopt the DOL amendments with respect to this requirement. Section 825.300(d) outlines the requirements of the designation notice an employing office must provide to an employee. Once the employing office has enough information to determine whether the leave qualifies as FMLA leave, the employing office must notify the employee within five business days of making the determination whether the leave has or has not been designated as FMLA leave. This is an increase from the two-day time frame in the current OOC regulations. Further, only one designation notice is required for each FMLA-qualifying reason per leave year, regardless of whether the leave is taken as a continuous block of leave or on an intermittent or reduced leave schedule basis.

Further, the employing office must inform the employee of the number of hours that would be designated as FMLA leave, only upon employee request and no more often than every 30 days if FMLA leave was taken during that period. To the extent it is not possible to provide such information (such as in the case of unforeseeable intermittent leave), the employing office is required to provide such information to the employee every 30 days if the employee took leave during the 30-day period. The employing office is permitted to notify the employee of the hours counted against the FMLA leave entitlement orally and follow up with written notification on a pay stub at the next payday (unless the next payday is in less than one week, in which case the notice must be no later than the subsequent payday). If the employing office requires that paid leave be substituted for unpaid leave, or that paid leave taken under an existing leave plan be counted as FMLA leave, the employing office must inform the employee of this designation at the time the leave is designated as FMLA leave.

Although the designation notice has to be in writing, it may be in any form, including a notation on the employee's pay stub, and if the leave is not designated as FMLA leave, the notice to the employee may be in the form of a simple written statement. Employing offices can provide an employee with both the eligibility and designation notice at the same time in cases where the employing office has adequate information to designate leave as FMLA leave when an employee requests the leave.

Employing offices must provide written notice of any requirement for a fitness-for-duty certification, including whether the fitness-for-duty certification must address the employee's ability to perform the essential functions of the employee's position and, if so, to provide a list of the essential functions of the employee's position with the designation notice. If the employee handbook or

other written documents clearly provides that a fitness-for-duty certificate will be required, written notice is not required, but oral notice must be provided.

Finally, the employing office is required to notify the employee if the information provided in the designation notice changes. For example, if an employee exhausts his or her FMLA leave entitlement and the leave will no longer be designated as FMLA leave, the employing office must provide the employee with written notice of this change consistent with this section.

(e) *Consequences of failing to provide notice.*

The Board proposes to adopt the DOL amendments with respect to this section. Section 825.300(e) clarifies that failure to comply with the notice requirements set forth in this section could constitute interference with, restraint of, or denial of the use of FMLA leave. The Board proposes that the following language be included in the OOC regulations:

Consequences of failing to provide notice. Failure to follow the notice requirements set forth in this section may constitute an interference with, restraint, or denial of the exercise of an employee's FMLA rights. An employing office may be liable for compensation and benefits lost by reason of the violation, for other actual monetary losses sustained as a direct result of the violation, and for appropriate equitable or other relief, including employment, reinstatement, promotion, or any other relief tailored to the harm suffered See 825.400(c).

Section 825.301 Designation of FMLA leave.

The Board proposes to adopt the DOL amendments with respect to this section. Section 825.301 addresses an employing office's obligations regarding timely designation of leave as FMLA-qualifying and reiterates the requirement to notify the employee of the designation within five business days. Among other things, this section requires that the employing office's designation decision be based only on information received from the employee or the employee's representative and also provides that, if the employing office does not have sufficient information about the employee's reason for leave, the employing office should inquire further of the employee or of the employee's spokesperson.

Section 825.302 Employee notice requirements for foreseeable FMLA leave.

The Board proposes to adopt the DOL amendments with respect to this section. In general, Section 825.302 addresses an employee's obligation to provide notice of the need for foreseeable FMLA leave. This includes requiring an employee to give at least 30 days notice when the need for FMLA leave is foreseeable at least 30 days in advance or ''as soon as practicable'' if leave is foreseeable but 30 days notice is not practicable. In such cases, employees must respond to requests from employing offices to explain why it was not possible to give 30 days notice. Further, the language in this section defines ''as soon as practicable'' to be ''as soon as both possible and practical, taking into account all of the facts and circumstances in the individual case.'' This is a change from defining ''as soon as practicable'' as ''ordinarily within one or two business days.''

Further, when an employee seeks leave for the first time for a FMLA-qualifying reason, the employee need not expressly assert rights under the FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA, or even mention the FMLA but must provide: sufficient information that indicates that a condition renders the employee unable to perform the functions of the job, or if the leave is for a family member, that the condition renders the family member unable to perform daily activities; the anticipated duration of the absence; and whether the employee or the employee's family member intends to visit a health care provider or has a condition for which the employee or the employee's family member is under the continuing care of a health care provider. The regulations set forth the types of information that an employee may have to provide in order to put an employing office on notice of the employee's need for FMLA-protected leave. Rather than establish a list of information that must be provided in all cases, the regulations provide additional guidance to employees so that they would know what information to provide to their employing offices. The nature of the information necessary to put the employing office on notice of the need for FMLA leave will vary depending on the circumstances.

Employees seeking leave for previously certified FMLA leave must inform the employing office that the leave is for a condition, covered servicemember's serious injury or illness, or qualifying exigency that was previously certified or for which the employee has previously taken FMLA leave.

While an employee must still comply with the employing office's usual notice and procedural requirements for calling in absences and requesting leave, under the new regulations, language stating that an employing office cannot delay or deny FMLA leave if an employee fails to follow such procedures has been deleted. However, employing offices may need to inquire further to determine for which reason the leave is being taken, and employees will be required to respond to such inquiries.

Additionally, the regulations make clear that the requirement that an employee and employing office attempt to work out a schedule without unduly disrupting the employing office's operations applies only to military caregiver leave. It does not apply to qualifying exigency leave.

Section 825.303 Employee notice requirements for unforeseeable FMLA leave

The Board proposes to adopt the DOL amendments with respect to this section. Section 825.303 addresses an employee's obligation to provide notice when the need for FMLA leave is unforeseeable. Section 825.303 retains the current standard that employees must provide notice of their need for unforeseeable leave ''as soon as practicable under the facts and circumstances of the particular case,'' but instead of expecting employees to give notice ''within no more than one or two working days of learning of the need for leave,'' in ''unusual circumstances,'' notice should be provided within the time prescribed by the employing office's usual and customary notice requirements applicable to such leave. Section 825.303 also retains the current standard that employees need not assert their rights under the FMLA or even mention the FMLA to put employing offices on notice of the need for unforeseeable FMLA leave, but adds the same language used in proposed section 825.302 clarifying what information must be provided in order to give sufficient notice to the employing office of the need for FMLA leave. New regulations in section 825.303 add that the employee has an obligation to respond to an employing office's questions designed to determine whether leave is FMLA-qualifying, explaining that calling in ''sick,'' without providing additional information, will not be sufficient notice.

Section 825.304 Employee failure to provide notice.

The Board proposes to adopt the DOL amendments with respect to this section. Section 825.304 follows the DOL's reorganization of the rules that are applicable to leave foreseeable at least 30 days in advance, leave foreseeable less than 30 days in advance, and unforeseeable leave. This section retains language that FMLA leave cannot be delayed due to lack of required employee notice if the employing office has not complied with its notice requirements.

Section 825.305 Certification, general rule.

The Board proposes to adopt the DOL amendments with respect to this section. Under the FMLA, as applied under the CAA, employing offices are permitted to require that employees provide a certification from their health care provider (or their family member's health care provider, as appropriate) to support the need for leave due to a serious health condition. Section 825.305 sets forth the general rules governing employing office requests for medical certification to substantiate an employee's need for FMLA leave due to a serious health condition. Military family leave provisions have been added to permit employing offices to require employees to provide a certification in the case of leave taken for a qualifying exigency or to care for a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness. Section 825.305 applies generally to all types of certification. In most cases, for example, former references to ''medical certification'' have been changed to ''certification.''

In section 825.305, the employing office should request that an employee furnish certification from a health care provider at the time the employee gives notice of the need for leave or within five business days thereafter, or, in the case of unforeseen leave, within five business days after the leave commences. This time frame has been increased from two to five business days after notice of the need for FMLA leave is provided. Further, the employing office may request certification at some later date if the employing office later has reason to question the appropriateness of the leave or its duration. This section also adds a 15-day time period for providing a requested certification to all cases.

Definitions of incomplete and insufficient certifications have been added in this section, as well as a procedure for curing an incomplete or insufficient certification. This procedure requires that an employing office notify the employee in writing as to what additional information is necessary for the medical certification and provides seven calendar days in which the employee must provide the additional information. If an employee fails to submit a complete and sufficient certification, despite the opportunity to cure the deficiency, the employing office may deny the request for FMLA leave.

Section 825.305 also deletes an earlier provision that if a less stringent medical certification standard applies under the employing office's sick leave plan, only that lesser standard may be required when the employee substitutes any form of paid leave for FMLA leave and replaces it with a provision allowing employing offices to require a new certification on an annual basis for conditions lasting beyond a single leave year.

Section 825.306 Content of medical certification for leave taken because of an employee's own serious health condition or the serious health condition of a family member.

The Board proposes to adopt the DOL amendments with respect to this section. Section 825.306 addresses the information an employing office can require in the medical certification to substantiate the existence of a serious health condition (of the employee or a family member) and the employee's need for leave due to the condition, and adds: the health care provider's specialization; guidance as to what may constitute appropriate medical facts, including that a health

care provider may provide a diagnosis; and whether intermittent or reduced schedule leave is medically necessary. Section 825.306 clarifies that where a serious health condition may also be a disability, employing offices are not prevented from following the procedures under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), as applied under the CAA, for requesting medical information. Section 825.306 also contains new language that employing offices may not require employees to sign a release of their medical information as a condition of taking FMLA leave.

This section does not apply to the military family leave provisions. The Board's proposed regulations have revised the current optional certification form into two separate optional forms, one for the employee's own serious health condition and one for the serious health condition of a covered family member.

Section 825.307 Authentication and clarification of medical certification for leave taken because of an employee's own serious health condition or the serious health condition of a family member; second and third opinions.

The Board proposes to adopt the DOL's amendments covered under this section. Section 825.307 addresses the employing office's ability to clarify or authenticate a complete and sufficient FMLA certification. Section 825.307 defines the terms ''authentication'' and ''clarification.'' ''Authentication'' involves providing the health care provider with a copy of the certification and requesting verification that the information on the form was completed and/or authorized by the provider. The regulations add that no additional medical information may be requested and the employee's permission is not required. In contrast, ''clarification'' involves contacting the employee's health care provider in order to understand the handwriting on the medical certification or to understand the meaning of a response. As is the case with authentication, no additional information beyond that included in the certification form may be requested. Any contact with the employee's health care provider must comply with the requirements of the HIPAA Privacy Rule.

It is no longer necessary that the employing office utilize a health care provider to make the contact with the employee's health care provider, but the regulations do clarify who may contact the employee's health care provider and ensure that the employee's direct supervisor is not the point of contact. Employee consent to the contact is no longer required. However, before the employing office contacts the employee's health care provider for clarification or authentication of the FMLA certification, the employee must first be given an opportunity to cure any deficiencies in the certification. Section 825.307 also provides requirements for an employing office's request for a second opinion, and adds language requiring the employee or the employee's family member to authorize his or her health care provider to release relevant medical information pertaining to the serious health condition at issue if such information is requested by the second opinion health care provider. Section 825.307 also increases the number of days the employing office has to provide an employee with a requested copy of a second or third opinion from two to five business days. This section of the regulations does not apply to the military family leave provisions.

Section 825.308 Recertifications for leave taken because of an employee's own serious health condition or the serious health condition of a family member.

The Board proposes to adopt the DOL amendments covered in this section. Section 825.308 of the regulations addresses the employing office's ability to seek recertification of an employee's medical condition. This section has been reorganized to clarify how often employing offices may seek recertification in situations where the minimum duration of the condition, as opposed to the duration of the period of incapacity, exceeds 30 days. Thus, an employing office may request recertification no more often than every 30 days and only in connection with an absence by the employee, unless the medical certification indicates that the minimum duration of the condition is more than 30 days, then an employing office must wait until that minimum duration expires before requesting a recertification. In all cases, an employing office may request a recertification of a medical condition every six months in connection with an absence by the employee. An employing office may request recertification in less than 30 days if, among other things, the employee requests an extension of leave or circumstances described by the previous certification change significantly. This section clarifies that an employing office may request the same information on recertification as required for the initial certification and the employee has the same obligation to cooperate in providing recertification as he or she does in providing the initial certification.

Section 825.309 Certification for leave taken because of a qualifying exigency.

The Board proposes to adopt the DOL's regulations under this section. Under the military family leave provisions of the DOL regulations, an employing office may require that leave taken because of a qualifying exigency be supported by a certification and require that the employee provide a copy of the covered military member's active duty orders or other documentation issued by the military which indicates that the covered military member is on active duty (or has been notified of an impending call or order to active duty) in support of a contingency operation, as well as the dates of the covered military member's active duty service. While a form requesting this basic information may be used by the employing office, no information may be required beyond that specified in this section and in all instances the information on the form must relate only to the qualifying exigency for which the current need for leave exists. Section 825.309 also establishes the verification process for certifications.

This section also provides that the information required in a certification need only be provided to the employing office the first time an employee requests leave because of a qualifying exigency arising out of a particular active duty or call to active duty of a covered military member. While additional information may be needed to provide certification for subsequent requests for exigency leave, an employee is only required to give a copy of the active duty orders to the employing office once. A copy of new active duty orders or other documentation issued by the military only needs to be provided to the employing office if the need for leave because of a qualifying exigency arises out of a different active duty or call to active duty order of the same or a different covered military member. *See* DOL (Form WH–384) and OOC regulations proposed Form E.

An employing office may contact an appropriate unit of the Department of Defense to request verification that a covered military member has been called to active duty status (or notified of an impending call to active duty status) in support of a contingency operation. Again, no additional information may be requested by the employing office and the employee's permission is not required. This verification process will protect employees from unnecessary intrusion while still providing a useful tool for employing offices to verify the certification information given to them.

Consistent with the amendments to section 825.126(b)(6), with respect to Rest and Recuperation qualifying exigency leave, the employing office is permitted to request a copy of the military member's Rest and Recuperation orders, or other documentation issued by the military indicating that the military member has been granted Rest and Recuperation leave, as well as the dates of the leave, in order to determine the employee's specific qualifying exigency leave period available for Rest and Recuperation. Employing offices may also contact the appropriate unit of the DOD to verify that the military member is on active duty or call to active duty status. The employee's permission is not required to conduct such verifications. The employing office may not, however, request any additional information.

Section 825.310 Certification for leave taken to care for a covered servicemember (military caregiver leave).

The Board proposes to adopt the amendments covered in the DOL regulations under this section. While the military family leave provisions of the NDAA amended the FMLA's certification requirements to permit an employer to request certification for leave taken to care for a covered servicemember, the FMLA's existing certification requirements focus on providing information related to a serious health condition—a term that is not necessarily relevant to leave taken to care for a covered servicemember. At the same time, the military family leave provisions of the NDAA do not explicitly require that a sufficient certification for purposes of military caregiver leave provide relevant information regarding the covered servicemember's serious injury or illness. Section 825.310 of the DOL's regulations provide that when leave is taken to care for a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness, an employer may require an employee to support his or her request for leave with a sufficient certification. An employer may require that certain necessary information to support the request for leave be supported by a certification from one of the following authorized health care providers: (1) A DOD health care provider; (2) a VA health care provider; (3) a DOD TRICARE network authorized private health care provider; or (4) a DOD non-network TRICARE authorized private health care provider. Sections 825.310(b)–(c) of the DOL regulations set forth the information an employing office may request from an employee (or the authorized health care provider) in order to support the employee's request for leave. The DOL developed a new optional form, Form WH–385, which the Board adopted for proposed OOC Form F. The Board agrees that OOC Form F may be used to obtain appropriate information to support an employee's request for leave to care for a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness. However, an employing office may use any form containing the following basic information: (1) whether the servicemember has incurred a serious injury or illness; (2) whether the injury or illness may render the servicemember medically unfit to perform the duties of the member's office, grade, rank, or rating; (3) whether the injury or illness was incurred by the member in line of duty on active duty; and (4) whether the servicemember is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy, is otherwise on outpatient status, or is otherwise on the temporary disability retired list. However, as is the case for any required certification for leave taken

to care for a family member with a serious health condition, no information may be required beyond that specified above. In all instances, the information on any required certification must relate only to the serious injury or illness for which the current need for leave exists.

Additionally, section 825.310 of the proposed OOC regulations provides that an employing office requiring an employee to submit a certification for leave to care for a covered servicemember must accept as sufficient certification ''invitational travel orders'' (ITOs) or ''invitational travel authorizations'' (ITAs) issued by the DOD for a family member to join an injured or ill servicemember at his or her bedside. If an employee will need leave to care for a covered servicemember beyond the expiration date specified in an ITO or an ITA, the regulations provide that an employing office may request further certification from the employee. Lastly this section provides that in all instances in which certification is requested, it is the employee's responsibility to provide the employing office with complete and sufficient certification and failure to do so may result in the denial of FMLA leave.

The regulations also permit an eligible employee who is a spouse, parent, son, daughter or next of kin of a covered servicemember to submit an ITO or ITA issued to another family member as sufficient certification for the duration of time specified in the ITO or ITA, even if the employee seeking leave is not the named recipient on the ITO or ITA. The regulations further permit an employing office to authenticate and clarify medical certifications submitted to support a request for leave to care for a covered servicemember using the procedures applicable to FMLA leave taken to care for a family member with a serious health condition. However, unlike the recertification, second and third opinion processes used for other types of FMLA leave, recertification, second and third opinions are not warranted for purposes of military caregiver leave when the certification has been completed by a DOD health care provider, a VA health care provider, a DOD TRICARE network authorized private health care provider, or a DOD nonnetwork TRICARE authorized private health care provider, but are permitted when the certification has been completed by a health care provider who is not affiliated with the DOD, VA, or TRICARE.

An employee seeking to take military caregiver leave must provide the requested certification to the employing office within the time frame requested by the employing office (which must allow at least 15 calendar days after the employing office's request), unless it is not practicable under the particular circumstances to do so despite the employee's diligent, good faith efforts.

Section 825.312 Fitness-for-duty certification.

The Board proposes to adopt the amendments covered in the DOL's regulations under this section. Section 825.312 addresses the fitness for-duty certification that an employee may be required to submit upon return to work from FMLA leave. This section clarifies that employees have the same obligation to provide a complete certification or provide sufficient authorization to the health care provider in order for that person to provide the information directly to the employing office in the fitness-for-duty certification process as they do in the initial certification process. The employing office may require that the fitness-for-duty certification address the employee's ability to perform the essential functions of the employee's job, as long as the employing office provides the employee with a list of those essential job functions no later than the employing office provides the designation notice. The designation notice must indicate that the certification address the employee's ability to perform those essential functions. An employing office may contact the employee's health care provider directly, consistent with the procedure in proposed section 825.307(a), for purposes of authenticating or clarifying the fitness-for-duty certification. The employing office is required to advise the employee in the eligibility notice required by proposed section 825.300(b) if the employing office will require a fitness-for-duty certification to return to work. Employees are not entitled to the reinstatement protections of the Act if they do not provide the required fitness-for-duty certification or request additional FMLA leave.

Section 825.312 also requires that the employing office uniformly apply its policies permitting fitness-for-duty certifications to intermittent and reduced schedule leave users when reasonable safety concerns are present, but limits the frequency of such certifications to once in a 30-day period in which intermittent or reduced schedule leave was taken. ''Reasonable safety concerns'' means a reasonable belief of a significant risk of harm to the individual employee or others. In determining whether reasonable safety concerns exist, an employing office should consider the nature and severity of the potential harm and the likelihood that potential harm will occur. This is meant to be a high standard. Thus, the determination that there are reasonable safety concerns must rely on objective factual evidence, not subjective perceptions. Employing offices cannot, under this section, require such certifications in all intermittent or reduced leave schedule situations, but only where reasonable safety concerns are present. There is no fitness-for-duty certification form, nor is there any specific format such a certification must follow as long as it contains the required information. An employing office is allowed to require that the fitness-for-duty certification address the employee's ability to perform the essential functions of his or her position. However, the employing office can choose to accept a simple statement in place of the fitness-for-duty certification (or not require a fitness-for-duty certification at all).

There is no second and third opinion process for a fitness-for-duty certification. A fitness-for-duty certification need only address the condition for which FMLA leave was taken and the employee's ability to perform the essential functions of the job. The employee's health care provider determines whether a separate examination is required in order to determine the employee's fitness to return to duty under the FMLA. A medical examination at the employing office's expense may be required only after the employee has returned from FMLA leave and must be job-related and consistent with business necessity as required by the ADA. The employing office cannot delay the employee's return to work while arranging for and having the employee undergo a medical examination.

Section 825.313 Failure to provide certification.

The Board proposes to adopt the amendments covered in the DOL regulations under this section. Section 825.313 explains the consequences for an employee who fails to provide medical certification in a timely manner. An employing office may ''deny'' FMLA leave until the required certification is provided. This section also addresses the consequences of failing to provide timely recertification. Section 825.313 also clarifies that recertification does not apply to leave taken for a qualifying exigency or to care for a covered servicemember.

Employees must be provided at least 15 calendar days to provide the requested certification, and are entitled to additional time when they are unable to meet that deadline despite their diligent, good-faith efforts. An employee's certification (or recertification) is not untimely until that period has passed. Employing offices may deny FMLA protection when an employee fails to provide a timely certification or recertification, but it does not require employing offices to do so. Employing offices always have the option of accepting an untimely certification and not denying FMLA protection to any absences that occurred during the period in which the certification was delayed.

Subpart D—Enforcement Mechanisms

Section 825.400 Enforcement, general rules.

The Board finds good cause not to adopt DOL section 825.400 because the enforcement of FMLA violations is different in the legislative branch as opposed to the workforces regulated by the DOL. The OOC section 825.400 remains the same.

Sections 825.401–825.404 Filing a complaint with the Federal Government; Violations of the posting requirement; Appealing the assessment of a penalty for willful violation of the posting requirement; Consequences for an employer when not paying the penalty assessment after a final order is issued.

These sections do not apply to the CAA and will remain reserved in the OOC regulations.

Subpart E—Recordkeeping Requirements

Section 825.500 Recordkeeping requirements.

This section does not apply to the CAA and will remain reserved in the OOC regulations.

Subpart F—Special Rules Applicable to Employees of Schools

Sections 825.600–825.604 Special rules for school employees, definitions; Special rules for school employees, limitations on intermittent leave; Special rules for school employees, limitations on leave near the end of an academic term; Special rules for school employees, duration of FMLA leave; Special rules for school employees, restoration to an equivalent position.

The Board proposes to adopt the amendments covered in the DOL regulations under these sections. Sections 825.600–825.604 cover the special rules applicable to instructional employees. When an eligible instructional employee needs intermittent leave or leave on a reduced schedule basis to care for a covered servicemember, the employee may choose to either (1) take leave for a period or periods of particular duration; or (2) transfer temporarily to an available alternative position with equivalent pay and benefits that better accommodates recurring periods of leave.

These sections also extend some of the limitations on leave near the end of an academic term to leave requested during this period to care for a covered servicemember. If an instructional employee begins leave for a purpose other than the employee's own serious health condition during the five-week period before the end of the term, the employing office may require the employee to continue taking leave until the end of the term if the leave will last more than two weeks and the employee would return to work during the two-week period before the end of the term. Further, an employing office may require an instructional employee to continue taking leave until the end of the term if the employee begins leave that will last more than five working days for a purpose other than the employee's own serious health condition

during the three-week period before the end of the term. The types of leave that are subject to the limitations are: (1) leave because of the birth of a son or daughter, (2) leave because of the placement of a son or daughter for adoption or foster care, (3) leave taken to care for a spouse, parent, or child with a serious health condition, and (4) leave taken to care for a covered servicemember.

Subpart G—Effect of Other Laws, Employing Office Practices, and Collective Bargaining Agreements on Employee Rights Under FMLA

Section 825.700 Interaction with employing office's policies.

The Board proposes to adopt the amendments covered in the DOL regulations under this section. Section 825.700 provides that an employing office may not limit the rights established by the FMLA through an employment benefit program or plan, but an employing office may provide greater leave rights than the FMLA requires. This section also provides that an employing office may amend existing leave programs, so long as they comply with the FMLA, and that nothing in the FMLA is intended to discourage employing offices from adopting or retaining more generous leave policies. The Board proposes to follow the DOL regulations and delete from the current OOC section 825.700(a) the following: ''If an employee takes paid or unpaid leave and the employing office does not designate the leave as FMLA leave, the leave taken does not count against an employee's FMLA entitlement.'' As explained by the DOL, this last sentence of section 825.700(a) was deleted in order to conform to the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in Ragsdale v. Wolverine World Wide, 535 U.S. 81 (2002), which specifically invalidated this provision.

Section 825.701 Interaction with State laws.

This DOL section does not apply to the CAA and will remain reserved in the OOC regulations.

Section 825.702 Interaction with Federal and State anti-discrimination laws.

The Board proposes to adopt the amendments covered in the DOL regulations under this section. Section 825.702 addresses the interaction between the FMLA and other Federal and State antidiscrimination laws. Section 825.702 discusses the interaction between the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA) and the FMLA. Under USERRA, a returning servicemember would be entitled to FMLA leave if, after including the hours that he or she would have worked for the civilian employing office during the period of military service, the employee would have met the FMLA eligibility threshold. This is not an expansion of FMLA rights through regulation; this is a requirement of USERRA.

With respect to the interaction of the FMLA and ADA, where both laws may apply, the applicability of each statute needs to be evaluated independently.

Further, the reference to employers who receive Federal financial assistance and employers who contract with the Federal government in this section has not been adopted by the Board because federal contractor employers are not covered by the CAA.

In its final regulations, the DOL removed the following optional-use forms and notices from the Appendix of the regulations, but continued to make them available to the public on the WHD Web site: Forms WH–380–E (Certification of Health Care Provider for Employee's Serious Health Condition); WH–380–F (Certification of Health Care Provider for Family Member's Serious Health Condition); WH–381 (Notice of Eligibility and Rights & Responsibilities); WH–382 (Designation Notice); WH–384 (Certification of Qualifying Exigency for Military Family Leave); WH–385 (Certification for Serious Injury or Illness of Current Servicemember for Military Family Leave); and WH–385–V (Certification for Serious Injury or Illness of a Veteran for Military Caregiver Leave). The Board proposes to revise its forms and to make the following OOC forms available on its website: Form A: Certification of Health Care Provider for Employee's Serious Health Condition; Form B: Certification of Health Care Provider for Family Member's Serious Health Condition; Form C: Notice of Eligibility and Rights and Responsibilities; Form D: Designation Notice to Employee of FMLA Leave; Form E: Certification of Qualifying Exigency for Military Family Leave; Form F: Certification for Serious Injury or Illness of Covered Servicemember for Military Family Leave; and Form G: Certification for Serious Injury or Illness of a Veteran for Military Caregiver Leave. The Board's proposed forms now include references to the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008, which is made applicable to employees covered under the CAA. The Board invites comment on whether these forms should be included in the regulations, or whether covered employees and employing offices should be directed to the DOL website for the appropriate forms. In any event, the use of a specific set of forms is optional and other forms requiring the same information may be used instead. In proposing these revised forms, the Board recognizes that the use of specific forms play a key role in employing offices' compliance with the FMLA and employees' ability to take FMLA protected leave when needed.

SUBSTANTIVE REGULATIONS PROPOSED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE OFFICE OF COMPLIANCE EXTENDING RIGHTS AND PROTECTIONS UNDER THE FAMILY AND MEDICAL ACT OF 1996, AS AMENDED

FINAL REGULATIONS

Part 825—Family and Medical Leave

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Form C: Notice of Eligibility and Rights & Responsibilities;
Form D: Designation Notice to Employee of FMLA Leave;
Form E: Certification of Qualifying Exigency for Military Family Leave;
Form F: Certification for Serious Injury or Illness of Covered Servicemember for Military Family Leave;
Form G: Certification for Serious Injury or Illness of a Veteran for Military Caregiver Leave.

825.1 Purpose and scope.

(a) Section 202 of the Congressional Accountability Act (CAA) (2 U.S.C. 1312) applies the rights and protections of sections 101 through 105 of the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) (29 U.S.C. 2611–2615) to covered employees. (The term ''covered employee'' is defined in section 101(3) of the CAA (2 U.S.C. 1301(3)). See 825.102 of these regulations for that definition.) The purpose of this part is to set forth the regulations to carry out the provisions of section 202 of the CAA.

(b) These regulations are issued by the Board of Directors (Board) of the Office of Compliance, pursuant to sections 202(d) and 304 of the CAA, which direct the Board to promulgate regulations implementing section 202 that are ''the same as substantive regulations promulgated by the Secretary of Labor to implement the statutory provisions referred to in subsection (a) [of section 202 of the CAA] except insofar as the Board may determine, for good cause shown . . . that a modification of such regulations would be more effective for the implementation of the rights and protections under this section.'' The regulations issued by the Board herein are on all matters for which section 202 of the CAA requires regulations to be issued. Specifically, it is the Board's considered judgment, based on the information available to it at the time of the promulgation of these regulations, that, with the exception of regulations adopted and set forth herein, there are no other ''substantive regulations promulgated by the Secretary of Labor to implement the statutory provisions referred to in subsection (a) [of section 202 of the CAA].''

(c) In promulgating these regulations, the Board has made certain technical and nomenclature changes to the regulations as promulgated by the Secretary. Such changes are intended to make the provisions adopted accord more naturally to situations in the legislative branch. However, by making these changes, the Board does not intend a substantive difference between these regulations and those of the Secretary from which they are derived. Moreover, such changes, in and of themselves, are not intended to constitute an interpretation of the regulation or of the statutory provisions of the CAA upon which they are based.

SUBPART A—COVERAGE UNDER THE FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

825.100 The Family and Medical Leave Act.

(a) The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA), as made applicable by the Congressional Accountability Act (CAA), allows eligible employees of an employing office to take job-protected, unpaid leave, or to substitute appropriate paid leave if the employee has earned or accrued it, for up to a total of 12 workweeks in any 12 months (*see* 825.200(b)) because of the birth of a child and to care for the newborn child, because of the placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care, because the employee is needed to care for a family member (child, spouse, or parent) with a serious health condition, because the employee's own serious health condition makes the employee unable to perform the functions of his or her job, or because of any qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent is a military member on active duty or call to covered active duty status (or has been notified of an impending call or order to covered active duty). In addition, eligible employees of a covered employing office may take job-protected, unpaid leave, or substitute appropriate paid leave if the employee has earned or accrued it, for up to a total of 26 workweeks in a single 12-month period to care for a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness. In certain cases, FMLA leave may be taken on an intermittent basis rather than all at once, or the employee may work a part-time schedule.

(b) An employee on FMLA leave is also entitled to have health benefits maintained while on leave as if the employee had continued to work instead of taking the leave. If an employee was paying all or part of the premium payments prior to leave, the employee would continue to pay his or her share during the leave period. The employing office or a disbursing or other financial office of *the House of Representatives or* [italicized language is in only the House and Instrumentalities versions of the regulations] the Senate may recover its share only if the employee does not return to work for a reason other than the serious health condition of the employee or the employee's covered family member, the serious injury or illness of a covered servicemember, or another reason beyond the employee's control.

(c) An employee generally has a right to return to the same position or an equivalent position with equivalent pay, benefits, and working conditions at the conclusion of the leave. The taking of FMLA leave cannot result in the loss of any benefit that accrued prior to the start of the leave.

(d) The employing office generally has a right to advance notice from the employee. In addition, the employing office may require an employee to submit certification to substantiate that the leave is due to the serious health condition of the employee or the employee's covered family member, due to the serious injury or illness of a covered servicemember, or because of a qualifying exigency. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in a delay in the start of FMLA leave. Pursuant to a uniformly applied policy, the employing office may also require that an employee present a certification of fitness to return to work when the absence was caused by the employee's serious health condition (*see* 825.312 and 825.313)). The employing office may delay restoring the employee to employment without such certificate relating to the health condition which caused the employee's absence.

825.101 Purpose of the FMLA.

(a) FMLA is intended to allow employees to balance their work and family life by taking reasonable unpaid leave for medical reasons, for the birth or adoption of a child, for the care of a child, spouse, or parent who has a serious health condition, for the care of a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness, or because of a qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent is a military member on covered active duty or call to covered active duty status. The FMLA is intended to balance the demands of the workplace with the needs of families, to promote the stability and economic security of families, and to promote national interests in preserving family integrity. It was intended that the FMLA accomplish these purposes in a manner that accommodates the legitimate interests of employing offices, and in a manner consistent with the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment in minimizing the potential for employment discrimination on the basis of sex, while promoting equal employment opportunity for men and women.

(b) The FMLA was predicated on two fundamental concerns—the needs of the American workforce, and the development of high-performance organizations. Increasingly, America's children and elderly are dependent upon family members who must spend long hours at work. When a family emergency arises, requiring workers to attend to seriously-ill children or parents, or to newly-born or adopted infants, or even to their own serious illness, workers need reassurance that they will not be asked to choose between continuing their employment, and meeting their personal and family obligations or tending to vital needs at home.

(c) The FMLA is both intended and expected to benefit employing offices as well as their employees. A direct correlation exists between stability in the family and productivity in the workplace. FMLA will encourage the development of high-performance organizations. When workers can count on durable links to their workplace they are able to make their own full commitments to their jobs. The record of hearings on family and medical leave indicate the powerful productive advantages of stable workplace relationships, and the comparatively small costs of guaranteeing that those relationships will not be dissolved while workers attend to pressing family health obligations or their own serious illness.

825.102 Definitions.

For purposes of this part:

ADA means the Americans With Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. 12101 *et seq.*, as amended).

CAA means the Congressional Accountability Act of 1995 (Pub. Law 104–1, 109 Stat. 3, 2 U.S.C. 1301 *et seq.*, as amended).

COBRA means the continuation coverage requirements of Title X of the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1986 (Pub. Law 99–272, title X, section 10002; 100 Stat. 227; 29 U.S.C. 1161–1168).

Contingency operation means a military operation that:

(1) Is designated by the Secretary of Defense as an operation in which members of the Armed Forces are or may become involved in military actions, operations, or hostilities against an enemy of the United States or against an opposing military force; or

(2) Results in the call or order to, or retention on, active duty of members of the uniformed services under section 688, 12301(a),

12302, 12304, 12305, or 12406 of Title 10 of the United States Code, chapter 15 of Title 10 of the United States Code, or any other provision of law during a war or during a national emergency declared by the President or Congress. *See also* 825.126(a)(2).

Continuing treatment by a health care provider means any one of the following:

(1) *Incapacity and treatment*. A period of incapacity of more than three consecutive, full calendar days, and any subsequent treatment or period of incapacity relating to the same condition, that also involves:

(i) Treatment two or more times, within 30 days of the first day of incapacity, unless extenuating circumstances exist, by a health care provider, by a nurse under direct supervision of a health care provider, or by a provider of health care services (*e.g.*, physical therapist) under orders of, or on referral by, a health care provider; or

(ii) Treatment by a health care provider on at least one occasion, which results in a regimen of continuing treatment under the supervision of the health care provider.

(iii) The requirement in paragraphs (i) and (ii) of this definition for treatment by a health care provider means an in-person visit to a health care provider. The first in-person treatment visit must take place within seven days of the first day of incapacity.

(iv) Whether additional treatment visits or a regimen of continuing treatment is necessary within the 30-day period shall be determined by the health care provider.

(v) The term ''extenuating circumstances'' in paragraph (i) means circumstances beyond the employee's control that prevent the follow-up visit from occurring as planned by the health care provider. Whether a given set of circumstances are extenuating depends on the facts. *See also* 825.115(a)(5).

(2) *Pregnancy or prenatal care*. Any period of incapacity due to pregnancy, or for prenatal care. *See also* 825.120.

(3) *Chronic conditions*. Any period of incapacity or treatment for such incapacity due to a chronic serious health condition. A chronic serious health condition is one which:

(i) Requires periodic visits (defined as at least twice a year) for treatment by a health care provider, or by a nurse under direct supervision of a health care provider;

(ii) Continues over an extended period of time (including recurring episodes of a single underlying condition); and

(iii) May cause episodic rather than a continuing period of incapacity (e.g., asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, *etc.*).

(4) *Permanent or long-term conditions*. A period of incapacity which is permanent or long-term due to a condition for which treatment may not be effective. The employee or family member must be under the continuing supervision of, but need not be receiving active treatment by, a health care provider. Examples include Alzheimer's, a severe stroke, or the terminal stages of a disease.

(5) *Conditions requiring multiple treatments*. Any period of absence to receive multiple treatments (including any period of recovery therefrom) by a health care provider or by a provider of health care services under orders of, or on referral by, a health care provider, for:

(i) Restorative surgery after an accident or other injury; or

(ii) A condition that would likely result in a period of incapacity of more than three consecutive full calendar days in the absence of medical intervention or treatment, such as cancer (chemotherapy, radiation, *etc.*), severe arthritis (physical therapy), kidney disease (dialysis).

(6) Absences attributable to incapacity under paragraphs (2) or (3) of this definition qualify for FMLA leave even though the employee or the covered family member does not receive treatment from a health care provider during the absence, and even if the absence does not last more than three consecutive, full calendar days. For example, an employee with asthma may be unable to report for work due to the onset of an asthma attack or because the employee's health care provider has advised the employee to stay home when the pollen count exceeds a certain level. An employee who is pregnant may be unable to report to work because of severe morning sickness.

Covered active duty or call to covered active duty status means:

(1) In the case of a member of the Regular Armed Forces, duty during the deployment of the member with the Armed Forces to a foreign country; and,

(2) In the case of a member of the Reserve components of the Armed Forces, duty during the deployment of the member with the Armed Forces to a foreign country under a Federal call or order to active duty in support of a contingency operation pursuant to: Section 688 of Title 10 of the United States Code, which authorizes ordering to active duty retired members of the Regular Armed Forces and members of the retired Reserve who retired after completing at least 20 years of active service; Section 12301(a) of Title 10 of the United States Code, which authorizes ordering all reserve component members to active duty in the case of war or national emergency; Section 12302 of Title 10 of the United States Code, which authorizes ordering any unit or unassigned member of the Ready Reserve to active duty; Section 12304 of Title 10 of the United States Code, which authorizes ordering any unit or unassigned member of the Selected Reserve and certain members of the Individual Ready Reserve to active duty; Section 12305 of Title 10 of the United States Code, which authorizes the suspension of promotion, retirement or separation rules for certain Reserve components; Section 12406 of Title 10 of the United States Code, which authorizes calling the National Guard into Federal service in certain circumstances; chapter 15 of Title 10 of the United States Code, which authorizes calling the National Guard and state military into Federal service in the case of insurrections and national emergencies; or any other provision of law during a war or during a national emergency declared by the President or Congress so long as it is in support of a contingency operation. *See* 10 U.S.C. 101(a)(13)(B). *See also* 825.126(a).

Covered employee as defined in the CAA, means any employee of—(1) the House of Representatives; (2) the Senate; (3) the Office of Congressional Accessibility Services; (4) the Capitol Police; (5) the Congressional Budget Office; (6) the Office of the Architect of the Capitol; (7) the Office of the Attending Physician; (8) the Office of Compliance; or (9) the Office of Technology Assessment.

Covered servicemember means:

(1) A current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy, is otherwise in outpatient status, or is otherwise on the temporary disability retired list, for a serious injury or illness, or

(2) A covered veteran who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy for a serious injury or illness.

Covered veteran means an individual who was a member of the Armed Forces (including a member of the National Guard or Reserves), and was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable at any time during the five-year period prior to the first date the eligible employee takes FMLA leave to care for the covered veteran. *See* 825.127(b)(2).

Eligible employee as defined in the CAA, means:

(1) A covered employee who has been employed for a total of at least 12 months in any employing office on the date on which any FMLA leave is to commence, except that an employing office need not consider any period of previous employment that occurred more than seven years before the date of the most recent hiring of the employee, *unless:*

(i) The break in service is occasioned by the fulfillment of the employee's Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA), 38 U.S.C. 4301, *et seq.*, covered service obligation (the period of absence from work due to or necessitated by USERRA-covered service must be also counted in determining whether the employee has been employed for at least 12 months by any employing office, but this section does not provide any greater entitlement to the employee than would be available under the USERRA, as made applicable by the CAA); or

(ii) A written agreement, including a collective bargaining agreement, exists concerning the employing office's intention to rehire the employee after the break in service (*e.g.*, for purposes of the employee furthering his or her education or for childrearing purposes); and

(2) Who, on the date on which any FMLA leave is to commence, has met the hours of service requirement by having been employed for at least 1,250 hours of service with an employing office during the previous 12-month period, *except that*:

(i) An employee returning from fulfilling his or her USERRA-covered service obligation shall be credited with the hours of service that would have been performed but for the period of absence from work due to or necessitated by USERRA-covered service in determining whether the employee met the hours of service requirement (accordingly, a person reemployed following absence from work due to or necessitated by USERRA-covered service has the hours that would have been worked for the employing office added to any hours actually worked during the previous 12-month period to meet the hours of service requirement); and

(ii) To determine the hours that would have been worked during the period of absence from work due to or necessitated by USERRA-covered service, the employee's pre-service work schedule can generally be used for calculations.

Employ means to suffer or permit to work.

Employee means an employee as defined by the CAA and includes an applicant for employment and a former employee.

Employee employed in an instructional capacity. *See* the definition of *Teacher* in this section.

Employee of the Capitol Police means any member or officer of the Capitol Police.

Employee of the House of Representatives means an individual occupying a position the pay for which is disbursed by the Clerk of the House of Representatives, or another official designated by the House of Representatives, or any employment position in an entity that is paid with funds derived from the clerk-hire allowance of the House of Representatives but not any such individual employed by any entity listed in subparagraphs (3) through (9) under the definition of *covered employee* above.

Employee of the Office of the Architect of the Capitol means any employee of the Office of the Architect of the Capitol or the Botanic Garden.

Employee of the Senate means any employee whose pay is disbursed by the Secretary of the Senate, but not any such individual employed by any entity listed in subparagraphs (3) through (9) under the definition of *covered employee* above.

Employing Office, as defined in the CAA, means:

(1) The personal office of a Member of the House of Representatives or of a Senator;

(2) A committee of the House of Representatives or the Senate or a joint committee;

(3) Any other office headed by a person with the final authority to appoint, hire, discharge, and set the terms, conditions, or privileges of the employment of an employee of the House of Representatives or the Senate; or

(4) The Office of Congressional Accessibility Services, the United States Capitol Police, the Congressional Budget Office, the Office of the Architect of the Capitol, the Office of the Attending Physician, the Office of Compliance, and the Office of Technology Assessment.

Employment benefits means all benefits provided or made available to employees by an employing office, including group life insurance, health insurance, disability insurance, sick leave, annual leave, educational benefits, and pensions, regardless of whether such benefits are provided by a practice or written policy of an employing office or through an employee benefit plan. The term does not include non-employment related obligations paid by employees through voluntary deductions such as supplemental insurance coverage. *See also* 825.209(a).

FLSA means the Fair Labor Standards Act (29 U.S.C. 201 *et seq.*).

FMLA means the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, Public Law 103–3 (February 5, 1993), 107 Stat. 6 (29 U.S.C. 2601 *et seq.*, as amended).

Group health plan means the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program and any other plan of, or contributed to by, an employing office (including a self-insured plan) to provide health care (directly or otherwise) to the employing office's employees, former employees, or the families of such employees or former employees. For purposes of FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA, the term *group health plan* shall not include an insurance program providing health coverage under which employees purchase individual policies from insurers provided that:

(1) No contributions are made by the employing office;

(2) Participation in the program is completely voluntary for employees;

(3) The sole functions of the employing office with respect to the program are, without endorsing the program, to permit the insurer to publicize the program to employees, to collect premiums through payroll deductions and to remit them to the insurer;

(4) The employing office receives no consideration in the form of cash or otherwise in connection with the program, other than reasonable compensation, excluding any profit, for administrative services actually rendered in connection with payroll deduction; and,

(5) The premium charged with respect to such coverage does not increase in the event the employment relationship terminates.

Health care provider means:

(1) The FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA, defines health care provider as:

(i) A doctor of medicine or osteopathy who is authorized to practice medicine or surgery (as appropriate) by the State in which the doctor practices; or

(ii) Any other person determined by the Department of Labor to be capable of providing health care services.

(2) Others ''capable of providing health care services'' include only:

(i) Podiatrists, dentists, clinical psychologists, optometrists, and chiropractors (limited to treatment consisting of manual manipulation of the spine to correct a subluxation as demonstrated by X-ray to exist) authorized to practice in the State and performing within the scope of their practice as defined under State law; and

(ii) Nurse practitioners, nurse-midwives and clinical social workers and physician assistants who are authorized to practice under State law and who are performing within the scope of their practice as defined under State law; and

(iii) Christian Science practitioners listed with the First Church of Christ, Scientist in Boston, Massachusetts. Where an employee or family member is receiving treatment from a Christian Science practitioner, an employee may not object to any requirement from an employing office that the employee or family member submit to examination (though not treatment) to obtain a second or third certification from a health care provider other than a Christian Science practitioner except as otherwise provided under applicable State or local law or collective bargaining agreement.

(iv) Any health care provider from whom an employing office or a group health plan's benefits manager will accept certification of the existence of a serious health condition to substantiate a claim for benefits; and

(v) A health care provider listed above who practices in a country other than the United States, who is authorized to practice in accordance with the law of that country, and who is performing within the scope of his or her practice as defined under such law.

(3) The phrase ''authorized to practice in the State'' as used in this section means that the provider must be authorized to diagnose and treat physical or mental health conditions.

Incapable of self-care means that the individual requires active assistance or supervision to provide daily self-care in several of the ''activities of daily living'' (ADLs) or ''instrumental activities of daily living'' (IADLs). Activities of daily living include adaptive activities such as caring appropriately for one's grooming and hygiene, bathing, dressing and eating. Instrumental activities of daily living include cooking, cleaning, shopping, taking public transportation, paying bills, maintaining a residence, using telephones and directories, using a post office, *etc.*

Instructional employee: See the definition of *Teacher* in this section.

Intermittent leave means leave taken in separate periods of time due to a single illness or injury, rather than for one continuous period of time, and may include leave of periods from an hour or more to several weeks. Examples of intermittent leave would include leave taken on an occasional basis for medical appointments, or leave taken several days at a time spread over a period of six months, such as for chemotherapy.

Invitational travel authorization (ITA) or *Invitational travel order* (ITO) mean orders issued by the Armed Forces to a family member to join an injured or ill servicemember at his or her bedside. *See also* 825.310(e).

Key employee means a salaried FMLA-eligible employee who is among the highest paid 10 percent of all the employees employed by the employing office within 75 miles of the employee's worksite. *See also* 825.217.

Mental disability: See the definition of *Physical or mental disability* in this section.

Military caregiver leave means leave taken to care for a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness under the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993. *See also* 825.127.

Next of kin of a covered servicemember means the nearest blood relative other than the covered servicemember's spouse, parent, son, or daughter, in the following order of priority: blood relatives who have been granted legal custody of the covered servicemember by court decree or statutory provisions, brothers and sisters, grandparents, aunts and uncles, and first cousins, unless the covered servicemember has specifically designated in writing another blood relative as his or her nearest blood relative for purposes of military caregiver leave under the FMLA. When no such designation is made, and there are multiple family members with the same level of relationship to the covered servicemember, all such family members shall be considered the covered servicemember's next of kin and may take FMLA leave to provide care to the covered servicemember, either consecutively or simultaneously. When such designation has been made, the designated individual shall be deemed to be the covered servicemember's only next of kin. *See also* 825.127(d)(3).

Office of Compliance means the independent office established in the legislative branch under section 301 of the CAA (2 U.S.C. 1381).

Outpatient status means, with respect to a covered servicemember who is a current member of the Armed Forces, the status of a member of the Armed Forces assigned to either a military medical treatment facility as an outpatient; or a unit established for the purpose of providing command and control of members of the Armed Forces receiving medical care as outpatients. *See also* 825.127(b)(1).

Parent means a biological, adoptive, step or foster father or mother or any other individual who stood in loco parentis to the employee when the employee was a son or daughter as defined below. This term does not include parents ''in law.''

*Parent of a covered servicemembe*r means a covered servicemember's biological, adoptive, step or foster father or mother, or any other individual who stood in loco parentis to the covered servicemember. This term does not include parents ''in law.'' *See also* 825.127(d)(2).

Physical or mental disability means a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of an individual. Regulations at 29 CFR part 1630, issued by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), 42 U.S.C. 12101 *et seq.*, as amended, provide guidance to these terms.

Reduced leave schedule means a leave schedule that reduces the usual number of hours per workweek, or hours per workday, of an employee.

Reserve components of the Armed Forces, for purposes of qualifying exigency leave, include the Army National Guard of the United States, Army Reserve, Navy Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve, Air National Guard of the United States, Air Force Reserve, and Coast Guard Reserve, and retired members of the Regular Armed Forces or Reserves who are called up in support of a contingency operation. *See also* 825.126(a)(2)(i).

Secretary means the Secretary of Labor or authorized representative.

Serious health condition means an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves inpatient care as defined in 825.114 or continuing treatment by a health care provider as defined in 825.115. Conditions for which cosmetic treatments are administered (such as most treatments for acne or plastic surgery) are not serious health conditions unless inpatient hospital care is required or unless complications develop. Restorative dental or plastic surgery after an injury or removal of cancerous growths are serious health conditions provided all the other conditions of this regulation are met. Mental illness or allergies may be serious health conditions, but only if all the conditions of 825.113 are met.

Serious injury or illness means:

(1) In the case of a current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the

National Guard or Reserves, an injury or illness that was incurred by the covered servicemember in the line of duty on active duty in the Armed Forces or that existed before the beginning of the member's active duty and was aggravated by service in the line of duty on active duty in the Armed Forces and that may render the servicemember medically unfit to perform the duties of the member's office, grade, rank, or rating; and

(2) In the case of a covered veteran, an injury or illness that was incurred by the member in the line of duty on active duty in the Armed Forces (or existed before the beginning of the member's active duty and was aggravated by service in the line of duty on active duty in the Armed Forces) and manifested itself before or after the member became a veteran, and is:

(i) A continuation of a serious injury or illness that was incurred or aggravated when the covered veteran was a member of the Armed Forces and rendered the servicemember unable to perform the duties of the servicemember's office, grade, rank, or rating; or

(ii) A physical or mental condition for which the covered veteran has received a U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Service-Related Disability Rating (VASRD) of 50 percent or greater, and such VASRD rating is based, in whole or in part, on the condition precipitating the need for military caregiver leave; or

(iii) A physical or mental condition that substantially impairs the covered veteran's ability to secure or follow a substantially gainful occupation by reason of a disability or disabilities related to military service, or would do so absent treatment; or

(iv) An injury, including a psychological injury, on the basis of which the covered veteran has been enrolled in the Department of Veterans Affairs Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers. *See also* 825.127(c).

Son or daughter means a biological, adopted, or foster child, a stepchild, a legal ward, or a child of a person standing in loco parentis, who is either under age 18, or age 18 or older and ''incapable of self-care because of a mental or physical disability'' at the time that FMLA leave is to commence.

Son or daughter of a covered servicemember means a covered servicemember's biological, adopted, or foster child, stepchild, legal ward, or a child for whom the covered servicemember stood in loco parentis, and who is of any age. *See also* 825.127(d)(1).

Son or daughter on covered active duty or call to covered active duty status means the employee's biological, adopted, or foster child, stepchild, legal ward, or a child for whom the employee stood in loco parentis, who is on covered active duty or call to covered active duty status, and who is of any age. *See also* 825.126(a)(5).

Spouse, as defined in the FMLA and as made applicable by the CAA, means a husband or wife. For purposes of this definition, husband or wife refers to all individuals in lawfully recognized marriages. This definition includes an individual in a same-sex marriage. This definition also includes an individual in a common law marriage that either:

(1) was entered into in a State that recognizes such marriages or,

(2) if entered into outside of any State, is valid in the place where entered into and could have been entered into in at least one State.

State means any State of the United States or the District of Columbia or any Territory or possession of the United States.

Teacher (or *employee employed in an instructional capacity*, or *instructional employee*) means an employee employed principally in an instructional capacity by an educational agency or school whose principal function is to teach and instruct students in a class, a small group, or an individual setting, and includes athletic coaches, driving instructors, and special education assistants such as signers for the hearing impaired. The term does not include teacher assistants or aides who do not have as their principal function actual teaching or instructing, nor auxiliary personnel such as counselors, psychologists, curriculum specialists, cafeteria workers, maintenance workers, bus drivers, or other primarily noninstructional employees.

TRICARE is the health care program serving active duty servicemembers, National Guard and Reserve members, retirees, their families, survivors, and certain former spouses worldwide.

825.103 [Removed and Reserved]

825.104 Covered employing offices.

(a) The FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA, covers all employing offices. As used in the CAA, the term employing office means:

(1) The personal office of a Member of the House of Representatives or of a Senator;

(2) A committee of the House of Representatives or the Senate or a joint committee;

(3) Any other office headed by a person with the final authority to appoint, hire, discharge, and set the terms, conditions, or privileges of the employment of an employee of the House of Representatives or the Senate; or

(4) The Office of Congressional Accessibility Services, the United States Capitol Police, the Congressional Budget Office, the Office of the Architect of the Capitol, the Office of the Attending Physician, the Office of Compliance, and the Office of Technology Assessment.

(b) **[Reserved]**

(c) Separate entities will be deemed to be parts of a single employing office for purposes of the FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA, if they meet the ''integrated employer'' test. Where this test is met, the employees of all entities making up the integrated employer will be counted in determining employer coverage and employee eligibility. A determination of whether or not separate entities are an integrated employer is not determined by the application of any single criterion, but rather the entire relationship is to be reviewed in its totality. Factors considered in determining whether two or more entities are an integrated employer include:

(1) Common management;

(2) Interrelation between operations;

(3) Centralized control of labor relations; and

(4) Degree of common financial control.

825.105 [Reserved].

825.106 Joint employer coverage.

(a) Where two or more employing offices exercise some control over the work or working conditions of the employee, the employing offices may be joint employers under FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA. Where the employee performs work which simultaneously benefits two or more employing offices, or works for two or more employing offices at different times during the workweek, a joint employment relationship generally will be considered to exist in situations such as:

(1) Where there is an arrangement between employing offices to share an employee's services or to interchange employees;

(2) Where one employing office acts directly or indirectly in the interest of the other employing office in relation to the employee; or

(3) Where the employing offices are not completely disassociated with respect to the employee's employment and may be deemed to share control of the employee, directly or indirectly, because one employing office controls, is controlled by, or is under common control with the other employing office.

(b) A determination of whether or not a joint employment relationship exists is not determined by the application of any single criterion, but rather the entire relationship is to be viewed in its totality. For example, joint employment will ordinarily be found to exist when:

(1) An employee, who is employed by an employing office other than the personal office of a Member of the House of Representatives or of a Senator, is under the actual direction and control of the Member of the House of Representatives or Senator; or

(2) Two or more employing offices employ an individual to work on common issues or other matters for both or all of them.

(c) When employing offices employ a covered employee jointly, they may designate one of themselves to be the primary employing office, and the other or others to be the secondary employing office(s). Such a designation shall be made by written notice to the covered employee.

(d) If an employing office is designated a primary employing office pursuant to paragraph (c) of this section, only that employing office is responsible for giving required notices to the covered employee, providing FMLA leave, and maintenance of health benefits. Job restoration is the primary responsibility of the primary employing office, and the secondary employing office(s) may, subject to the limitations in 825.216, be responsible for accepting the employee returning from FMLA leave.

(e) If employing offices employ an employee jointly, but fail to designate a primary employing office pursuant to paragraph (c) of this section, then all of these employing offices shall be jointly and severally liable for giving required notices to the employee, for providing FMLA leave, for assuring that health benefits are maintained, and for job restoration. The employee may give notice of need for FMLA leave, as described in 825.302 and 825.303, to whichever of these employing offices the employee chooses. If the employee makes a written request for restoration to one of these employing offices, that employing office shall be primarily responsible for job restoration, and the other employing office(s) may, subject to the limitations in 825.216, be responsible for accepting the employee returning from FMLA leave.

825.107 [Reserved]

825.108 [Reserved]

825.109 [Reserved]

825.110 Eligible employees.

(a) An eligible employee is an employee of a covered employing office who:

(1) Has been employed by any employing office for at least 12 months, and

(2) Has been employed for at least 1,250 hours of service during the 12-month period immediately preceding the commencement of the leave.

(b) The 12 months an employee must have been employed by any employing office need not be consecutive months, *provided*:

(1) Subject to the exceptions provided in paragraph (b)(2) of this section, employment periods prior to a break in service of seven years or more need not be counted in determining whether the employee has been employed by the employing office for at least 12 months.

(2) Employment periods preceding a break in service of more than seven years must be counted in determining whether the employee has been employed by the employing office for at least 12 months where:

(i) The employee's break in service is occasioned by the fulfillment of his or her Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA), 38 U.S.C. 4301, *et*

seq., covered service obligation. The period of absence from work due to or necessitated by USERRA-covered service must be also counted in determining whether the employee has been employed for at least 12 months by the employing office. However, this section does not provide any greater entitlement to the employee than would be available under the USERRA; or

(ii) A written agreement, including a collective bargaining agreement, exists concerning the employing office's intention to rehire the employee after the break in service (*e.g.*, for purposes of the employee furthering his or her education or for childrearing purposes).

(3) If an employee worked for two or more employing offices sequentially, the time worked will be aggregated to determine whether it equals 12 months.

(4) If an employee is maintained on the payroll for any part of a week, including any periods of paid or unpaid leave (sick, vacation) during which other benefits or compensation are provided by the employing office (*e.g.*, Federal Employees' Compensation, group health plan benefits, *etc.*), the week counts as a week of employment. For purposes of determining whether intermittent/occasional/casual employment qualifies as at least 12 months, 52 weeks is deemed to be equal to 12 months.

(5) Nothing in this section prevents employing offices from considering employment prior to a continuous break in service of more than seven years when determining whether an employee has met the 12-month employment requirement. However, if an employing office chooses to recognize such prior employment, the employing office must do so uniformly, with respect to all employees with similar breaks in service.

(c)(1) If an employee was employed by two or more employing offices, either sequentially or concurrently, the hours of service will be aggregated to determine whether the minimum of 1,250 hours has been reached.

(2) Except as provided in paragraph (c)(3) of this section, whether an employee has worked the minimum 1,250 hours of service is determined according to the principles established under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), as applied by section 203 of the CAA (2 U.S.C. 1313), for determining compensable hours of work. The determining factor is the number of hours an employee has worked for one or more employing offices. The determination is not limited by methods of recordkeeping, or by compensation agreements that do not accurately reflect all of the hours an employee has worked for or been in service to the employing office. Any accurate accounting of actual hours worked under the FLSA's principles may be used.

(3) An employee returning from USERRA-covered service shall be credited with the hours of service that would have been performed but for the period of absence from work due to or necessitated by USERRA-covered service in determining the employee's eligibility for FMLA-qualifying leave. Accordingly, a person reemployed following USERRA-covered service has the hours that would have been worked for the employing office added to any hours actually worked during the previous 12-month period to meet the hours of service requirement. In order to determine the hours that would have been worked during the period of absence from work due to or necessitated by USERRA-covered service, the employee's pre-service work schedule can generally be used for calculations.

(4) In the event an employing office does not maintain an accurate record of hours worked by an employee, including for employees who are exempt from FLSA's requirement that a record be kept of their hours worked (*e.g.*, bona fide executive, administrative, and professional employees as defined in the FLSA Regulations, 29 CFR part 541, and as made applicable by the CAA, the employing office has the burden of showing that the employee has not worked the requisite hours. An employing office must be able to clearly demonstrate, for example, that full-time teachers (*see* 825.102 for definition) of an elementary or secondary school system, or institution of higher education, or other educational establishment or institution (who often work outside the classroom or at their homes) did not work 1,250 hours during the previous 12 months in order to claim that the teachers are not eligible for FMLA leave.

(d) The determination of whether an employee has worked for any employing office for at least 1,250 hours in the past 12 months and has been employed by any employing office for a total of at least 12 months must be made as of the date the FMLA leave is to start. An employee may be on non-FMLA leave at the time he or she meets the 12-month eligibility requirement, and in that event, any portion of the leave taken for an FMLA-qualifying reason after the employee meets the eligibility requirement would be FMLA leave. *See* 825.300(b) for rules governing the content of the eligibility notice given to employees.

(e) **[Reserved]**

825.111 [Reserved]

825.112 Qualifying reasons for leave, general rule.

(a) *Circumstances qualifying for leave*. Employing offices covered by FMLA as made applicable by the CAA are required to grant leave to eligible employees:

(1) For birth of a son or daughter, and to care for the newborn child (*see* 825.120);

(2) For placement with the employee of a son or daughter for adoption or foster care (*see* 825.121);

(3) To care for the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent with a serious health condition (*see* 825.113 and 825.122); and

(4) Because of a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the functions of the employee's job (*see* 825.113 and 825.123);

(5) Because of any qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent is a military member on covered active duty (or has been notified of an impending call or order to covered active status) (*see* 825.122 and 825.126); and

(6) To care for a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness if the employee is the spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin of the covered servicemember (*see* 825.122 and 825.127).

(b) *Equal Application*. The right to take leave under FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA, applies equally to male and female employees. A father, as well as a mother, can take family leave for the birth, placement for adoption, or foster care of a child.

(c) *Active employee*. In situations where the employing office/employee relationship has been interrupted, such as an employee who has been on layoff, the employee must be recalled or otherwise be re-employed before being eligible for FMLA leave. Under such circumstances, an eligible employee is immediately entitled to further FMLA leave for a qualifying reason.

825.113 Serious health condition.

(a) For purposes of FMLA, *serious health condition* entitling an employee to FMLA leave means an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves inpatient care as defined in 825.114 or continuing treatment by a health care provider as defined in 825.115.

(b) The term *incapacity* means inability to work, attend school or perform other regular daily activities due to the serious health condition, treatment therefore, or recovery therefrom.

(c) The term *treatment* includes (but is not limited to) examinations to determine if a serious health condition exists and evaluations of the condition. Treatment does not include routine physical examinations, eye examinations, or dental examinations. A regimen of continuing treatment includes, for example, a course of prescription medication (*e.g.*, an antibiotic) or therapy requiring special equipment to resolve or alleviate the health condition (*e.g.*, oxygen). A regimen of continuing treatment that includes the taking of over-the-counter medications such as aspirin, antihistamines, or salves; or bedrest, drinking fluids, exercise, and other similar activities that can be initiated without a visit to a health care provider, is not, by itself, sufficient to constitute a regimen of continuing treatment for purposes of FMLA leave.

(d) Conditions for which cosmetic treatments are administered (such as most treatments for acne or plastic surgery) are not serious health conditions unless inpatient hospital care is required or unless complications develop. Ordinarily, unless complications arise, the common cold, the flu, ear aches, upset stomach, minor ulcers, headaches other than migraine, routine dental or orthodontia problems, periodontal disease, *etc.*, are examples of conditions that do not meet the definition of a serious health condition and do not qualify for FMLA leave. Restorative dental or plastic surgery after an injury or removal of cancerous growths are serious health conditions provided all the other conditions of this regulation are met. Mental illness or allergies may be serious health conditions, but only if all the conditions of this section are met.

825.114 Inpatient care.

Inpatient care means an overnight stay in a hospital, hospice, or residential medical care facility, including any period of incapacity as defined in 825.113(b), or any subsequent treatment in connection with such inpatient care.

825.115 Continuing treatment.

A serious health condition involving continuing treatment by a health care provider includes any one or more of the following:

(a) *Incapacity and treatment*. A period of incapacity of more than three consecutive, full calendar days, and any subsequent treatment or period of incapacity relating to the same condition, that also involves:

(1) Treatment two or more times, within 30 days of the first day of incapacity, unless extenuating circumstances exist, by a health care provider, by a nurse under direct supervision of a health care provider, or by a provider of health care services (*e.g.*, physical therapist) under orders of, or on referral by, a health care provider; or

(2) Treatment by a health care provider on at least one occasion, which results in a regimen of continuing treatment under the supervision of the health care provider.

(3) The requirement in paragraphs (a)(1) and (2) of this section for treatment by a health care provider means an in-person visit to a health care provider. The first (or only) in-person treatment visit must take place within seven days of the first day of incapacity.

(4) Whether additional treatment visits or a regimen of continuing treatment is necessary within the 30-day period shall be determined by the health care provider.

(5) The term *extenuating circumstances* in paragraph (a)(1) of this section means circumstances beyond the employee's control

that prevent the follow-up visit from occurring as planned by the health care provider. Whether a given set of circumstances are extenuating depends on the facts. For example, extenuating circumstances exist if a health care provider determines that a second in-person visit is needed within the 30-day period, but the health care provider does not have any available appointments during that time period.

(b) *Pregnancy or prenatal care.* Any period of incapacity due to pregnancy, or for prenatal care. See also 825.120.

(c) *Chronic conditions.* Any period of incapacity or treatment for such incapacity due to a chronic serious health condition. A chronic serious health condition is one which:

(1) Requires periodic visits (defined as at least twice a year) for treatment by a health care provider, or by a nurse under direct supervision of a health care provider;

(2) Continues over an extended period of time (including recurring episodes of a single underlying condition); and

(3) May cause episodic rather than a continuing period of incapacity (*e.g.*, asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, *etc.*).

(d) *Permanent or long-term conditions.* A period of incapacity which is permanent or long-term due to a condition for which treatment may not be effective. The employee or family member must be under the continuing supervision of, but need not be receiving active treatment by, a health care provider. Examples include Alzheimer's, a severe stroke, or the terminal stages of a disease.

(e) *Conditions requiring multiple treatments.* Any period of absence to receive multiple treatments (including any period of recovery therefrom) by a health care provider or by a provider of health care services under orders of, or on referral by, a health care provider, for:

(1) Restorative surgery after an accident or other injury; or

(2) A condition that would likely result in a period of incapacity of more than three consecutive, full calendar days in the absence of medical intervention or treatment, such as cancer (chemotherapy, radiation, *etc.*), severe arthritis (physical therapy), or kidney disease (dialysis).

(f) Absences attributable to incapacity under paragraphs (b) or (c) of this section qualify for FMLA leave even though the employee or the covered family member does not receive treatment from a health care provider during the absence, and even if the absence does not last more than three consecutive, full calendar days. For example, an employee with asthma may be unable to report for work due to the onset of an asthma attack or because the employee's health care provider has advised the employee to stay home when the pollen count exceeds a certain level. An employee who is pregnant may be unable to report to work because of severe morning sickness.

825.116 [Removed and Reserved]

825.117 [Removed and Reserved]

825.118 [Removed and Reserved]

825.119 Leave for treatment of substance abuse.

(a) Substance abuse may be a serious health condition if the conditions of 825.113 through 825.115 are met. However, FMLA leave may only be taken for treatment for substance abuse by a health care provider or by a provider of health care services on referral by a health care provider. On the other hand, absence because of the employee's use of the substance, rather than for treatment, does not qualify for FMLA leave.

(b) Treatment for substance abuse does not prevent an employing office from taking employment action against an employee. The employing office may not take action against the employee because the employee has exercised his or her right to take FMLA leave for treatment. However, if the employing office has an established policy, applied in a non-discriminatory manner that has been communicated to all employees, that provides under certain circumstances an employee may be terminated for substance abuse, pursuant to that policy the employee may be terminated whether or not the employee is presently taking FMLA leave. An employee may also take FMLA leave to care for a covered family member who is receiving treatment for substance abuse. The employing office may not take action against an employee who is providing care for a covered family member receiving treatment for substance abuse.

825.120 Leave for pregnancy or birth.

(a) *General rules.* Eligible employees are entitled to FMLA leave for pregnancy or birth of a child as follows:

(1) Both parents are entitled to FMLA leave for the birth of their child.

(2) Both parents are entitled to FMLA leave to be with the healthy newborn child (*i.e.*, bonding time) during the 12-month period beginning on the date of birth. An employee's entitlement to FMLA leave for a birth expires at the end of the 12-month period beginning on the date of the birth. If the employing office permits bonding leave to be taken beyond this period, such leave will not qualify as FMLA leave. Under this section, both parents are entitled to FMLA leave even if the newborn does not have a serious health condition.

(3) Spouses who are eligible for FMLA leave and are employed by the same employing office may be limited to a combined total of 12 weeks of leave during any 12-month period if the leave is taken for birth of the employee's son or daughter or to care for the child after birth, for placement of a son or daughter with the employee for adoption or foster care or to care for the child after placement, or to care for the employee's parent with a serious health condition. This limitation on the total weeks of leave applies to leave taken for the reasons specified as long as the spouses are employed by the same employing office. It would apply, for example, even though the spouses are employed at two different worksites of an employing office. On the other hand, if one spouse is ineligible for FMLA leave, the other spouse would be entitled to a full 12 weeks of FMLA leave. Where spouses both use a portion of the total 12-week FMLA leave entitlement for either the birth of a child, for placement for adoption or foster care, or to care for a parent, the spouses would each be entitled to the difference between the amount he or she has taken individually and 12 weeks for FMLA leave for other purposes. For example, if each spouse took six weeks of leave to care for a healthy, newborn child, each could use an additional six weeks due to his or her own serious health condition or to care for a child with a serious health condition. Note, too, that many state pregnancy disability laws specify a period of disability either before or after the birth of a child; such periods would also be considered FMLA leave for a serious health condition of the birth mother, and would not be subject to the combined limit.

(4) The expectant mother is entitled to FMLA leave for incapacity due to pregnancy, for prenatal care, or for her own serious health condition following the birth of the child. An expectant mother may take FMLA leave before the birth of the child for prenatal care or if her condition makes her unable to work. The expectant mother is entitled to leave for incapacity due to pregnancy even though she does not receive treatment from a health care provider during the absence, and even if the absence does not last for more than three consecutive calendar days.

(5) A spouse is entitled to FMLA leave if needed to care for a pregnant spouse who is incapacitated or if needed to care for her during her prenatal care, or if needed to care for her following the birth of a child if she has a serious health condition. See 825.124.

(6) Both parents are entitled to FMLA leave if needed to care for a child with a serious health condition if the requirements of 825.113 through 825.115 and 825.122(d) are met. Thus, spouses may each take 12 weeks of FMLA leave if needed to care for their newborn child with a serious health condition, even if both are employed by the same employing office, provided they have not exhausted their entitlements during the applicable 12-month FMLA leave period.

(b) *Intermittent and reduced schedule leave.* An eligible employee may use intermittent or reduced schedule leave after the birth to be with a healthy newborn child only if the employing office agrees. For example, an employing office and employee may agree to a part-time work schedule after the birth. If the employing office agrees to permit intermittent or reduced schedule leave for the birth of a child, the employing office may require the employee to transfer temporarily, during the period the intermittent or reduced leave schedule is required, to an available alternative position for which the employee is qualified and which better accommodates recurring periods of leave than does the employee's regular position. Transfer to an alternative position may require compliance with any applicable collective bargaining agreement and federal law (such as the Americans with Disabilities Act, as made applicable by the CAA). Transfer to an alternative position may include altering an existing job to better accommodate the employee's need for intermittent or reduced leave. The employing office's agreement is not required for intermittent leave required by the serious health condition of the expectant mother or newborn child. *See* 825.202–825.205 for general rules governing the use of intermittent and reduced schedule leave. *See* 825.121 for rules governing leave for adoption or foster care. *See* 825.601 for special rules applicable to instructional employees of schools.

825.121 Leave for adoption or foster care.

(a) *General rules.* Eligible employees are entitled to FMLA leave for placement with the employee of a son or daughter for adoption or foster care as follows:

(1) Employees may take FMLA leave before the actual placement or adoption of a child if an absence from work is required for the placement for adoption or foster care to proceed. For example, the employee may be required to attend counseling sessions, appear in court, consult with his or her attorney or the doctor(s) representing the birth parent, submit to a physical examination, or travel to another country to complete an adoption. The source of an adopted child (*e.g.*, whether from a licensed placement agency or otherwise) is not a factor in determining eligibility for leave for this purpose.

(2) An employee's entitlement to leave for adoption or foster care expires at the end of the 12-month period beginning on the date of the placement. If the employing office permits leave for adoption or foster care to be taken beyond this period, such leave will not qualify as FMLA leave. Under this section, the employee is entitled to FMLA leave even if the adopted or foster child does not have a serious health condition.

(3) Spouses who are eligible for FMLA leave and are employed by the same covered employing office may be limited to a combined total of 12 weeks of leave during any 12-month period if the leave is taken for the placement of the employee's son or daughter or to care for the child after placement, for the birth of the employee's son or daughter or to care for the child after birth, or to care for the employee's parent with a serious health condition. This limitation on the total weeks of leave applies to leave taken for the reasons specified as long as the spouses are employed by the same employing office. It would apply, for example, even though the spouses are employed at two different worksites of an employing office. On the other hand, if one spouse is ineligible for FMLA leave, the other spouse would be entitled to a full 12 weeks of FMLA leave. Where spouses both use a portion of the total 12-week FMLA leave entitlement for either the birth of a child, for placement for adoption or foster care, or to care for a parent, the spouses would each be entitled to the difference between the amount he or she has taken individually and 12 weeks for FMLA leave for other purposes. For example, if each spouse took six weeks of leave to care for a healthy, newly placed child, each could use an additional six weeks due to his or her own serious health condition or to care for a child with a serious health condition.

(4) An eligible employee is entitled to FMLA leave in order to care for an adopted or foster child with a serious health condition if the requirements of 825.113 through 825.115 and 825.122(d) are met. Thus, spouses may each take 12 weeks of FMLA leave if needed to care for an adopted or foster child with a serious health condition, even if both are employed by the same employing office, provided they have not exhausted their entitlements during the applicable 12-month FMLA leave period.

(b) *Use of intermittent and reduced schedule leave*. An eligible employee may use intermittent or reduced schedule leave after the placement of a healthy child for adoption or foster care only if the employing office agrees. Thus, for example, the employing office and employee may agree to a part-time work schedule after the placement for bonding purposes. If the employing office agrees to permit intermittent or reduced schedule leave for the placement for adoption or foster care, the employing office may require the employee to transfer temporarily, during the period the intermittent or reduced leave schedule is required, to an available alternative position for which the employee is qualified and which better accommodates recurring periods of leave than does the employee's regular position. Transfer to an alternative position may require compliance with any applicable collective bargaining agreement and federal law (such as the Americans with Disabilities Act, as made applicable by the CAA). Transfer to an alternative position may include altering an existing job to better accommodate the employee's need for intermittent or reduced leave. The employing office's agreement is not required for intermittent leave required by the serious health condition of the adopted or foster child. *See* 825.202–825.205 for general rules governing the use of intermittent and reduced schedule leave. *See* 825.120 for general rules governing leave for pregnancy and birth of a child. *See* 825.601 for special rules applicable to instructional employees of schools.

825.122 Definitions of covered servicemember, spouse, parent, son or daughter, next of kin of a covered servicemember, adoption, foster care, son or daughter on covered active duty or call to covered active duty status, son or daughter of a covered servicemember, and parent of a covered servicemember.

(a) *Covered servicemember* means:

(1) A current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation or therapy, is otherwise in outpatient status, or is otherwise on the temporary disability retired list, for a serious injury or illness; or

(2) A covered veteran who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy for a serious injury or illness. *Covered veteran* means an individual who was a member of the Armed Forces (including a member of the National Guard or Reserves), and was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable at any time during the five-year period prior to the first date the eligible employee takes FMLA leave to care for the covered veteran. *See* 825.127(b)(2).

(b) *Spouse*, as defined in the FMLA and as made applicable by the CAA, means a husband or wife. For purposes of this definition, husband or wife refers to all individuals in lawfully recognized marriages. This definition includes an individual in a same-sex marriage. This definition also includes an individual in a common law marriage that either:

(1) was entered into in a State that recognizes such marriages or,

(2) if entered into outside of any State, is valid in the place where entered into and could have been entered into in at least one State.

(c) *Parent*. Parent means a biological, adoptive, step or foster father or mother, or any other individual who stood in loco parentis to the employee when the employee was a son or daughter as defined in paragraph (d) of this section. This term does not include parents ''in law.''

(d) *Son or daughter*. For purposes of FMLA leave taken for birth or adoption, or to care for a family member with a serious health condition, son or daughter means a biological, adopted, or foster child, a stepchild, a legal ward, or a child of a person standing in loco parentis, who is either under age 18, or age 18 or older and ''incapable of self-care because of a mental or physical disability'' at the time that FMLA leave is to commence.

(1) *Incapable of self-care* means that the individual requires active assistance or supervision to provide daily self-care in three or more of the activities of daily living (ADLs) or instrumental activities of daily living (IADLs). Activities of daily living include adaptive activities such as caring appropriately for one's grooming and hygiene, bathing, dressing and eating. Instrumental activities of daily living include cooking, cleaning, shopping, taking public transportation, paying bills, maintaining a residence, using telephones and directories, using a post office, *etc*.

(2) *Physical or mental disability* means a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of an individual. Regulations at 29 CFR 1630.2(h), (i), and (j), issued by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), 42 U.S.C. 12101 *et seq.*, define these terms.

(3) Persons who are ''in loco parentis'' include those with day-to-day responsibilities to care for and financially support a child, or, in the case of an employee, who had such responsibility for the employee when the employee was a child. A biological or legal relationship is not necessary.

(e) *Next of kin of a covered servicemember* means the nearest blood relative other than the covered servicemember's spouse, parent, son, or daughter, in the following order of priority: blood relatives who have been granted legal custody of the covered servicemember by court decree or statutory provisions, brothers and sisters, grandparents, aunts and uncles, and first cousins, unless the covered servicemember has specifically designated in writing another blood relative as his or her nearest blood relative for purposes of military caregiver leave under the FMLA. When no such designation is made, and there are multiple family members with the same level of relationship to the covered servicemember, all such family members shall be considered the covered servicemember's next of kin and may take FMLA leave to provide care to the covered servicemember, either consecutively or simultaneously. When such designation has been made, the designated individual shall be deemed to be the covered servicemember's only next of kin. *See* 825.127(d)(3).

(f) *Adoption* means legally and permanently assuming the responsibility of raising a child as one's own. The source of an adopted child (*e.g.*, whether from a licensed placement agency or otherwise) is not a factor in determining eligibility for FMLA leave. *See* 825.121 for rules governing leave for adoption.

(g) *Foster care* means 24-hour care for children in substitution for, and away from, their parents or guardian. Such placement is made by or with the agreement of the State as a result of a voluntary agreement between the parent or guardian that the child be removed from the home, or pursuant to a judicial determination of the necessity for foster care, and involves agreement between the State and foster family that the foster family will take care of the child. Although foster care may be with relatives of the child, State action is involved in the removal of the child from parental custody. *See* 825.121 for rules governing leave for foster care.

(h) *Son or daughter on covered active duty or call to covered active duty status* means the employee's biological, adopted, or foster child, stepchild, legal ward, or a child for whom the employee stood in loco parentis, who is on covered active duty or call to covered active duty status, and who is of any age. *See* 825.126(a)(5).

(i) *Son or daughter of a covered servicemember* means the covered servicemember's biological, adopted, or foster child, stepchild, legal ward, or a child for whom the covered servicemember stood in loco parentis, and who is of any age. *See* 825.127(d)(1).

(j) *Parent of a covered servicemember* means a covered servicemember's biological, adoptive, step or foster father or mother, or any other individual who stood in loco parentis to the covered servicemember. This term does not include parents ''in law.'' *See* 825.127(d)(2).

(k) *Documenting relationships*. For purposes of confirmation of family relationship, the employing office may require the employee giving notice of the need for leave to provide reasonable documentation or statement of family relationship. This documentation may take the form of a simple statement from the employee, or a child's birth certificate, a court document, *etc*. The employing office is entitled to examine documentation such as a birth certificate, *etc*., but the employee is entitled to the return of the official document submitted for this purpose.

825.123 Unable to perform the functions of the position.

(a) *Definition*. An employee is unable to perform the functions of the position where the health care provider finds that the employee is unable to work at all or is unable

to perform any one of the essential functions of the employee's position within the meaning of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), as amended and made applicable by Section 201(a) of the CAA (2 U.S.C. 1311(a)(3)). An employee who must be absent from work to receive medical treatment for a serious health condition is considered to be unable to perform the essential functions of the position during the absence for treatment.

(b) *Statement of functions*. An employing office has the option, in requiring certification from a health care provider, to provide a statement of the essential functions of the employee's position for the health care provider to review. A sufficient medical certification must specify what functions of the employee's position the employee is unable to perform so that the employing office can then determine whether the employee is unable to perform one or more essential functions of the employee's position. For purposes of FMLA, the essential functions of the employee's position are to be determined with reference to the position the employee held at the time notice is given or leave commenced, whichever is earlier. *See* 825.306.

825.124 Needed to care for a family member or covered servicemember.

(a) The medical certification provision that an employee is needed to care for a family member or covered servicemember encompasses both physical and psychological care. It includes situations where, for example, because of a serious health condition, the family member is unable to care for his or her own basic medical, hygienic, or nutritional needs or safety, or is unable to transport himself or herself to the doctor. The term also includes providing psychological comfort and reassurance which would be beneficial to a child, spouse or parent with a serious health condition who is receiving inpatient or home care.

(b) The term also includes situations where the employee may be needed to substitute for others who normally care for the family member or covered servicemember, or to make arrangements for changes in care, such as transfer to a nursing home. The employee need not be the only individual or family member available to care for the family member or covered servicemember.

(c) An employee's intermittent leave or a reduced leave schedule necessary to care for a family member or covered servicemember includes not only a situation where the condition of the family member or covered servicemember itself is intermittent, but also where the employee is only needed intermittently—such as where other care is normally available, or care responsibilities are shared with another member of the family or a third party. *See* 825.202–825.205 for rules governing the use of intermittent or reduced schedule leave.

825.125 Definition of health care provider.

(a) The FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA, defines *health care provider* as:

(1) A doctor of medicine or osteopathy who is authorized to practice medicine or surgery (as appropriate) by the State in which the doctor practices; or

(2) Any other person determined by the Office of Compliance to be capable of providing health care services.

(3) In making a determination referred to in subparagraph (a)(2), and absent good cause shown to do otherwise, the Office of Compliance will follow any determination made by the Department of Labor (under section 101(6)(B) of FMLA (29 U.S.C. 2611(6)(B))) that a person is capable of providing health care services, provided the determination by the Department of Labor was not made at the request of a person who was then a covered employee.

(b) Others capable of providing health care services include only:

(1) Podiatrists, dentists, clinical psychologists, optometrists, and chiropractors (limited to treatment consisting of manual manipulation of the spine to correct a subluxation as demonstrated by X-ray to exist) authorized to practice in the State and performing within the scope of their practice as defined under State law;

(2) Nurse practitioners, nurse-midwives, clinical social workers and physician assistants who are authorized to practice under State law and who are performing within the scope of their practice as defined under State law;

(3) Christian Science Practitioners listed with the First Church of Christ, Scientist in Boston, Massachusetts. Where an employee or family member is receiving treatment from a Christian Science practitioner, an employee may not object to any requirement from an employing office that the employee or family member submit to examination (though not treatment) to obtain a second or third certification from a health care provider other than a Christian Science practitioner except as otherwise provided under applicable State or local law or collective bargaining agreement;

(4) Any health care provider from whom an employing office or the employing office's group health plan's benefits manager will accept certification of the existence of a serious health condition to substantiate a claim for benefits; and

(5) A health care provider listed above who practices in a country other than the United States, who is authorized to practice in accordance with the law of that country, and who is performing within the scope of his or her practice as defined under such law.

(c) The phrase authorized to practice in the State as used in this section means that the provider must be authorized to diagnose and treat physical or mental health conditions.

825.126 Leave because of a qualifying exigency.

(a) Eligible employees may take FMLA leave for a qualifying exigency while the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent (the military member or member) is on covered active duty or call to covered active duty status (or has been notified of an impending call or order to covered active duty).

(1) *Covered active duty or call to covered active duty status* in the case of a member of the Regular Armed Forces means duty during the deployment of the member with the Armed Forces to a foreign country. The active duty orders of a member of the Regular components of the Armed Forces will generally specify if the member is deployed to a foreign country.

(2) *Covered active duty or call to covered active duty status* in the case of a member of the Reserve components of the Armed Forces means duty during the deployment of the member with the Armed Forces to a foreign country under a Federal call or order to active duty in support of a contingency operation pursuant to: Section 688 of Title 10 of the United States Code, which authorizes ordering to active duty retired members of the Regular Armed Forces and members of the retired Reserve who retired after completing at least 20 years of active service; Section 12301(a) of Title 10 of the United States Code, which authorizes ordering all reserve component members to active duty in the case of war or national emergency; Section 12302 of Title 10 of the United States Code, which authorizes ordering any unit or unassigned member of the Ready Reserve to active duty; Section 12304 of Title 10 of the United States Code, which authorizes ordering any unit or unassigned member of the Selected Reserve and certain members of the Individual Ready Reserve to active duty; Section 12305 of Title 10 of the United States Code, which authorizes the suspension of promotion, retirement or separation rules for certain Reserve components; Section 12406 of Title 10 of the United States Code, which authorizes calling the National Guard into Federal service in certain circumstances; chapter 15 of Title 10 of the United States Code, which authorizes calling the National Guard and state military into Federal service in the case of insurrections and national emergencies; or any other provision of law during a war or during a national emergency declared by the President or Congress so long as it is in support of a contingency operation. See 10 U.S.C. 101(a)(13)(B).

(i) For purposes of covered active duty or call to covered active duty status, the Reserve components of the Armed Forces include the Army National Guard of the United States, Army Reserve, Navy Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve, Air National Guard of the United States, Air Force Reserve and Coast Guard Reserve, and retired members of the Regular Armed Forces or Reserves who are called up in support of a contingency operation pursuant to one of the provisions of law identified in paragraph (a)(2).

(ii) The active duty orders of a member of the Reserve components will generally specify if the military member is serving in support of a contingency operation by citation to the relevant section of Title 10 of the United States Code and/or by reference to the specific name of the contingency operation and will specify that the deployment is to a foreign country.

(3) *Deployment of the member with the Armed Forces to a foreign country* means deployment to areas outside of the United States, the District of Columbia, or any Territory or possession of the United States, including international waters.

(4) A call to covered active duty for purposes of leave taken because of a qualifying exigency refers to a Federal call to active duty. State calls to active duty are not covered unless under order of the President of the United States pursuant to one of the provisions of law identified in paragraph (a)(2) of this section.

(5) *Son or daughter on covered active duty or call to covered active duty status* means the employee's biological, adopted, or foster child, stepchild, legal ward, or a child for whom the employee stood in loco parentis, who is on covered active duty or call to covered active duty status, and who is of any age.

(b) An eligible employee may take FMLA leave for one or more of the following qualifying exigencies:

(1) *Short-notice deployment*. (i) To address any issue that arises from the fact that the military member is notified of an impending call or order to covered active duty seven or less calendar days prior to the date of deployment;

(ii) Leave taken for this purpose can be used for a period of seven calendar days beginning on the date the military member is notified of an impending call or order to covered active duty;

(2) *Military events and related activities*. (i) To attend any official ceremony, program, or event sponsored by the military that is related to the covered active duty or call to covered active duty status of the military member; and

(ii) To attend family support or assistance programs and informational briefings sponsored or promoted by the military, military service organizations, or the American Red Cross that are related to the covered active duty or call to covered active duty status of the military member;

(3) *Childcare and school activities*. For the purposes of leave for childcare and school activities listed in (i) through (iv) of this paragraph, a child of the military member must be the military member's biological, adopted, or foster child, stepchild, legal ward, or child for whom the military member stands in loco parentis, who is either under 18 years of age or 18 years of age or older and incapable of self-care because of a mental or physical disability at the time that FMLA leave is to commence. As with all instances of qualifying exigency leave, the military member must be the spouse, son, daughter, or parent of the employee requesting qualifying exigency leave.

(i) To arrange for alternative childcare for a child of the military member when the covered active duty or call to covered active duty status of the military member necessitates a change in the existing childcare arrangement;

(ii) To provide childcare for a child of the military member on an urgent, immediate need basis (but not on a routine, regular, or everyday basis) when the need to provide such care arises from the covered active duty or call to covered active duty status of the military member;

(iii) To enroll in or transfer to a new school or day care facility a child of the military member when enrollment or transfer is necessitated by the covered active duty or call to covered active duty status of the military member; and

(iv) To attend meetings with staff at a school or a daycare facility, such as meetings with school officials regarding disciplinary measures, parent-teacher conferences, or meetings with school counselors, for a child of the military member, when such meetings are necessary due to circumstances arising from the covered active duty or call to covered active duty status of the military member;

(4) *Financial and legal arrangements*. (i) To make or update financial or legal arrangements to address the military member's absence while on covered active duty or call to covered active duty status, such as preparing and executing financial and healthcare powers of attorney, transferring bank account signature authority, enrolling in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS), obtaining military identification cards, or preparing or updating a will or living trust; and

(ii) To act as the military member's representative before a federal, state, or local agency for purposes of obtaining, arranging, or appealing military service benefits while the military member is on covered active duty or call to covered active duty status, and for a period of 90 days following the termination of the military member's covered active duty status;

(5) *Counseling*. To attend counseling provided by someone other than a health care provider, for oneself, for the military member, or for the biological, adopted, or foster child, a stepchild, or a legal ward of the military member, or a child for whom the military member stands in loco parentis, who is either under age 18, or age 18 or older and incapable of self-care because of a mental or physical disability at the time that FMLA leave is to commence, provided that the need for counseling arises from the covered active duty or call to covered active duty status of the military member;

(6) *Rest and Recuperation*. (i) To spend time with the military member who is on short-term, temporary, Rest and Recuperation leave during the period of deployment;

(ii) Leave taken for this purpose can be used for a period of 15 calendar days beginning on the date the military member commences each instance of Rest and Recuperation leave;

(7) *Post-deployment activities*. (i) To attend arrival ceremonies, reintegration briefings and events, and any other official ceremony or program sponsored by the military for a period of 90 days following the termination of the military member's covered active duty status; and

(ii) To address issues that arise from the death of the military member while on covered active duty status, such as meeting and recovering the body of the military member, making funeral arrangements, and attending funeral services;

(8) *Parental care*. For purposes of leave for parental care listed in (i) through (iv) of this paragraph, the parent of the military member must be incapable of self-care and must be the military member's biological, adoptive, step, or foster father or mother, or any other individual who stood in loco parentis to the military member when the member was under 18 years of age. A parent who is incapable of self-care means that the parent requires active assistance or supervision to provide daily self-care in three or more of the activities of daily living or instrumental activities of daily living. Activities of daily living include adaptive activities such as caring appropriately for one's grooming and hygiene, bathing, dressing, and eating. Instrumental activities of daily living include cooking, cleaning, shopping, taking public transportation, paying bills, maintaining a residence, using telephones and directories, using a post office, *etc*. As with all instances of qualifying exigency leave, the military member must be the spouse, son, daughter, or parent of the employee requesting qualifying exigency leave.

(i) To arrange for alternative care for a parent of the military member when the parent is incapable of self-care and the covered active duty or call to covered active duty status of the military member necessitates a change in the existing care arrangement for the parent;

(ii) To provide care for a parent of the military member on an urgent, immediate need basis (but not on a routine, regular, or everyday basis) when the parent is incapable of self-care and the need to provide such care arises from the covered active duty or call to covered active duty status of the military member;

(iii) To admit to or transfer to a care facility a parent of the military member when admittance or transfer is necessitated by the covered active duty or call to covered active duty status of the military member; and

(iv) To attend meetings with staff at a care facility, such as meetings with hospice or social service providers for a parent of the military member, when such meetings are necessary due to circumstances arising from the covered active duty or call to covered active duty status of the military member but not for routine or regular meetings;

(9) *Additional activities*. To address other events which arise out of the military member's covered active duty or call to covered active duty status provided that the employing office and employee agree that such leave shall qualify as an exigency, and agree to both the timing and duration of such leave.

825.127 Leave to care for a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness (military caregiver leave).

(a) Eligible employees are entitled to FMLA leave to care for a covered servicemember with a serious illness or injury.

(b) *Covered servicemember* means:

(1) A current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy, is otherwise in *outpatient status*; or is otherwise on the temporary disability retired list, for a serious injury or illness. Outpatient status means the status of a member of the Armed Forces assigned to either a military medical treatment facility as an outpatient or a unit established for the purpose of providing command and control of members of the Armed Forces receiving medical care as outpatients.

(2) A covered veteran who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation or therapy for a serious injury or illness. *Covered veteran* means an individual who was a member of the Armed Forces (including a member of the National Guard or Reserves), and was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable at any time during the five-year period prior to the first date the eligible employee takes FMLA leave to care for the covered veteran. An eligible employee must commence leave to care for a covered veteran within five years of the veteran's active duty service, but the single 12-month period described in paragraph (e)(1) of this section may extend beyond the five-year period.

(i) For an individual who was a member of the Armed Forces (including a member of the National Guard or Reserves) and who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable prior to the effective date of this Final Rule, the period between October 28, 2009 and the effective date of this Final Rule shall not count towards the determination of the five-year period for covered veteran status.

(c) A *serious injury or illness* means:

(1) In the case of a current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, means an injury or illness that was incurred by the covered servicemember in the line of duty on active duty in the Armed Forces or that existed before the beginning of the member's active duty and was aggravated by service in the line of duty on active duty in the Armed Forces, and that may render the member medically unfit to perform the duties of the member's office, grade, rank or rating; and,

(2) In the case of a covered veteran, means an injury or illness that was incurred by the member in the line of duty on active duty in the Armed Forces (or existed before the beginning of the member's active duty and was aggravated by service in the line of duty on active duty in the Armed Forces), and manifested itself before or after the member became a veteran, and is:

(i) A continuation of a serious injury or illness that was incurred or aggravated when the covered veteran was a member of the Armed Forces and rendered the servicemember unable to perform the duties of the servicemember's office, grade, rank, or rating; or

(ii) A physical or mental condition for which the covered veteran has received a U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Service-Related Disability Rating (VASRD) of 50 percent or greater, and such VASRD rating is based, in whole or in part, on the condition precipitating the need for military caregiver leave; or

(iii) A physical or mental condition that substantially impairs the covered veteran's ability to secure or follow a substantially gainful occupation by reason of a disability or disabilities related to military service, or would do so absent treatment; or

(iv) An injury, including a psychological injury, on the basis of which the covered veteran has been enrolled in the Department of Veterans Affairs Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers.

(d) In order to care for a covered servicemember, an eligible employee must be the spouse, son, daughter, or parent, or next of kin of a covered servicemember.

(1) *Son or daughter of a covered servicemember* means the covered servicemember's biological, adopted, or foster child, stepchild, legal ward, or a child for whom the covered servicemember stood in loco parentis, and who is of any age.

(2) *Parent of a covered servicemember* means a covered servicemember's biological, adoptive, step or foster father or mother, or any other individual who stood in loco parentis to the covered servicemember. This term does not include parents ''in law.''

(3) *Next of kin of a covered servicemember* means the nearest blood relative, other than the covered servicemember's spouse, parent, son, or daughter, in the following order of priority: blood relatives who have been granted legal custody of the servicemember by court decree or statutory provisions, brothers and sisters, grandparents, aunts and uncles, and first cousins, unless the covered servicemember has specifically designated in writing another blood relative as his or her nearest blood relative for purposes of military caregiver leave under the FMLA. When no such designation is made, and there are multiple family members with the same level of relationship to the covered servicemember, all such family members shall be considered the covered servicemember's next of kin and may take FMLA leave to provide care to the covered servicemember, either consecutively or simultaneously. When such designation has been made, the designated individual shall be deemed to be the covered servicemember's only next of kin. For example, if a covered servicemember has three siblings and has not designated a blood relative to provide care, all three siblings would be considered the covered servicemember's next of kin. Alternatively, where a covered servicemember has a sibling(s) and designates a cousin as his or her next of kin for FMLA purposes, then only the designated cousin is eligible as the covered servicemember's next of kin. An employing office is permitted to require an employee to provide confirmation of covered family relationship to the covered servicemember pursuant to 825.122(k).

(e) An eligible employee is entitled to 26 workweeks of leave to care for a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness during a single 12-month period.

(1) The single 12-month period described in paragraph (e) of this section begins on the first day the eligible employee takes FMLA leave to care for a covered servicemember and ends 12 months after that date, regardless of the method used by the employing office to determine the employee's 12 workweeks of leave entitlement for other FMLA-qualifying reasons. If an eligible employee does not take all of his or her 26 workweeks of leave entitlement to care for a covered servicemember during this single 12-month period, the remaining part of his or her 26 workweeks of leave entitlement to care for the covered servicemember is forfeited.

(2) The leave entitlement described in paragraph (e) of this section is to be applied on a per-covered-servicemember, per-injury basis such that an eligible employee may be entitled to take more than one period of 26 workweeks of leave if the leave is to care for different covered servicemembers or to care for the same servicemember with a subsequent serious injury or illness, except that no more than 26 workweeks of leave may be taken within any single 12-month period. An eligible employee may take more than one period of 26 workweeks of leave to care for a covered servicemember with more than one serious injury or illness only when the serious injury or illness is a subsequent serious injury or illness. When an eligible employee takes leave to care for more than one covered servicemember or for a subsequent serious injury or illness of the same covered servicemember, and the single 12-month periods corresponding to the different military caregiver leave entitlements overlap, the employee is limited to taking no more than 26 workweeks of leave in each single 12-month period.

(3) An eligible employee is entitled to a combined total of 26 workweeks of leave for any FMLA-qualifying reason during the single 12-month period described in paragraph (e) of this section, provided that the employee is entitled to no more than 12 workweeks of leave for one or more of the following: because of the birth of a son or daughter of the employee and in order to care for such son or daughter; because of the placement of a son or daughter with the employee for adoption or foster care; in order to care for the spouse, son, daughter, or parent with a serious health condition; because of the employee's own serious health condition; or because of a qualifying exigency. Thus, for example, an eligible employee may, during the single 12-month period, take 16 workweeks of FMLA leave to care for a covered servicemember and 10 workweeks of FMLA leave to care for a newborn child. However, the employee may not take more than 12 weeks of FMLA leave to care for the newborn child during the single 12-month period, even if the employee takes fewer than 14 workweeks of FMLA leave to care for a covered servicemember.

(4) In all circumstances, including for leave taken to care for a covered servicemember, the employing office is responsible for designating leave, paid or unpaid, as FMLA-qualifying, and for giving notice of the designation to the employee as provided in 825.300. In the case of leave that qualifies as both leave to care for a covered servicemember and leave to care for a family member with a serious health condition during the single 12-month period described in paragraph (e) of this section, the employing office must designate such leave as leave to care for a covered servicemember in the first instance. Leave that qualifies as both leave to care for a covered servicemember and leave taken to care for a family member with a serious health condition during the single 12-month period described in paragraph (e) of this section must not be designated and counted as both leave to care for a covered servicemember and leave to care for a family member with a serious health condition. As is the case with leave taken for other qualifying reasons, employing offices may retroactively designate leave as leave to care for a covered servicemember pursuant to 825.301(d).

(f) Spouses who are eligible for FMLA leave and are employed by the same covered employing office may be limited to a combined total of 26 workweeks of leave during the single 12-month period described in paragraph (e) of this section if the leave is taken for birth of the employee's son or daughter or to care for the child after birth, for placement of a son or daughter with the employee for adoption or foster care, or to care for the child after placement, to care for the employee's parent with a serious health condition, or to care for a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness. This limitation on the total weeks of leave applies to leave taken for the reasons specified as long as the spouses are employed by the same employing office. It would apply, for example, even though the spouses are employed at two different worksites. On the other hand, if one spouse is ineligible for FMLA leave, the other spouse would be entitled to a full 26 workweeks of FMLA leave.

Subpart B—EMPLOYEE LEAVE ENTITLEMENTS UNDER THE FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT, AS MADE APPLICABLE BY THE CONGRESSIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

825.200 Amount of Leave.

(a) Except in the case of leave to care for a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness, an eligible employee's FMLA leave entitlement is limited to a total of 12 workweeks of leave during any 12-month period for any one, or more, of the following reasons:

(1) The birth of the employee's son or daughter, and to care for the newborn child;

(2) The placement with the employee of a son or daughter for adoption or foster care, and to care for the newly placed child;

(3) To care for the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent with a serious health condition;

(4) Because of a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform one or more of the essential functions of his or her job; and

(5) Because of any qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent is a military member on covered active duty status (or has been notified of an impending call or order to active duty).

(b) An employing office is permitted to choose any one of the following methods for determining the 12-month period in which the 12 weeks of leave entitlement described in paragraph (a) of this section occurs:

(1) The calendar year;

(2) Any fixed 12-month leave year, such as a fiscal year or a year starting on an employee's anniversary date;

(3) The 12-month period measured forward from the date any employee's first FMLA leave under paragraph (a) begins; or

(4) A ''rolling'' 12-month period measured backward from the date an employee uses any FMLA leave as described in paragraph (a).

(c) Under methods in paragraphs (b)(1) and (b)(2) of this section an employee would be entitled to up to 12 weeks of FMLA leave at any time in the fixed 12-month period selected. An employee could, therefore, take 12 weeks of leave at the end of the year and 12 weeks at the beginning of the following year. Under the method in paragraph (b)(3) of this section, an employee would be entitled to 12 weeks of leave during the year beginning on the first date FMLA leave is taken; the next 12-month period would begin the first time FMLA leave is taken after completion of any previous 12-month period. Under the method in paragraph (b)(4) of this section, the ''rolling'' 12-month period, each time an employee takes FMLA leave the remaining leave entitlement would be any balance of the 12 weeks which has not been used during the immediately preceding 12 months. For example, if an employee has taken eight weeks of leave during the past 12 months, an additional four weeks of leave could be taken. If an employee used four weeks beginning February 1, 2008, four weeks beginning June 1, 2008, and four weeks beginning December 1, 2008, the employee would not be entitled to any additional leave until February 1, 2009. However, beginning on February 1, 2009, the employee would again be eligible to take FMLA leave, recouping the right to take the leave in the same manner and amounts in which it was used in the previous year. Thus, the employee would recoup (and be entitled to use) one additional day of FMLA leave each day for four weeks, commencing February 1, 2009. The employee would also begin to recoup additional days beginning on June 1, 2009, and additional days beginning on December 1, 2009. Accordingly, employing offices using the rolling 12-month period may

need to calculate whether the employee is entitled to take FMLA leave each time that leave is requested, and employees taking FMLA leave on such a basis may fall in and out of FMLA protection based on their FMLA usage in the prior 12 months. For example, in the example above, if the employee needs six weeks of leave for a serious health condition commencing February 1, 2009, only the first four weeks of the leave would be FMLA-protected.

(d)(1) Employing offices will be allowed to choose any one of the alternatives in paragraph (b) of this section for the leave entitlements described in paragraph (a) of this section provided the alternative chosen is applied consistently and uniformly to all employees. An employing office wishing to change to another alternative is required to give at least 60 days notice to all employees, and the transition must take place in such a way that the employees retain the full benefit of 12 weeks of leave under whichever method affords the greatest benefit to the employee. Under no circumstances may a new method be implemented in order to avoid the CAA's FMLA leave requirements.

(2) [Reserved]

(e) If an employing office fails to select one of the options in paragraph (b) of this section for measuring the 12-month period for the leave entitlements described in paragraph (a), the option that provides the most beneficial outcome for the employee will be used. The employing office may subsequently select an option only by providing the 60-day notice to all employees of the option the employing office intends to implement. During the running of the 60-day period any other employee who needs FMLA leave may use the option providing the most beneficial outcome to that employee. At the conclusion of the 60-day period the employing office may implement the selected option.

(f) An eligible employee's FMLA leave entitlement is limited to a total of 26 workweeks of leave during a single 12-month period to care for a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness. An employing office shall determine the single 12-month period in which the 26 weeks of leave entitlement described in this paragraph occurs using the 12-month period measured forward from the date an employee's first FMLA leave to care for the covered servicemember begins. *See* 825.127(e)(1).

(g) During the single 12-month period described in paragraph (f), an eligible employee's FMLA leave entitlement is limited to a combined total of 26 workweeks of FMLA leave for any qualifying reason. *See* 825.127(e)(3).

(h) For purposes of determining the amount of leave used by an employee, the fact that a holiday may occur within the week taken as FMLA leave has no effect; the week is counted as a week of FMLA leave. However, if an employee is using FMLA leave in increments of less than one week, the holiday will not count against the employee's FMLA entitlement unless the employee was otherwise scheduled and expected to work during the holiday. Similarly, if for some reason the employing office's business activity has temporarily ceased and employees generally are not expected to report for work for one or more weeks (e.g., a school closing two weeks for the Christmas/New Year holiday or the summer vacation or an employing office closing the office for repairs), the days the employing office's activities have ceased do not count against the employee's FMLA leave entitlement. Methods for determining an employee's 12-week leave entitlement are also described in 825.205.

(i)(1) If employing offices jointly employ an employee, and if they designate a primary employing office pursuant to 825.106(c), the primary employing office may choose any one of the alternatives in paragraph (b) of this section for measuring the 12-month period, provided that the alternative chosen is applied consistently and uniformly to all employees of the primary employing office including the jointly employed employee.

(2) If employing offices fail to designate a primary employing office pursuant to 825.106(c), an employee jointly employed by the employing offices may, by so notifying one of the employing offices, select that employing office to be the primary employing office of the employee for purposes of the application of paragraphs (d) and (e) of this section.

825.201 Leave to care for a parent.

(a) *General rule*. An eligible employee is entitled to FMLA leave if needed to care for the employee's parent with a serious health condition. Care for parents-in-law is not covered by the FMLA. *See* 825.122(c) for definition of parent.

(b) *Same employing office limitation*. Spouses who are eligible for FMLA leave and are employed by the same covered employing office may be limited to a combined total of 12 weeks of leave during any 12-month period if the leave is taken to care for the employee's parent with a serious health condition, for the birth of the employee's son or daughter or to care for the child after the birth, or for placement of a son or daughter with the employee for adoption or foster care or to care for the child after placement. This limitation on the total weeks of leave applies to leave taken for the reasons specified as long as the spouses are employed by the same employing office. It would apply, for example, even though the spouses are employed at two different worksites of an employing office. On the other hand, if one spouse is ineligible for FMLA leave, the other spouse would be entitled to a full 12 weeks of FMLA leave. Where the spouses both use a portion of the total 12-week FMLA leave entitlement for either the birth of a child, for placement for adoption or foster care, or to care for a parent, the spouses would each be entitled to the difference between the amount he or she has taken individually and 12 weeks for FMLA leave for other purposes. For example, if each spouse took six weeks of leave to care for a parent, each could use an additional six weeks due to his or her own serious health condition or to care for a child with a serious health condition. *See also* 825.127(d).

825.202 Intermittent leave or reduced leave schedule.

(a) *Definition*. FMLA leave may be taken intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule under certain circumstances. *Intermittent leave* is FMLA leave taken in separate blocks of time due to a single qualifying reason. A *reduced leave schedule* is a leave schedule that reduces an employee's usual number of working hours per workweek, or hours per workday. A reduced leave schedule is a change in the employee's schedule for a period of time, normally from full-time to part-time.

(b) *Medical necessity*. For intermittent leave or leave on a reduced leave schedule taken because of one's own serious health condition, to care for a spouse, parent, son, or daughter with a serious health condition, or to care for a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness, there must be a medical need for leave and it must be that such medical need can be best accommodated through an intermittent or reduced leave schedule. The treatment regimen and other information described in the certification of a serious health condition and in the certification of a serious injury or illness, if required by the employing office, addresses the medical necessity of intermittent leave or leave on a reduced leave schedule. *See* 825.306, 825.310. Leave may be taken intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule when medically necessary for planned and/or unanticipated medical treatment of a serious health condition or of a covered servicemember's serious injury or illness, or for recovery from treatment or recovery from a serious health condition or a covered servicemember's serious injury or illness. It may also be taken to provide care or psychological comfort to a covered family member with a serious health condition or a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness.

(1) Intermittent leave may be taken for a serious health condition of a spouse, parent, son, or daughter, for the employee's own serious health condition, or a serious injury or illness of a covered servicemember which requires treatment by a health care provider periodically, rather than for one continuous period of time, and may include leave of periods from an hour or more to several weeks. Examples of intermittent leave would include leave taken on an occasional basis for medical appointments, or leave taken several days at a time spread over a period of six months, such as for chemotherapy. A pregnant employee may take leave intermittently for prenatal examinations or for her own condition, such as for periods of severe morning sickness. An example of an employee taking leave on a reduced leave schedule is an employee who is recovering from a serious health condition and is not strong enough to work a full-time schedule.

(2) Intermittent or reduced schedule leave may be taken for absences where the employee or family member is incapacitated or unable to perform the essential functions of the position because of a chronic serious health condition or a serious injury or illness of a covered servicemember, even if he or she does not receive treatment by a health care provider. *See* 825.113 and 825.127.

(c) *Birth or placement*. When leave is taken after the birth of a healthy child or placement of a healthy child for adoption or foster care, an employee may take leave intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule only if the employing office agrees. Such a schedule reduction might occur, for example, where an employee, with the employing office's agreement, works part-time after the birth of a child, or takes leave in several segments. The employing office's agreement is not required, however, for leave during which the expectant mother has a serious health condition in connection with the birth of her child or if the newborn child has a serious health condition. *See* 825.204 for rules governing transfer to an alternative position that better accommodates intermittent leave. *See also* 825.120 (pregnancy) and 825.121 (adoption and foster care).

(d) *Qualifying exigency*. Leave due to a qualifying exigency may be taken on an intermittent or reduced leave schedule basis.

825.203 Scheduling of intermittent or reduced schedule leave.

Eligible employees may take FMLA leave on an intermittent or reduced schedule basis when medically necessary due to the serious health condition of a covered family member or the employee or the serious injury or illness of a covered servicemember. *See* 825.202. Eligible employees may also take FMLA leave on an intermittent or reduced schedule basis when necessary because of a qualifying exigency. If an employee needs leave intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule for planned medical treatment, then the employee must make a reasonable effort to schedule the treatment so as not to disrupt unduly the employing office's operations.

825.204 Transfer of an employee to an alternative position during intermittent leave or reduced schedule leave.

(a) *Transfer or reassignment*. If an employee needs intermittent leave or leave on a reduced leave schedule that is foreseeable based on planned medical treatment for the employee, a family member, or a covered servicemember, including during a period of recovery from one's own serious health condition, a serious health condition of a spouse, parent, son, or daughter, or a serious injury or illness of a covered servicemember, or if the employing office agrees to permit intermittent or reduced schedule leave for the birth of a child or for placement of a child for adoption or foster care, the employing office may require the employee to transfer temporarily, during the period the intermittent or reduced leave schedule is required, to an available alternative position for which the employee is qualified and which better accommodates recurring periods of leave than does the employee's regular position. *See* 825.601 for special rules applicable to instructional employees of schools.

(b) *Compliance*. Transfer to an alternative position may require compliance with any applicable collective bargaining agreement and Federal law (such as the Americans with Disabilities Act, as made applicable by the CAA). Transfer to an alternative position may include altering an existing job to better accommodate the employee's need for intermittent or reduced scheduled leave.

(c) *Equivalent pay and benefits*. The alternative position must have equivalent pay and benefits. An alternative position for these purposes does not have to have equivalent duties. The employing office may increase the pay and benefits of an existing alternative position, so as to make them equivalent to the pay and benefits of the employee's regular job. The employing office may also transfer the employee to a part-time job with the same hourly rate of pay and benefits, provided the employee is not required to take more leave than is medically necessary. For example, an employee desiring to take leave in increments of four hours per day could be transferred to a half-time job, or could remain in the employee's same job on a part-time schedule, paying the same hourly rate as the employee's previous job and enjoying the same benefits. The employing office may not eliminate benefits which otherwise would not be provided to part-time employees; however, an employing office may proportionately reduce benefits such as vacation leave where an employing office's normal practice is to base such benefits on the number of hours worked.

(d) *Employing office limitations*. An employing office may not transfer the employee to an alternative position in order to discourage the employee from taking leave or otherwise work a hardship on the employee. For example, a white collar employee may not be assigned to perform laborer's work; an employee working the day shift may not be reassigned to the graveyard shift; an employee working in the headquarters facility may not be reassigned to a branch a significant distance away from the employee's normal job location. Any such attempt on the part of the employing office to make such a transfer will be held to be contrary to the prohibited acts provisions of the FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA.

(e) *Reinstatement of employee*. When an employee who is taking leave intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule and has been transferred to an alternative position no longer needs to continue on leave and is able to return to full-time work, the employee must be placed in the same or equivalent job as the job he or she left when the leave commenced. An employee may not be required to take more leave than necessary to address the circumstance that precipitated the need for leave.

825.205 Increments of FMLA leave for intermittent or reduced schedule leave.

(a) *Minimum increment*. (1) When an employee takes FMLA leave on an intermittent or reduced leave schedule basis, the employing office must account for the leave using an increment no greater than the shortest period of time that the employing office uses to account for use of other forms of leave provided that it is not greater than one hour and provided further that an employee's FMLA leave entitlement may not be reduced by more than the amount of leave actually taken. An employing office may not require an employee to take more leave than is necessary to address the circumstances that precipitated the need for the leave, provided that the leave is counted using the shortest increment of leave used to account for any other type of leave. *See also* 825.205(a)(2) for the physical impossibility exception, and 825.600 and 825.601 for special rules applicable to employees of schools. If an employing office uses different increments to account for different types of leave, the employing office must account for FMLA leave in the smallest increment used to account for any other type of leave. For example, if an employing office accounts for the use of annual leave in increments of one hour and the use of sick leave in increments of one-half hour, then FMLA leave use must be accounted for using increments no larger than one-half hour. If an employing office accounts for use of leave in varying increments at different times of the day or shift, the employing office may also account for FMLA leave in varying increments, provided that the increment used for FMLA leave is no greater than the smallest increment used for any other type of leave during the period in which the FMLA leave is taken. If an employing office accounts for other forms of leave use in increments greater than one hour, the employing office must account for FMLA leave use in increments no greater than one hour. An employing office may account for FMLA leave in shorter increments than used for other forms of leave. For example, an employing office that accounts for other forms of leave in one hour increments may account for FMLA leave in a shorter increment when the employee arrives at work several minutes late, and the employing office wants the employee to begin work immediately. Such accounting for FMLA leave will not alter the increment considered to be the shortest period used to account for other forms of leave or the use of FMLA leave in other circumstances. In all cases, employees may not be charged FMLA leave for periods during which they are working.

(2) Where it is physically impossible for an employee using intermittent leave or working a reduced leave schedule to commence or end work mid-way through a shift, such as where a flight attendant or a railroad conductor is scheduled to work aboard an airplane or train, or a laboratory employee is unable to enter or leave a sealed ''clean room'' during a certain period of time and no equivalent position is available, the entire period that the employee is forced to be absent is designated as FMLA leave and counts against the employee's FMLA entitlement. The period of the physical impossibility is limited to the period during which the employing office is unable to permit the employee to work prior to a period of FMLA leave or return the employee to the same or equivalent position due to the physical impossibility after a period of FMLA leave. *See* 825.214.

(b) *Calculation of leave*. (1) When an employee takes leave on an intermittent or reduced leave schedule, only the amount of leave actually taken may be counted toward the employee's leave entitlement. The actual workweek is the basis of leave entitlement. Therefore, if an employee who would otherwise work 40 hours a week takes off eight hours, the employee would use one-fifth (⅕) of a week of FMLA leave. Similarly, if a full-time employee who would otherwise work eight hour days works four-hour days under a reduced leave schedule, the employee would use one half (½) week of FMLA leave each week. Where an employee works a part-time schedule or variable hours, the amount of FMLA leave that an employee uses is determined on a pro rata or proportional basis. If an employee who would otherwise work 30 hours per week, but works only 20 hours a week under a reduced leave schedule, the employee's 10 hours of leave would constitute one-third (1/3) of a week of FMLA leave for each week the employee works the reduced leave schedule. An employing office may convert these fractions to their hourly equivalent so long as the conversion equitably reflects the employee's total normally scheduled hours. An employee does not accrue FMLA-protected leave at any particular hourly rate. An eligible employee is entitled to up to a total of 12 workweeks of leave, or 26 workweeks in the case of military caregiver leave, and the total number of hours contained in those workweeks is necessarily dependent on the specific hours the employee would have worked but for the use of leave. *See also* 825.601 and 825.602 on special rules for schools.

(2) If an employing office has made a permanent or long-term change in the employee's schedule (for reasons other than FMLA, and prior to the notice of need for FMLA leave), the hours worked under the new schedule are to be used for making this calculation.

(3) If an employee's schedule varies from week to week to such an extent that an employing office is unable to determine with any certainty how many hours the employee would otherwise have worked (but for the taking of FMLA leave), a weekly average of the hours worked over the 12 months prior to the beginning of the leave period (including any hours for which the employee took leave of any type) would be used for calculating the employee's leave entitlement.

(c) *Overtime*. If an employee would normally be required to work overtime, but is unable to do so because of a FMLA-qualifying reason that limits the employee's ability to work overtime, the hours which the employee would have been required to work may be counted against the employee's FMLA entitlement. In such a case, the employee is using intermittent or reduced schedule leave. For example, if an employee would normally be required to work for 48 hours in a particular week, but due to a serious health condition the employee is unable to work more than 40 hours that week, the employee would utilize eight hours of FMLA-protected leave out of the 48–hour workweek, or one-sixth (⅙) of a week of FMLA leave. Voluntary overtime hours that an employee does not work due to an FMLA-qualifying reason may not be counted against the employee's FMLA leave entitlement.

825.206 Interaction with the FLSA.

(a) Leave taken under FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA, may be unpaid. If an employee is otherwise exempt from minimum wage and overtime requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), as made applicable by the CAA, as a salaried executive, administrative, or professional

employee (under regulations issued by the Board, at part 541), providing unpaid FMLA-qualifying leave to such an employee will not cause the employee to lose the FLSA exemption. This means that under regulations currently in effect, where an employee meets the specified duties test, is paid on a salary basis, and is paid a salary of at least the amount specified in the regulations, the employing office may make deductions from the employee's salary for any hours taken as intermittent or reduced FMLA leave within a workweek, without affecting the exempt status of the employee. The fact that an employing office provides FMLA leave, whether paid or unpaid, and maintains records regarding FMLA leave, will not be relevant to the determination whether an employee is exempt within the meaning of the Board's regulations at part 541.

(b) For an employee paid in accordance with a fluctuating workweek method of payment for overtime, where permitted by section 203 of the CAA (2 U.S.C. 1313), the employing office, during the period in which intermittent or reduced schedule FMLA leave is scheduled to be taken, may compensate an employee on an hourly basis and pay only for the hours the employee works, including time and one-half the employee's regular rate for overtime hours. The change to payment on an hourly basis would include the entire period during which the employee is taking intermittent leave, including weeks in which no leave is taken. The hourly rate shall be determined by dividing the employee's weekly salary by the employee's normal or average schedule of hours worked during weeks in which FMLA leave is not being taken. If an employing office chooses to follow this exception from the fluctuating workweek method of payment, the employing office must do so uniformly, with respect to all employees paid on a fluctuating workweek basis for whom FMLA leave is taken on an intermittent or reduced leave schedule basis. If an employing office does not elect to convert the employee's compensation to hourly pay, no deduction may be taken for FMLA leave absences. Once the need for intermittent or reduced scheduled leave is over, the employee may be restored to payment on a fluctuating workweek basis.

(c) This special exception to the salary basis requirements of the FLSA exemption or fluctuating workweek payment requirements applies only to employees of covered employing offices who are eligible for FMLA leave, and to leave which qualifies as FMLA leave. Hourly or other deductions which are not in accordance with the Board's FLSA regulations at part 541 or with a permissible fluctuating workweek method of payment for overtime may not be taken, for example, where the employee has not worked long enough to be eligible for FMLA leave without potentially affecting the employee's eligibility for exemption. Nor may deductions which are not permitted by the Board's FLSA regulations at part 541 or by a permissible fluctuating workweek method of payment for overtime be taken from such an employee's salary for any leave which does not qualify as FMLA leave, for example, deductions from an employee's pay for leave required under an employing office's policy or practice for a reason which does not qualify as FMLA leave, *e.g.*, leave to care for a grandparent or for a medical condition which does not qualify as a serious health condition; or for leave which is more generous than provided by the FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA, such as leave in excess of 12 weeks in a year. Employing offices may comply with the employing office's own policy/practice under these circumstances and maintain the employee's eligibility for exemption or for the fluctuating workweek method of pay by not taking hourly deductions from the employee's pay, in accordance with FLSA requirements, as made applicable by the CAA, or may take such deductions, treating the employee as an hourly employee and pay overtime premium pay for hours worked over 40 in a workweek.

825.207 Substitution of paid leave.

(a) Generally, FMLA leave is unpaid. However, under the circumstances described in this section, FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA, permits an eligible employee to choose to substitute accrued paid leave for FMLA leave. If an employee does not choose to substitute accrued paid leave, the employing office may require the employee to substitute accrued paid leave for unpaid FMLA leave. The term substitute means that the paid leave provided by the employing office, and accrued pursuant to established policies of the employing office, will run concurrently with the unpaid FMLA leave. Accordingly, the employee receives pay pursuant to the employing office's applicable paid leave policy during the period of otherwise unpaid FMLA leave. An employee's ability to substitute accrued paid leave is determined by the terms and conditions of the employing office's normal leave policy. When an employee chooses, or an employing office requires, substitution of accrued paid leave, the employing office must inform the employee that the employee must satisfy any procedural requirements of the paid leave policy only in connection with the receipt of such payment. See 825.300(c). If an employee does not comply with the additional requirements in an employing office's paid leave policy, the employee is not entitled to substitute accrued paid leave, but the employee remains entitled to take unpaid FMLA leave. Employing offices may not discriminate against employees on FMLA leave in the administration of their paid leave policies.

(b) If neither the employee nor the employing office elects to substitute paid leave for unpaid FMLA leave under the above conditions and circumstances, the employee will remain entitled to all the paid leave which is earned or accrued under the terms of the employing office's plan.

(c) If an employee uses paid leave under circumstances which do not qualify as FMLA leave, the leave will not count against the employee's FMLA leave entitlement. For example, paid sick leave used for a medical condition which is not a serious health condition or serious injury or illness does not count against the employee's FMLA leave entitlement.

(d) Leave taken pursuant to a disability leave plan would be considered FMLA leave for a serious health condition and counted in the leave entitlement permitted under FMLA if it meets the criteria set forth above in 825.112 through 825.115. In such cases, the employing office may designate the leave as FMLA leave and count the leave against the employee's FMLA leave entitlement. Because leave pursuant to a disability benefit plan is not unpaid, the provision for substitution of the employee's accrued paid leave is inapplicable, and neither the employee nor the employing office may require the substitution of paid leave. However, employing offices and employees may agree to have paid leave supplement the disability plan benefits, such as in the case where a plan only provides replacement income for two-thirds of an employee's salary.

(e) The FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA, provides that a serious health condition may result from injury to the employee on or off the job. If the employing office designates the leave as FMLA leave in accordance with 825.300(d), the leave counts against the employee's FMLA leave entitlement. Because the workers' compensation absence is not unpaid, the provision for substitution of the employee's accrued paid leave is not applicable, and neither the employee nor the employing office may require the substitution of paid leave. However, employing offices and employees may agree, to have paid leave supplement workers' compensation benefits, such as in the case where workers' compensation only provides replacement income for two-thirds of an employee's salary. If the health care provider treating the employee for the workers' compensation injury certifies the employee is able to return to a light duty job but is unable to return to the same or equivalent job, the employee may decline the employing office's offer of a light duty job. As a result, the employee may lose workers' compensation payments, but is entitled to remain on unpaid FMLA leave until the employee's FMLA leave entitlement is exhausted. As of the date workers' compensation benefits cease, the substitution provision becomes applicable and either the employee may elect or the employing office may require the use of accrued paid leave. *See also* 825.210(f), 825.216(d), 825.220(d), 825.307(a) and 825.702 (d)(1) and (2) regarding the relationship between workers' compensation absences and FMLA leave.

(f) Under the FLSA, as made applicable by the CAA, an employing office always has the right to cash out an employee's compensatory time or to require the employee to use the time. Therefore, if an employee requests and is permitted to use accrued compensatory time to receive pay for time taken off for an FMLA reason, or if the employing office requires such use pursuant to the FLSA, the time taken may be counted against the employee's FMLA leave entitlement.

825.208 [Removed and reserved]

825.209 Maintenance of employee benefits.

(a) During any FMLA leave, an employing office must maintain the employee's coverage under the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program or any group health plan (as defined in the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 at 26 U.S.C. 5000(b)(1)) on the same conditions as coverage would have been provided if the employee had been continuously employed during the entire leave period. All employing offices are subject to the requirements of the FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA, to maintain health coverage. The definition of group health plan is set forth in 825.102. For purposes of FMLA, the term group health plan shall not include an insurance program providing health coverage under which employees purchase individual policies from insurers provided that:

(1) No contributions are made by the employing office;

(2) Participation in the program is completely voluntary for employees;

(3) The sole functions of the employing office with respect to the program are, without endorsing the program, to permit the insurer to publicize the program to employees, to collect premiums through payroll deductions and to remit them to the insurer;

(4) The employing office receives no consideration in the form of cash or otherwise in connection with the program, other than reasonable compensation, excluding any profit, for administrative services actually rendered in connection with payroll deduction; and

(5) The premium charged with respect to such coverage does not increase in the event the employment relationship terminates.

(b) The same group health plan benefits provided to an employee prior to taking FMLA leave must be maintained during the FMLA leave. For example, if family member coverage is provided to an employee, family

member coverage must be maintained during the FMLA leave. Similarly, benefit coverage during FMLA leave for medical care, surgical care, hospital care, dental care, eye care, mental health counseling, substance abuse treatment, *etc.*, must be maintained during leave if provided in an employing office's group health plan, including a supplement to a group health plan, whether or not provided through a flexible spending account or other component of a cafeteria plan.

(c) If an employing office provides a new health plan or benefits or changes health benefits or plans while an employee is on FMLA leave, the employee is entitled to the new or changed plan/benefits to the same extent as if the employee were not on leave. For example, if an employing office changes a group health plan so that dental care becomes covered under the plan, an employee on FMLA leave must be given the same opportunity as other employees to receive (or obtain) the dental care coverage. Any other plan changes (e.g., in coverage, premiums, deductibles, etc.) which apply to all employees of the workforce would also apply to an employee on FMLA leave.

(d) Notice of any opportunity to change plans or benefits must also be given to an employee on FMLA leave. If the group health plan permits an employee to change from single to family coverage upon the birth of a child or otherwise add new family members, such a change in benefits must be made available while an employee is on FMLA leave. If the employee requests the changed coverage it must be provided by the employing office.

(e) An employee may choose not to retain group health plan coverage during FMLA leave. However, when an employee returns from leave, the employee is entitled to be reinstated on the same terms as prior to taking the leave, including family or dependent coverages, without any qualifying period, physical examination, exclusion of pre-existing conditions, *etc. See* 825.212(c).

(f) Except as required by the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1986 (COBRA) or 5 U.S.C. 8905a, whichever is applicable, and for key employees (as discussed below), an employing office's obligation to maintain health benefits during leave (and to restore the employee to the same or equivalent employment) under FMLA ceases if and when the employment relationship would have terminated if the employee had not taken FMLA leave (e.g., if the employee's position is eliminated as part of a nondiscriminatory reduction in force and the employee would not have been transferred to another position); an employee informs the employing office of his or her intent not to return from leave (including before starting the leave if the employing office is so informed before the leave starts); or the employee fails to return from leave or continues on leave after exhausting his or her FMLA leave entitlement in the 12-month period.

(g) If a key employee (*see* 825.218) does not return from leave when notified by the employing office that substantial or grievous economic injury will result from his or her reinstatement, the employee's entitlement to group health plan benefits continues unless and until the employee advises the employing office that the employee does not desire restoration to employment at the end of the leave period, or the FMLA leave entitlement is exhausted, or reinstatement is actually denied.

(h) An employee's entitlement to benefits other than group health benefits during a period of FMLA leave (*e.g.*, holiday pay) is to be determined by the employing office's established policy for providing such benefits when the employee is on other forms of leave (paid or unpaid, as appropriate).

825.210 Employee payment of group health benefit premiums.

(a) Group health plan benefits must be maintained on the same basis as coverage would have been provided if the employee had been continuously employed during the FMLA leave period. Therefore, any share of group health plan premiums which had been paid by the employee prior to FMLA leave must continue to be paid by the employee during the FMLA leave period. If premiums are raised or lowered, the employee would be required to pay the new premium rates. Maintenance of health insurance policies which are not a part of the employing office's group health plan, as described in 825.209(a), are the sole responsibility of the employee. The employee and the insurer should make necessary arrangements for payment of premiums during periods of unpaid FMLA leave.

(b) If the FMLA leave is substituted paid leave, the employee's share of premiums must be paid by the method normally used during any paid leave, presumably as a payroll deduction.

(c) If FMLA leave is unpaid, the employing office has a number of options for obtaining payment from the employee. The employing office may require that payment be made to the employing office or to the insurance carrier, but no additional charge may be added to the employee's premium payment for administrative expenses. The employing office may require employees to pay their share of premium payments in any of the following ways:

(1) Payment would be due at the same time as it would be made if by payroll deduction;

(2) Payment would be due on the same schedule as payments are made under COBRA or 5 U.S.C. 8905a, whichever is applicable;

(3) Payment would be prepaid pursuant to a cafeteria plan at the employee's option;

(4) The employing office's existing rules for payment by employees on leave without pay would be followed, provided that such rules do not require prepayment (*i.e.*, prior to the commencement of the leave) of the premiums that will become due during a period of unpaid FMLA leave or payment of higher premiums than if the employee had continued to work instead of taking leave; or

(5) Another system voluntarily agreed to between the employing office and the employee, which may include prepayment of premiums (*e.g.*, through increased payroll deductions when the need for the FMLA leave is foreseeable).

(d) The employing office must provide the employee with advance written notice of the terms and conditions under which these payments must be made. *See* 825. 300(c).

(e) An employing office may not require more of an employee using unpaid FMLA leave than the employing office requires of other employees on leave without pay.

(f) An employee who is receiving payments as a result of a workers' compensation injury must make arrangements with the employing office for payment of group health plan benefits when simultaneously taking FMLA leave. *See* 825.207(e).

825.211 Maintenance of benefits under multi-employer health plans.

(a) A multi-employer health plan is a plan to which more than one employing office is required to contribute, and which is maintained pursuant to one or more collective bargaining agreements between employee organization(s) and the employing offices.

(b) An employing office under a multi-employer plan must continue to make contributions on behalf of an employee using FMLA leave as though the employee had been continuously employed, unless the plan contains an explicit FMLA provision for maintaining coverage such as through pooled contributions by all employing offices party to the plan.

(c) During the duration of an employee's FMLA leave, coverage by the group health plan, and benefits provided pursuant to the plan, must be maintained at the level of coverage and benefits which were applicable to the employee at the time FMLA leave commenced.

(d) An employee using FMLA leave cannot be required to use banked hours or pay a greater premium than the employee would have been required to pay if the employee had been continuously employed.

(e) As provided in 825.209(f) of this part, group health plan coverage must be maintained for an employee on FMLA leave until:

(1) The employee's FMLA leave entitlement is exhausted;

(2) The employing office can show that the employee would have been laid off and the employment relationship terminated; or

(3) The employee provides unequivocal notice of intent not to return to work.

825.212 Employee failure to pay health plan premium payments.

(a)(1) In the absence of an established employing office policy providing a longer grace period, an employing office's obligations to maintain health insurance coverage cease under FMLA if an employee's premium payment is more than 30 days late. In order to drop the coverage for an employee whose premium payment is late, the employing office must provide written notice to the employee that the payment has not been received. Such notice must be mailed to the employee at least 15 days before coverage is to cease, advising that coverage will be dropped on a specified date at least 15 days after the date of the letter unless the payment has been received by that date. If the employing office has established policies regarding other forms of unpaid leave that provide for the employing office to cease coverage retroactively to the date the unpaid premium payment was due, the employing office may drop the employee from coverage retroactively in accordance with that policy, provided the 15-day notice was given. In the absence of such a policy, coverage for the employee may be terminated at the end of the 30-day grace period, where the required 15-day notice has been provided.

(2) An employing office has no obligation regarding the maintenance of a health insurance policy which is not a group health plan. *See* 825.209(a).

(3) All other obligations of an employing office under FMLA would continue; for example, the employing office continues to have an obligation to reinstate an employee upon return from leave.

(b) The employing office may recover the employee's share of any premium payments missed by the employee for any FMLA leave period during which the employing office maintains health coverage by paying the employee's share after the premium payment is missed.

(c) If coverage lapses because an employee has not made required premium payments, upon the employee's return from FMLA leave the employing office must still restore the employee to coverage/benefits equivalent to those the employee would have had if leave had not been taken and the premium payment(s) had not been missed, including family or dependent coverage. *See* 825.215(d)(1)-(5). In such case, an employee may not be required to meet any qualification requirements imposed by the plan, including any new preexisting condition waiting period, to wait for an open season, or to pass a medical examination to obtain reinstatement of coverage. If an employing office

terminates an employee's insurance in accordance with this section and fails to restore the employee's health insurance as required by this section upon the employee's return, the employing office may be liable for benefits lost by reason of the violation, for other actual monetary losses sustained as a direct result of the violation, and for appropriate equitable relief tailored to the harm suffered.

825.213 Employing office recovery of benefit costs.

(a) In addition to the circumstances discussed in 825.212(b), an employing office may recover its share of health plan premiums during a period of unpaid FMLA leave from an employee if the employee fails to return to work after the employee's FMLA leave entitlement has been exhausted or expires, unless the reason the employee does not return is due to:

(1) The continuation, recurrence, or onset of either a serious health condition of the employee or the employee's family member, or a serious injury or illness of a covered servicemember, which would otherwise entitle the employee to leave under FMLA; or

(2) Other circumstances beyond the employee's control. Examples of other circumstances beyond the employee's control are necessarily broad. They include such situations as where a parent chooses to stay home with a newborn child who has a serious health condition; an employee's spouse is unexpectedly transferred to a job location more than 75 miles from the employee's worksite; a relative or individual other than a covered family member has a serious health condition and the employee is needed to provide care; the employee is laid off while on leave; or, the employee is a key employee who decides not to return to work upon being notified of the employing office's intention to deny restoration because of substantial and grievous economic injury to the employing office's operations and is not reinstated by the employing office. Other circumstances beyond the employee's control would not include a situation where an employee desires to remain with a parent in a distant city even though the parent no longer requires the employee's care, or a parent chooses not to return to work to stay home with a well, newborn child.

(3) When an employee fails to return to work because of the continuation, recurrence, or onset of either a serious health condition of the employee or employee's family member, or a serious injury or illness of a covered servicemember, thereby precluding the employing office from recovering its (share of) health benefit premium payments made on the employee's behalf during a period of unpaid FMLA leave, the employing office may require medical certification of the employee's or the family member's serious health condition or the covered servicemember's serious injury or illness. Such certification is not required unless requested by the employing office. The cost of the certification shall be borne by the employee, and the employee is not entitled to be paid for the time or travel costs spent in acquiring the certification. The employee is required to provide medical certification in a timely manner which, for purposes of this section, is within 30 days from the date of the employing office's request. For purposes of medical certification, the employee may use the optional forms developed for this purpose. *See* 825.306(b), 825.310(c)-(d) and Forms A, B, and F. If the employing office requests medical certification and the employee does not provide such certification in a timely manner (within 30 days), or the reason for not returning to work does not meet the test of other circumstances beyond the employee's control, the employing office may recover 100 percent of the health benefit premiums it paid during the period of unpaid FMLA leave.

(b) Under some circumstances an employing office may elect to maintain other benefits, *e.g.*, life insurance, disability insurance, *etc.*, by paying the employee's (share of) premiums during periods of unpaid FMLA leave. For example, to ensure the employing office can meet its responsibilities to provide equivalent benefits to the employee upon return from unpaid FMLA leave, it may be necessary that premiums be paid continuously to avoid a lapse of coverage. If the employing office elects to maintain such benefits during the leave, at the conclusion of leave, the employing office is entitled to recover only the costs incurred for paying the employee's share of any premiums whether or not the employee returns to work.

(c) An employee who returns to work for at least 30 calendar days is considered to have returned to work. An employee who transfers directly from taking FMLA leave to retirement, or who retires during the first 30 days after the employee returns to work, is deemed to have returned to work.

(d) When an employee elects or an employing office requires paid leave to be substituted for FMLA leave, the employing office may not recover its (share of) health insurance or other non-health benefit premiums for any period of FMLA leave covered by paid leave. Because paid leave provided under a plan covering temporary disabilities (including workers' compensation) is not unpaid, recovery of health insurance premiums does not apply to such paid leave.

(e) The amount that self-insured employing offices may recover is limited to only the employing office's share of allowable premiums as would be calculated under COBRA, excluding the two percent fee for administrative costs.

(f) When an employee fails to return to work, any health and non-health benefit premiums which this section of the regulations permits an employing office to recover are a debt owed by the non-returning employee to the employing office. The existence of this debt caused by the employee's failure to return to work does not alter the employing office's responsibilities for health benefit coverage and, under a self-insurance plan, payment of claims incurred during the period of FMLA leave. To the extent recovery is allowed, the employing office may recover the costs through deduction from any sums due to the employee (*e.g.*, unpaid wages, vacation pay, *etc.*), provided such deductions do not otherwise violate applicable wage payment or other laws. Alternatively, the employing office may initiate legal action against the employee to recover such costs.

825.214 Employee right to reinstatement.

General Rule. On return from FMLA leave, an employee is entitled to be returned to the same position the employee held when leave commenced, or to an equivalent position with equivalent benefits, pay, and other terms and conditions of employment. An employee is entitled to such reinstatement even if the employee has been replaced or his or her position has been restructured to accommodate the employee's absence. *See also* 825.106(e) for the obligations of employing offices that are joint employers.

825.215 Equivalent position.

(a) *Equivalent position.* An equivalent position is one that is virtually identical to the employee's former position in terms of pay, benefits and working conditions, including privileges, prerequisites and status. It must involve the same or substantially similar duties and responsibilities, which must entail substantially equivalent skill, effort, responsibility, and authority.

(b) *Conditions to qualify.* If an employee is no longer qualified for the position because of the employee's inability to attend a necessary course, renew a license, *etc.*, as a result of the leave, the employee shall be given a reasonable opportunity to fulfill those conditions upon return to work.

(c) *Equivalent Pay.* (1) An employee is entitled to any unconditional pay increases which may have occurred during the FMLA leave period, such as cost of living increases. Pay increases conditioned upon seniority, length of service, or work performed must be granted in accordance with the employing office's policy or practice with respect to other employees on an equivalent leave status for a reason that does not qualify as FMLA leave. An employee is entitled to be restored to a position with the same or equivalent pay premiums, such as a shift differential. If an employee departed from a position averaging ten hours of overtime (and corresponding overtime pay) each week, an employee is ordinarily entitled to such a position on return from FMLA leave.

(2) Equivalent pay includes any bonus or payment, whether it is discretionary or nondiscretionary, made to employees consistent with the provisions of paragraph (c)(1) of this section. However, if a bonus or other payment is based on the achievement of a specified goal such as hours worked, products sold or perfect attendance, and the employee has not met the goal due to FMLA leave, then the payment may be denied, unless otherwise paid to employees on an equivalent leave status for a reason that does not qualify as FMLA leave. For example, if an employee who used paid vacation leave for a non-FMLA purpose would receive the payment, then the employee who used paid vacation leave for an FMLA-protected purpose also must receive the payment.

(d) *Equivalent benefits.* Benefits include all benefits provided or made available to employees by an employing office, including group life insurance, health insurance, disability insurance, sick leave, annual leave, educational benefits, and pensions, regardless of whether such benefits are provided by a practice or written policy of an employing office through an employee benefit plan.

(1) At the end of an employee's FMLA leave, benefits must be resumed in the same manner and at the same levels as provided when the leave began, and subject to any changes in benefit levels that may have taken place during the period of FMLA leave affecting the entire work force, unless otherwise elected by the employee. Upon return from FMLA leave, an employee cannot be required to requalify for any benefits the employee enjoyed before FMLA leave began (including family or dependent coverages). For example, if an employee was covered by a life insurance policy before taking leave but is not covered or coverage lapses during the period of unpaid FMLA leave, the employee cannot be required to meet any qualifications, such as taking a physical examination, in order to requalify for life insurance upon return from leave. Accordingly, some employing offices may find it necessary to modify life insurance and other benefits programs in order to restore employees to equivalent benefits upon return from FMLA leave, make arrangements for continued payment of costs to maintain such benefits during unpaid FMLA leave, or pay these costs subject to recovery from the employee on return from leave. See 825.213(b).

(2) An employee may, but is not entitled to, accrue any additional benefits or seniority during unpaid FMLA leave. Benefits accrued at the time leave began, however, (*e.g.*, paid vacation, sick or personal leave to the extent not substituted for FMLA leave) must be available to an employee upon return from leave.

(3) If, while on unpaid FMLA leave, an employee desires to continue life insurance, disability insurance, or other types of benefits for which he or she typically pays, the employing office is required to follow established policies or practices for continuing such benefits for other instances of leave without pay. If the employing office has no established policy, the employee and the employing office are encouraged to agree upon arrangements before FMLA leave begins.

(4) With respect to pension and other retirement plans, any period of unpaid FMLA leave shall not be treated as or counted toward a break in service for purposes of vesting and eligibility to participate. Also, if the plan requires an employee to be employed on a specific date in order to be credited with a year of service for vesting, contributions or participation purposes, an employee on unpaid FMLA leave on that date shall be deemed to have been employed on that date. However, unpaid FMLA leave periods need not be treated as credited service for purposes of benefit accrual, vesting and eligibility to participate.

(5) Employees on unpaid FMLA leave are to be treated as if they continued to work for purposes of changes to benefit plans. They are entitled to changes in benefits plans, except those which may be dependent upon seniority or accrual during the leave period, immediately upon return from leave or to the same extent they would have qualified if no leave had been taken. For example if the benefit plan is predicated on a pre-established number of hours worked each year and the employee does not have sufficient hours as a result of taking unpaid FMLA leave, the benefit is lost. (In this regard, 825.209 addresses health benefits.)

(e) *Equivalent terms and conditions of employment.* An equivalent position must have substantially similar duties, conditions, responsibilities, privileges and status as the employee's original position.

(1) The employee must be reinstated to the same or a geographically proximate worksite (*i.e.*, one that does not involve a significant increase in commuting time or distance) from where the employee had previously been employed. If the employee's original worksite has been closed, the employee is entitled to the same rights as if the employee had not been on leave when the worksite closed. For example, if an employing office transfers all employees from a closed worksite to a new worksite in a different city, the employee on leave is also entitled to transfer under the same conditions as if he or she had continued to be employed.

(2) The employee is ordinarily entitled to return to the same shift or the same or an equivalent work schedule.

(3) The employee must have the same or an equivalent opportunity for bonuses, and other similar discretionary and non-discretionary payments.

(4) FMLA does not prohibit an employing office from accommodating an employee's request to be restored to a different shift, schedule, or position which better suits the employee's personal needs on return from leave, or to offer a promotion to a better position. However, an employee cannot be induced by the employing office to accept a different position against the employee's wishes.

(f) *De minimis exception.* The requirement that an employee be restored to the same or equivalent job with the same or equivalent pay, benefits, and terms and conditions of employment does not extend to de minimis, intangible, or unmeasurable aspects of the job.

825.216 Limitations on an employee's right to reinstatement.

(a) An employee has no greater right to reinstatement or to other benefits and conditions of employment than if the employee had been continuously employed during the FMLA leave period. An employing office must be able to show that an employee would not otherwise have been employed at the time reinstatement is requested in order to deny restoration to employment. For example:

(1) If an employee is laid off during the course of taking FMLA leave and employment is terminated, the employing office's responsibility to continue FMLA leave, maintain group health plan benefits and restore the employee ceases at the time the employee is laid off, provided the employing office has no continuing obligations under a collective bargaining agreement or otherwise. An employing office would have the burden of proving that an employee would have been laid off during the FMLA leave period and, therefore, would not be entitled to restoration. Restoration to a job slated for lay-off when the employee's original position is not would not meet the requirements of an equivalent position.

(2) If a shift has been eliminated, or overtime has been decreased, an employee would not be entitled to return to work that shift or the original overtime hours upon restoration. However, if a position on, for example, a night shift has been filled by another employee, the employee is entitled to return to the same shift on which employed before taking FMLA leave.

(3) If an employee was hired for a specific term or only to perform work on a discrete project, the employing office has no obligation to restore the employee if the employment term or project is over and the employing office would not otherwise have continued to employ the employee. On the other hand, if an employee was hired to perform work for one employing office for a specific time period, and after that time period has ended, the work was assigned to another employing office, the successor employing office may be required to restore the employee if it is a successor employing office. *See* 825.107.

(b) In addition to the circumstances explained above, an employing office may deny job restoration to salaried eligible employees (key employees, as defined in 825.217(c)), if such denial is necessary to prevent substantial and grievous economic injury to the operations of the employing office; or may delay restoration to an employee who fails to provide a fitness-for-duty certificate to return to work under the conditions described in 825.312.

(c) If the employee is unable to perform an essential function of the position because of a physical or mental condition, including the continuation of a serious health condition or an injury or illness also covered by workers' compensation, the employee has no right to restoration to another position under the FMLA. The employing office's obligations may, however, be governed by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), as amended and as made applicable by the CAA. *See* 825.702.

(d) An employee who fraudulently obtains FMLA leave from an employing office is not protected by the job restoration or maintenance of health benefits provisions of the FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA.

(e) If the employing office has a uniformly-applied policy governing outside or supplemental employment, such a policy may continue to apply to an employee while on FMLA leave. An employing office which does not have such a policy may not deny benefits to which an employee is entitled under FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA, on this basis unless the FMLA leave was fraudulently obtained as in paragraph (d) of this section.

825.217 Key employee, general rule.

(a) A *key employee* is a salaried FMLA-eligible employee who is among the highest paid 10 percent of all the employees employed by the employing office within 75 miles of the employee's worksite.

(b) The term *salaried* means paid on a salary basis, within the meaning of the Board's regulations at part 541, implementing section 203 of the CAA (2 U.S.C. 1313), regarding employees who may qualify as exempt from the minimum wage and overtime requirements of the FLSA, as made applicable by the CAA, as executive, administrative, and professional employees).

(c) A key employee must be among the highest paid 10 percent of all the employees—both salaried and non-salaried, eligible and ineligible—who are employed by the employing office within 75 miles of the worksite.

(1) In determining which employees are among the highest paid 10 percent, year- to-date earnings are divided by weeks worked by the employee (including weeks in which paid leave was taken). Earnings include wages, premium pay, incentive pay, and non-discretionary and discretionary bonuses. Earnings do not include incentives whose value is determined at some future date, *e.g.*, benefits or prerequisites.

(2) The determination of whether a salaried employee is among the highest paid 10 percent shall be made at the time the employee gives notice of the need for leave. No more than 10 percent of the employing office's employees within 75 miles of the worksite may be key employees.

825.218 Substantial and grievous economic injury.

(a) In order to deny restoration to a key employee, an employing office must determine that the restoration of the employee to employment will cause substantial and grievous economic injury to the operations of the employing office, not whether the absence of the employee will cause such substantial and grievous injury.

(b) An employing office may take into account its ability to replace on a temporary basis (or temporarily do without) the employee on FMLA leave. If permanent replacement is unavoidable, the cost of then reinstating the employee can be considered in evaluating whether substantial and grievous economic injury will occur from restoration; in other words, the effect on the operations of the employing office of reinstating the employee in an equivalent position.

(c) A precise test cannot be set for the level of hardship or injury to the employing office which must be sustained. If the reinstatement of a key employee threatens the economic viability of the employing office, that would constitute substantial and grievous economic injury. A lesser injury which causes substantial, long-term economic injury would also be sufficient. Minor inconveniences and costs that the employing office would experience in the normal course would certainly not constitute substantial and grievous economic injury.

(d) FMLA's substantial and grievous economic injury standard is different from and more stringent than the undue hardship test under the ADA. *See also* 825.702.

825.219 Rights of a key employee

(a) An employing office that believes that reinstatement may be denied to a key employee, must give written notice to the employee at the time the employee gives notice of the need for FMLA leave (or when FMLA leave commences, if earlier) that he or she qualifies as a key employee. At the same time, the employing office must also fully inform the employee of the potential consequences with respect to reinstatement and

maintenance of health benefits if the employing office should determine that substantial and grievous economic injury to the employing office's operations will result if the employee is reinstated from FMLA leave. If such notice cannot be given immediately because of the need to determine whether the employee is a key employee, it shall be given as soon as practicable after being notified of a need for leave (or the commencement of leave, if earlier). It is expected that in most circumstances there will be no desire that an employee be denied restoration after FMLA leave and, therefore, there would be no need to provide such notice. However, an employing office who fails to provide such timely notice will lose its right to deny restoration even if substantial and grievous economic injury will result from reinstatement.

(b) As soon as an employing office makes a good faith determination, based on the facts available, that substantial and grievous economic injury to its operations will result if a key employee who has given notice of the need for FMLA leave or is using FMLA leave is reinstated, the employing office shall notify the employee in writing of its determination, that it cannot deny FMLA leave, and that it intends to deny restoration to employment on completion of the FMLA leave. It is anticipated that an employing office will ordinarily be able to give such notice prior to the employee starting leave. The employing office must serve this notice either in person or by certified mail. This notice must explain the basis for the employing office's finding that substantial and grievous economic injury will result, and, if leave has commenced, must provide the employee a reasonable time in which to return to work, taking into account the circumstances, such as the length of the leave and the urgency of the need for the employee to return.

(c) If an employee on leave does not return to work in response to the employing office's notification of intent to deny restoration, the employee continues to be entitled to maintenance of health benefits and the employing office may not recover its cost of health benefit premiums. A key employee's rights under FMLA continue unless and until the employee either gives notice that he or she no longer wishes to return to work, or the employing office actually denies reinstatement at the conclusion of the leave period.

(d) After notice to an employee has been given that substantial and grievous economic injury will result if the employee is reinstated to employment, an employee is still entitled to request reinstatement at the end of the leave period even if the employee did not return to work in response to the employing office's notice. The employing office must then again determine whether there will be substantial and grievous economic injury from reinstatement, based on the facts at that time. If it is determined that substantial and grievous economic injury will result, the employing office shall notify the employee in writing (in person or by certified mail) of the denial of restoration.

825.220 Protection for employees who request leave or otherwise assert FMLA rights.

(a) The FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA, prohibits interference with an employee's rights under the law, and with legal proceedings or inquiries relating to an employee's rights. More specifically, the law contains the following employee protections:

(1) An employing office is prohibited from interfering with, restraining, or denying the exercise of (or attempts to exercise) any rights provided by the FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA.

(2) An employing office is prohibited from discharging or in any other way discriminating against any covered employee (whether or not an eligible employee) for opposing or complaining about any unlawful practice under the FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA.

(3) All employing offices are prohibited from discharging or in any other way discriminating against any covered employee (whether or not an eligible employee) because that covered employee has—

(i) Filed any charge, or has instituted (or caused to be instituted) any proceeding under or related to the FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA;

(ii) Given, or is about to give, any information in connection with an inquiry or proceeding relating to a right under the FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA;

(iii) Testified, or is about to testify, in any inquiry or proceeding relating to a right under the FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA.

(b) Any violations of the FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA, or of these regulations constitute interfering with, restraining, or denying the exercise of rights provided by the FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA. An employing office may be liable for compensation and benefits lost by reason of the violation, for other actual monetary losses sustained as a direct result of the violation, and for appropriate equitable or other relief, including employment, reinstatement, promotion, or any other relief tailored to the harm suffered. *See* 825.400(c). Interfering with the exercise of an employee's rights would include, for example, not only refusing to authorize FMLA leave, but discouraging an employee from using such leave. It would also include manipulation by a covered employing office to avoid responsibilities under FMLA, for example:

(1) [Reserved]

(2) Changing the essential functions of the job in order to preclude the taking of leave; or

(3) Reducing hours available to work in order to avoid employee eligibility.

(c) The FMLA's prohibition against interference prohibits an employing office from discriminating or retaliating against an employee or prospective employee for having exercised or attempted to exercise FMLA rights. For example, if an employee on leave without pay would otherwise be entitled to full benefits (other than health benefits), the same benefits would be required to be provided to an employee on unpaid FMLA leave. By the same token, employing offices cannot use the taking of FMLA leave as a negative factor in employment actions, such as hiring, promotions or disciplinary actions; nor can FMLA leave be counted under no fault attendance policies. *See* 825.215.

(d) Employees cannot waive, nor may employing offices induce employees to waive, their rights under FMLA. For example, employees (or their collective bargaining representatives) cannot trade off the right to take FMLA leave against some other benefit offered by the employing office. Except for settlement agreements covered by 1414 and/or 1415 of the Congressional Accountability Act, this does not prevent the settlement or release of FMLA claims by employees based on past employing office conduct without the approval of the Office of Compliance or a court. Nor does it prevent an employee's voluntary and uncoerced acceptance (not as a condition of employment) of a light duty assignment while recovering from a serious health condition. *See* 825.702(d). An employee's acceptance of such light duty assignment does not constitute a waiver of the employee's prospective rights, including the right to be restored to the same position the employee held at the time the employee's FMLA leave commenced or to an equivalent position. The employee's right to restoration, however, ceases at the end of the applicable 12-month FMLA leave year.

(e) Individuals, and not merely covered employees, are protected from retaliation for opposing (e.g., filing a complaint about) any practice which is unlawful under the FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA. They are similarly protected if they oppose any practice which they reasonably believe to be a violation of the FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA, or regulations.

Subpart C—EMPLOYEE AND EMPLOYING OFFICE RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE FMLA, AS MADE APPLICABLE BY THE CAA

825.300 Employing office notice requirements.

(a)(1) If an employing office has any eligible employees and has any written guidance to employees concerning employee benefits or leave rights, such as in an employee handbook, information concerning both entitlements and employee obligations under the FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA, must be included in the handbook or other document. For example, if an employing office provides an employee handbook to all employees that describes the employing office's policies regarding leave, wages, attendance, and similar matters, the handbook must incorporate information on FMLA rights and responsibilities and the employing office's policies regarding the FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA. Informational publications describing the provisions of the FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA, are available from the Office of Compliance and may be incorporated in such employing office handbooks or written policies.

(2) If such an employing office does not have written policies, manuals, or handbooks describing employee benefits and leave provisions, the employing office shall provide written guidance to an employee concerning all the employee's rights and obligations under the FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA. This notice shall be provided to employees each time notice is given pursuant to paragraph (c), and in accordance with the provisions of that paragraph. Employing offices may duplicate and provide the employee a copy of the FMLA Fact Sheet available from the Office of Compliance to provide such guidance.

(b) *Eligibility notice.* (1) When an employee requests FMLA leave, or when the employing office acquires knowledge that an employee's leave may be for an FMLA-qualifying reason, the employing office must notify the employee of the employee's eligibility to take FMLA leave within five business days, absent extenuating circumstances. *See* 825.110 for definition of an eligible employee. Employee eligibility is determined (and notice must be provided) at the commencement of the first instance of leave for each FMLA-qualifying reason in the applicable 12-month period. *See* 825.127(c) and 825.200(b). All FMLA absences for the same qualifying reason are considered a single leave and employee eligibility as to that reason for leave does not change during the applicable 12-month period.

(2) The eligibility notice must state whether the employee is eligible for FMLA leave as defined in 825.110. If the employee is not eligible for FMLA leave, the notice must state at least one reason why the employee is not eligible, including as applicable the number of months the employee has been employed by the employing office and the hours of service with the employing office during the 12-month period. Notification of eligibility may be oral or in writing; employing offices may use Form C to provide such notification to employees. The employing office is obligated to translate this notice in

any situation in which it is obligated to do so in 825.300(a)(4).

(3) If, at the time an employee provides notice of a subsequent need for FMLA leave during the applicable 12-month period due to a different FMLA-qualifying reason, and the employee's eligibility status has not changed, no additional eligibility notice is required. If, however, the employee's eligibility status has changed (*e.g.*, if the employee has not met the hours of service requirement in the 12 months preceding the commencement of leave for the subsequent qualifying reason), the employing office must notify the employee of the change in eligibility status within five business days, absent extenuating circumstances.

(c) *Rights and responsibilities notice.* (1) Employing offices shall provide written notice detailing the specific expectations and obligations of the employee and explaining any consequences of a failure to meet these obligations. The employing office is obligated to translate this notice in any situation in which it is obligated to do so in 825.300(a)(4). This notice shall be provided to the employee each time the eligibility notice is provided pursuant to paragraph (b) of this section. If leave has already begun, the notice should be mailed to the employee's address of record. Such specific notice must include, as appropriate:

(i) That the leave may be designated and counted against the employee's annual FMLA leave entitlement if qualifying (*see* 825.300(c) and 825.301) and the applicable 12-month period for FMLA entitlement (*see* 825.127(c), 825.200(b), (f), and (g));

(ii) Any requirements for the employee to furnish certification of a serious health condition, serious injury or illness, or qualifying exigency arising out of active duty or call to active duty status, and the consequences of failing to do so (*see* 825.305, 825.309, 825.310, 825.313);

(iii) The employee's right to substitute paid leave, whether the employing office will require the substitution of paid leave, the conditions related to any substitution, and the employee's entitlement to take unpaid FMLA leave if the employee does not meet the conditions for paid leave (*see* 825.207);

(iv) Any requirement for the employee to make any premium payments to maintain health benefits and the arrangements for making such payments (*see* 825.210), and the possible consequences of failure to make such payments on a timely basis (*i.e.*, the circumstances under which coverage may lapse);

(v) The employee's status as a key employee and the potential consequence that restoration may be denied following FMLA leave, explaining the conditions required for such denial (*see* 825.218);

(vi) The employee's right to maintenance of benefits during the FMLA leave and restoration to the same or an equivalent job upon return from FMLA leave (*see* 825.214 and 825.604); and

(vii) The employee's potential liability for payment of health insurance premiums paid by the employing office during the employee's unpaid FMLA leave if the employee fails to return to work after taking FMLA leave (*see* 825.213).

(2) The notice of rights and responsibilities may include other information—*e.g.*, whether the employing office will require periodic reports of the employee's status and intent to return to work—but is not required to do so.

(3) The notice of rights and responsibilities may be accompanied by any required certification form.

(4) If the specific information provided by the notice of rights and responsibilities changes, the employing office shall, within five business days of receipt of the employee's first notice of need for leave subsequent to any change, provide written notice referencing the prior notice and setting forth any of the information in the notice of rights and responsibilities that has changed. For example, if the initial leave period was paid leave and the subsequent leave period would be unpaid leave, the employing office may need to give notice of the arrangements for making premium payments.

(5) Employing offices are also expected to responsively answer questions from employees concerning their rights and responsibilities under the FMLA, as made applicable under the CAA.

(6) A prototype notice of rights and responsibilities may be obtained in Form C, or from the Office of Compliance. Employing offices may adapt the prototype notice as appropriate to meet these notice requirements. The notice of rights and responsibilities may be distributed electronically so long as it otherwise meets the requirements of this section.

(d) *Designation notice.* (1) The employing office is responsible in all circumstances for designating leave as FMLA-qualifying, and for giving notice of the designation to the employee as provided in this section. When the employing office has enough information to determine whether the leave is being taken for a FMLA-qualifying reason (*e.g.*, after receiving a certification), the employing office must notify the employee whether the leave will be designated and will be counted as FMLA leave within five business days absent extenuating circumstances. Only one notice of designation is required for each FMLA-qualifying reason per applicable 12-month period, regardless of whether the leave taken due to the qualifying reason will be a continuous block of leave or intermittent or reduced schedule leave. If the employing office determines that the leave will not be designated as FMLA-qualifying (*e.g.*, if the leave is not for a reason covered by FMLA or the FMLA leave entitlement has been exhausted), the employing office must notify the employee of that determination. If the employing office requires paid leave to be substituted for unpaid FMLA leave, or that paid leave taken under an existing leave plan be counted as FMLA leave, the employing office must inform the employee of this designation at the time of designating the FMLA leave.

(2) If the employing office has sufficient information to designate the leave as FMLA leave immediately after receiving notice of the employee's need for leave, the employing office may provide the employee with the designation notice at that time.

(3) If the employing office will require the employee to present a fitness-for-duty certification to be restored to employment, the employing office must provide notice of such requirement with the designation notice. If the employing office will require that the fitness-for-duty certification address the employee's ability to perform the essential functions of the employee's position, the employing office must so indicate in the designation notice, and must include a list of the essential functions of the employee's position. *See* 825.312. If the employing office's handbook or other written documents (if any) describing the employing office's leave policies clearly provide that a fitness-for-duty certification will be required in specific circumstances (*e.g.*, by stating that fitness-for-duty certification will be required in all cases of back injuries for employees in a certain occupation), the employing office is not required to provide written notice of the requirement with the designation notice, but must provide oral notice no later than with the designation notice.

(4) The designation notice must be in writing. A prototype designation notice is contained in Form D or may be obtained from the Office of Compliance. If the leave is not designated as FMLA leave because it does not meet the requirements of the FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA, the notice to the employee that the leave is not designated as FMLA leave may be in the form of a simple written statement.

(5) If the information provided by the employing office to the employee in the designation notice changes (*e.g.*, the employee exhausts the FMLA leave entitlement), the employing office shall provide, within five business days of receipt of the employee's first notice of need for leave subsequent to any change, written notice of the change.

(6) The employing office must notify the employee of the amount of leave counted against the employee's FMLA leave entitlement. If the amount of leave needed is known at the time the employing office designates the leave as FMLA-qualifying, the employing office must notify the employee of the number of hours, days, or weeks that will be counted against the employee's FMLA leave entitlement in the designation notice. If it is not possible to provide the hours, days, or weeks that will be counted against the employee's FMLA leave entitlement (such as in the case of unforeseeable intermittent leave), then the employing office must provide notice of the amount of leave counted against the employee's FMLA leave entitlement upon the request by the employee, but no more often than once in a 30-day period and only if leave was taken in that period. The notice of the amount of leave counted against the employee's FMLA entitlement may be oral or in writing. If such notice is oral, it shall be confirmed in writing no later than the following payday (unless the payday is less than one week after the oral notice, in which case the notice must be no later than the subsequent payday). Such written notice may be in any form, including a notation on the employee's pay stub.

(e) *Consequences of failing to provide notice.* Failure to follow the notice requirements set forth in this section may constitute an interference with, restraint, or denial of the exercise of an employee's FMLA rights. An employing office may be liable for compensation and benefits lost by reason of the violation, for other actual monetary losses sustained as a direct result of the violation, and for appropriate equitable or other relief, including employment, reinstatement, promotion, or any other relief tailored to the harm suffered. *See* 825.400(c).

825.301 Designation of FMLA leave.

(a) *Employing office responsibilities.* The employing office's decision to designate leave as FMLA-qualifying must be based only on information received from the employee or the employee's spokesperson (*e.g.*, if the employee is incapacitated, the employee's spouse, adult child, parent, doctor, *etc.*, may provide notice to the employing office of the need to take FMLA leave). In any circumstance where the employing office does not have sufficient information about the reason for an employee's use of leave, the employing office should inquire further of the employee or the spokesperson to ascertain whether leave is potentially FMLA-qualifying. Once the employing office has acquired knowledge that the leave is being taken for a FMLA-qualifying reason, the employing office must notify the employee as provided in 825.300(d).

(b) *Employee responsibilities.* An employee giving notice of the need for FMLA leave does not need to expressly assert rights under the FMLA, as made applicable by the

CAA, or even mention the FMLA to meet his or her obligation to provide notice, though the employee would need to state a qualifying reason for the needed leave and otherwise satisfy the notice requirements set forth in 825.302 or 825.303 depending on whether the need for leave is foreseeable or unforeseeable. An employee giving notice of the need for FMLA leave must explain the reasons for the needed leave so as to allow the employing office to determine whether the leave qualifies under the FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA. If the employee fails to explain the reasons, leave may be denied. In many cases, in explaining the reasons for a request to use leave, especially when the need for the leave was unexpected or unforeseen, an employee will provide sufficient information for the employing office to designate the leave as FMLA leave. An employee using accrued paid leave may in some cases not spontaneously explain the reasons or their plans for using their accrued leave. However, if an employee requesting to use paid leave for a FMLA-qualifying reason does not explain the reason for the leave and the employing office denies the employee's request, the employee will need to provide sufficient information to establish a FMLA-qualifying reason for the needed leave so that the employing office is aware that the leave may not be denied and may designate that the paid leave be appropriately counted against (substituted for) the employee's FMLA leave entitlement. Similarly, an employee using accrued paid vacation leave who seeks an extension of unpaid leave for a FMLA-qualifying reason will need to state the reason. If this is due to an event which occurred during the period of paid leave, the employing office may count the leave used after the FMLA-qualifying reason against the employee's FMLA leave entitlement.

(c) *Disputes*. If there is a dispute between an employing office and an employee as to whether leave qualifies as FMLA leave, it should be resolved through discussions between the employee and the employing office. Such discussions and the decision must be documented.

(d) *Retroactive designation*. If an employing office does not designate leave as required by 825.300, the employing office may retroactively designate leave as FMLA leave with appropriate notice to the employee as required by 825.300 provided that the employing office's failure to timely designate leave does not cause harm or injury to the employee. In all cases where leave would qualify for FMLA protections, an employing office and an employee can mutually agree that leave be retroactively designated as FMLA leave.

(e) *Remedies*. If an employing office's failure to timely designate leave in accordance with 825.300 causes the employee to suffer harm, it may constitute an interference with, restraint of, or denial of the exercise of an employee's FMLA rights. An employing office may be liable for compensation and benefits lost by reason of the violation, for other actual monetary losses sustained as a direct result of the violation, and for appropriate equitable or other relief, including employment, reinstatement, promotion, or any other relief tailored to the harm suffered. *See* 825.400(c). For example, if an employing office that was put on notice that an employee needed FMLA leave failed to designate the leave properly, but the employee's own serious health condition prevented him or her from returning to work during that time period regardless of the designation, an employee may not be able to show that the employee suffered harm as a result of the employing office's actions. However, if an employee took leave to provide care for a son or daughter with a serious health condition believing it would not count toward his or her FMLA entitlement, and the employee planned to later use that FMLA leave to provide care for a spouse who would need assistance when recovering from surgery planned for a later date, the employee may be able to show that harm has occurred as a result of the employing office's failure to designate properly. The employee might establish this by showing that he or she would have arranged for an alternative caregiver for the seriously-ill son or daughter if the leave had been designated timely.

825.302 Employee notice requirements for foreseeable FMLA leave.

(a) *Timing of notice*. An employee must provide the employing office at least 30 days advance notice before FMLA leave is to begin if the need for the leave is foreseeable based on an expected birth, placement for adoption or foster care, planned medical treatment for a serious health condition of the employee or of a family member, or the planned medical treatment for a serious injury or illness of a covered servicemember. If 30 days notice is not practicable, such as because of a lack of knowledge of approximately when leave will be required to begin, a change in circumstances, or a medical emergency, notice must be given as soon as practicable. For example, an employee's health condition may require leave to commence earlier than anticipated before the birth of a child. Similarly, little opportunity for notice may be given before placement for adoption. For foreseeable leave due to a qualifying exigency, notice must be provided as soon as practicable, regardless of how far in advance such leave is foreseeable. Whether FMLA leave is to be continuous or is to be taken intermittently or on a reduced schedule basis, notice need only be given one time, but the employee shall advise the employing office as soon as practicable if dates of scheduled leave change or are extended, or were initially unknown. In those cases where the employee is required to provide at least 30 days notice of foreseeable leave and does not do so, the employee shall explain the reasons why such notice was not practicable upon a request from the employing office for such information.

(b) *As soon as practicable* means as soon as both possible and practical, taking into account all of the facts and circumstances in the individual case. When an employee becomes aware of a need for FMLA leave less than 30 days in advance, it should be practicable for the employee to provide notice of the need for leave either the same day or the next business day. In all cases, however, the determination of when an employee could practicably provide notice must take into account the individual facts and circumstances.

(c) *Content of notice*. An employee shall provide at least verbal notice sufficient to make the employing office aware that the employee needs FMLA-qualifying leave, and the anticipated timing and duration of the leave. Depending on the situation, such information may include that a condition renders the employee unable to perform the functions of the job; that the employee is pregnant or has been hospitalized overnight; whether the employee or the employee's family member is under the continuing care of a health care provider; if the leave is due to a qualifying exigency, that a military member is on covered active duty or call to covered active duty status (or has been notified of an impending call or order to covered active duty), and that the requested leave is for one of the reasons listed in 825.126(b); if the leave is for a family member, that the condition renders the family member unable to perform daily activities, or that the family member is a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness; and the anticipated duration of the absence, if known. When an employee seeks leave for the first time for a FMLA-qualifying reason, the employee need not expressly assert rights under the FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA, or even mention the FMLA. When an employee seeks leave due to a FMLA-qualifying reason, for which the employing office has previously provided FMLA-protected leave, the employee must specifically reference the qualifying reason for leave or the need for FMLA leave. In all cases, the employing office should inquire further of the employee if it is necessary to have more information about whether FMLA leave is being sought by the employee, and obtain the necessary details of the leave to be taken. In the case of medical conditions, the employing office may find it necessary to inquire further to determine if the leave is because of a serious health condition and may request medical certification to support the need for such leave. *See* 825.305. An employing office may also request certification to support the need for leave for a qualifying exigency or for military caregiver leave. *See* 825.309, 825.310. When an employee has been previously certified for leave due to more than one FMLA-qualifying reason, the employing office may need to inquire further to determine for which qualifying reason the leave is needed. An employee has an obligation to respond to an employing office's questions designed to determine whether an absence is potentially FMLA-qualifying. Failure to respond to reasonable employing office inquiries regarding the leave request may result in denial of FMLA protection if the employing office is unable to determine whether the leave is FMLA-qualifying.

(d) *Complying with the employing office policy*. An employing office may require an employee to comply with the employing office's usual and customary notice and procedural requirements for requesting leave, absent unusual circumstances. For example, an employing office may require that written notice set forth the reasons for the requested leave, the anticipated duration of the leave, and the anticipated start of the leave. An employee also may be required by an employing office's policy to contact a specific individual. Unusual circumstances would include situations such as when an employee is unable to comply with the employing office's policy that requests for leave should be made by contacting a specific number because on the day the employee needs to provide notice of his or her need for FMLA leave there is no one to answer the call-in number and the voice mail box is full. Where an employee does not comply with the employing office's usual notice and procedural requirements, and no unusual circumstances justify the failure to comply, FMLA-protected leave may be delayed or denied. However, FMLA-protected leave may not be delayed or denied where the employing office's policy requires notice to be given sooner than set forth in paragraph (a) of this section and the employee provides timely notice as set forth in paragraph (a) of this section.

(e) *Scheduling planned medical treatment*. When planning medical treatment, the employee must consult with the employing office and make a reasonable effort to schedule the treatment so as not to disrupt unduly the employing office's operations, subject to the approval of the health care provider. Employees are ordinarily expected to consult with their employing offices prior to the scheduling of treatment in order to work out a treatment schedule which best suits the needs of both the employing office and the employee. For example, if an employee who provides notice of the need to take FMLA

leave on an intermittent basis for planned medical treatment neglects to consult with the employing office to make a reasonable effort to arrange the schedule of treatments so as not to unduly disrupt the employing office's operations, the employing office may initiate discussions with the employee and require the employee to attempt to make such arrangements, subject to the approval of the health care provider. *See* 825.203 and 825.205.

(f) Intermittent leave or leave on a reduced leave schedule must be medically necessary due to a serious health condition or a serious injury or illness. An employee shall advise the employing office, upon request, of the reasons why the intermittent/reduced leave schedule is necessary and of the schedule for treatment, if applicable. The employee and employing office shall attempt to work out a schedule for such leave that meets the employee's needs without unduly disrupting the employing office's operations, subject to the approval of the health care provider.

(g) An employing office may waive employees' FMLA notice requirements. *See* 825.304.

825.303 Employee notice requirements for unforeseeable FMLA leave.

(a) *Timing of notice*. When the approximate timing of the need for leave is not foreseeable, an employee must provide notice to the employing office as soon as practicable under the facts and circumstances of the particular case. It generally should be practicable for the employee to provide notice of leave that is unforeseeable within the time prescribed by the employing office's usual and customary notice requirements applicable to such leave. *See* 825.303(c). Notice may be given by the employee's spokesperson (*e.g.*, spouse, adult family member, or other responsible party) if the employee is unable to do so personally. For example, if an employee's child has a severe asthma attack and the employee takes the child to the emergency room, the employee would not be required to leave his or her child in order to report the absence while the child is receiving emergency treatment. However, if the child's asthma attack required only the use of an inhaler at home followed by a period of rest, the employee would be expected to call the employing office promptly after ensuring the child has used the inhaler.

(b) *Content of notice*. An employee shall provide sufficient information for an employing office to reasonably determine whether the FMLA may apply to the leave request. Depending on the situation, such information may include that a condition renders the employee unable to perform the functions of the job; that the employee is pregnant or has been hospitalized overnight; whether the employee or the employee's family member is under the continuing care of a health care provider; if the leave is due to a qualifying exigency, that a military member is on covered active duty or call to covered active duty status (or has been notified of an impending call or order to covered active duty), that the requested leave is for one of the reasons listed in 825.126(b), and the anticipated duration of the absence; or if the leave is for a family member that the condition renders the family member unable to perform daily activities or that the family member is a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness; and the anticipated duration of the absence, if known. When an employee seeks leave for the first time for a FMLA-qualifying reason, the employee need not expressly assert rights under the FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA, or even mention the FMLA. When an employee seeks leave due to a qualifying reason, for which the employing office has previously provided the employee FMLA-protected leave, the employee must specifically reference either the qualifying reason for leave or the need for FMLA leave. Calling in ''sick'' without providing more information will not be considered sufficient notice to trigger an employing office's obligations under the FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA. The employing office will be expected to obtain any additional required information through informal means. An employee has an obligation to respond to an employing office's questions designed to determine whether an absence is potentially FMLA-qualifying. Failure to respond to reasonable employing office inquiries office regarding the leave request may result in denial of FMLA protection if the employing office is unable to determine whether the leave is FMLA-qualifying.

(c) *Complying with employing office policy*. When the need for leave is not foreseeable, an employee must comply with the employing office's usual and customary notice and procedural requirements for requesting leave, absent unusual circumstances. For example, an employing office may require employees to call a designated number or a specific individual to request leave. However, if an employee requires emergency medical treatment, he or she would not be required to follow the call-in procedure until his or her condition is stabilized and he or she has access to, and is able to use, a phone. Similarly, in the case of an emergency requiring leave because of a FMLA-qualifying reason, written advance notice pursuant to an employing office's internal rules and procedures may not be required when FMLA leave is involved. If an employee does not comply with the employing office's usual notice and procedural requirements, and no unusual circumstances justify the failure to comply, FMLA-protected leave may be delayed or denied.

825.304 Employee failure to provide notice.

(a) *Proper notice required*. In all cases, in order for the onset of an employee's FMLA leave to be delayed due to lack of required notice, it must be clear that the employee had actual notice of the FMLA notice requirements. This condition would be satisfied by the employing office's proper posting, at the worksite where the employee is employed, of the information regarding the FMLA provided (pursuant to section 301(h)(2) of the CAA, 2 U.S.C. 1381(h)(2)) by the Office of Compliance to the employing office in a manner suitable for posting.

(b) *Foreseeable leave—30 days*. When the need for FMLA leave is foreseeable at least 30 days in advance and an employee fails to give timely advance notice with no reasonable excuse, the employing office may delay FMLA coverage until 30 days after the date the employee provides notice. The need for leave and the approximate date leave would be taken must have been clearly foreseeable to the employee 30 days in advance of the leave. For example, knowledge that an employee would receive a telephone call about the availability of a child for adoption at some unknown point in the future would not be sufficient to establish the leave was clearly foreseeable 30 days in advance.

(c) *Foreseeable leave—less than 30 days*. When the need for FMLA leave is foreseeable fewer than 30 days in advance and an employee fails to give notice as soon as practicable under the particular facts and circumstances, the extent to which an employing office may delay FMLA coverage for leave depends on the facts of the particular case. For example, if an employee reasonably should have given the employing office two weeks' notice but instead only provided one week's notice, then the employing office may delay FMLA-protected leave for one week (thus, if the employing office elects to delay FMLA coverage and the employee nonetheless takes leave one week after providing the notice (*i.e.*, a week before the two week notice period has been met) the leave will not be FMLA-protected).

(d) *Unforeseeable leave*. When the need for FMLA leave is unforeseeable and an employee fails to give notice in accordance with 825.303, the extent to which an employing office may delay FMLA coverage for leave depends on the facts of the particular case. For example, if it would have been practicable for an employee to have given the employing office notice of the need for leave very soon after the need arises consistent with the employing office's policy, but instead the employee provided notice two days after the leave began, then the employing office may delay FMLA coverage of the leave by two days.

(e) *Waiver of notice*. An employing office may waive employees' FMLA notice obligations or the employing office's own internal rules on leave notice requirements. If an employing office does not waive the employee's obligations under its internal leave rules, the employing office may take appropriate action under its internal rules and procedures for failure to follow its usual and customary notification rules, absent unusual circumstances, as long as the actions are taken in a manner that does not discriminate against employees taking FMLA leave and the rules are not inconsistent with 825.303(a).

825.305 Certification, general rule.

(a) *General*. An employing office may require that an employee's leave to care for the employee's covered family member with a serious health condition, or due to the employee's own serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform one or more of the essential functions of the employee's position, be supported by a certification issued by the health care provider of the employee or the employee's family member. An employing office may also require that an employee's leave because of a qualifying exigency or to care for a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness be supported by a certification, as described in 825.309 and 825.310, respectively. An employing office must give notice of a requirement for certification each time a certification is required; such notice must be written notice whenever required by 825.300(c). An employing office's oral request to an employee to furnish any subsequent certification is sufficient.

(b) *Timing*. In most cases, the employing office should request that an employee furnish certification at the time the employee gives notice of the need for leave or within five business days thereafter, or, in the case of unforeseen leave, within five business days after the leave commences. The employing office may request certification at some later date if the employing office later has reason to question the appropriateness of the leave or its duration. The employee must provide the requested certification to the employing office within 15 calendar days after the employing office's request, unless it is not practicable under the particular circumstances to do so despite the employee's diligent, good faith efforts or the employing office provides more than 15 calendar days to return the requested certification.

(c) *Complete and sufficient certification*. The employee must provide a complete and sufficient certification to the employing office if required by the employing office in accordance with 825.306, 825.309, and 825.310. The employing office shall advise an employee whenever the employing office finds a certification incomplete or insufficient, and

shall state in writing what additional information is necessary to make the certification complete and sufficient. A certification is considered incomplete if the employing office receives a certification, but one or more of the applicable entries have not been completed. A certification is considered insufficient if the employing office receives a complete certification, but the information provided is vague, ambiguous, or non-responsive. The employing office must provide the employee with seven calendar days (unless not practicable under the particular circumstances despite the employee's diligent good faith efforts) to cure any such deficiency. If the deficiencies specified by the employing office are not cured in the resubmitted certification, the employing office may deny the taking of FMLA leave, in accordance with 825.313. A certification that is not returned to the employing office is not considered incomplete or insufficient, but constitutes a failure to provide certification.

(d) *Consequences*. At the time the employing office requests certification, the employing office must also advise an employee of the anticipated consequences of an employee's failure to provide adequate certification. If the employee fails to provide the employing office with a complete and sufficient certification, despite the opportunity to cure the certification as provided in paragraph (c) of this section, or fails to provide any certification, the employing office may deny the taking of FMLA leave, in accordance with 825.313. It is the employee's responsibility either to furnish a complete and sufficient certification or to furnish the health care provider providing the certification with any necessary authorization from the employee or the employee's family member in order for the health care provider to release a complete and sufficient certification to the employing office to support the employee's FMLA request. This provision will apply in any case where an employing office requests a certification permitted by these regulations, whether it is the initial certification, a recertification, a second or third opinion, or a fitness-for-duty certificate, including any clarifications necessary to determine if such certifications are authentic and sufficient. *See* 825.306, 825.307, 825.308, and 825.312.

(e) *Annual medical certification*. Where the employee's need for leave due to the employee's own serious health condition, or the serious health condition of the employee's covered family member, lasts beyond a single leave year (as defined in 825.200), the employing office may require the employee to provide a new medical certification in each subsequent leave year. Such new medical certifications are subject to the provisions for authentication and clarification set forth in 825.307, including second and third opinions.

825.306 Content of medical certification for leave taken because of an employee's own serious health condition or the serious health condition of a family member.

(a) *Required information*. When leave is taken because of an employee's own serious health condition, or the serious health condition of a family member, an employing office may require an employee to obtain a medical certification from a health care provider that sets forth the following information:

(1) The name, address, telephone number, and fax number of the health care provider and type of medical practice/specialization;

(2) The approximate date on which the serious health condition commenced, and its probable duration;

(3) A statement or description of appropriate medical facts regarding the patient's health condition for which FMLA leave is requested. The medical facts must be sufficient to support the need for leave. Such medical facts may include information on symptoms, diagnosis, hospitalization, doctor visits, whether medication has been prescribed, any referrals for evaluation or treatment (physical therapy, for example), or any other regimen of continuing treatment;

(4) If the employee is the patient, information sufficient to establish that the employee cannot perform the essential functions of the employee's job as well as the nature of any other work restrictions, and the likely duration of such inability (see 825.123(b) and (c));

(5) If the patient is a covered family member with a serious health condition, information sufficient to establish that the family member is in need of care, as described in 825.124, and an estimate of the frequency and duration of the leave required to care for the family member;

(6) If an employee requests leave on an intermittent or reduced schedule basis for planned medical treatment of the employee's or a covered family member's serious health condition, information sufficient to establish the medical necessity for such intermittent or reduced schedule leave and an estimate of the dates and duration of such treatments and any periods of recovery;

(7) If an employee requests leave on an intermittent or reduced schedule basis for the employee's serious health condition, including pregnancy, that may result in unforeseeable episodes of incapacity, information sufficient to establish the medical necessity for such intermittent or reduced schedule leave and an estimate of the frequency and duration of the episodes of incapacity; and

(8) If an employee requests leave on an intermittent or reduced schedule basis to care for a covered family member with a serious health condition, a statement that such leave is medically necessary to care for the family member, as described in 825.124 and 825.203(b), which can include assisting in the family member's recovery, and an estimate of the frequency and duration of the required leave.

(b) The Office of Compliance has developed two optional forms (Form A and Form B) for use in obtaining medical certification, including second and third opinions, from health care providers that meets FMLA's certification requirements, as made applicable by the CAA. (*See* Forms A and B.) Optional Form A is for use when the employee's need for leave is due to the employee's own serious health condition. Optional Form B is for use when the employee needs leave to care for a family member with a serious health condition. These optional forms reflect certification requirements so as to permit the health care provider to furnish appropriate medical information. Forms A and B are modeled closely on Form WH–380E and Form WH–380F, as revised, which were developed by the Department of Labor (*see* 29 C.F.R. Part 825). The employing office may use the Office of Compliance's forms, or Form WH–380E and Form WH–380F, as revised, or another form containing the same basic information; however, no information may be required beyond that specified in 825.306, 825.307, and 825.308. In all instances the information on the form must relate only to the serious health condition for which the current need for leave exists.

(c) If an employee is on FMLA leave running concurrently with a workers' compensation absence, and the provisions of the workers' compensation statute permit the employing office or the employing office's representative to request additional information from the employee's workers' compensation health care provider, the FMLA does not prevent the employing office from following the applicable workers' compensation provisions and information received under those provisions may be considered in determining the employee's entitlement to FMLA-protected leave. Similarly, an employing office may request additional information in accordance with a paid leave policy or disability plan that requires greater information to qualify for payments or benefits, provided that the employing office informs the employee that the additional information only needs to be provided in connection with receipt of such payments or benefits. Any information received pursuant to such policy or plan may be considered in determining the employee's entitlement to FMLA-protected leave. If the employee fails to provide the information required for receipt of such payments or benefits, such failure will not affect the employee's entitlement to take unpaid FMLA leave. *See* 825.207(a).

(d) If an employee's serious health condition may also be a disability within the meaning of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), as amended and as made applicable by the CAA, the FMLA does not prevent the employing office from following the procedures for requesting medical information under the ADA. Any information received pursuant to these procedures may be considered in determining the employee's entitlement to FMLA-protected leave.

(e) While an employee may choose to comply with the certification requirement by providing the employing office with an authorization, release, or waiver allowing the employing office to communicate directly with the health care provider of the employee or his or her covered family member, the employee may not be required to provide such an authorization, release, or waiver. In all instances in which certification is requested, it is the employee's responsibility to provide the employing office with complete and sufficient certification and failure to do so may result in the denial of FMLA leave. *See* 825.305(d).

825.307 Authentication and clarification of medical certification for leave taken because of an employee's own serious health condition or the serious health condition of a family member; second and third opinions.

(a) *Clarification and authentication*. If an employee submits a complete and sufficient certification signed by the health care provider, the employing office may not request additional information from the health care provider. However, the employing office may contact the health care provider for purposes of clarification and authentication of the medical certification (whether initial certification or recertification) after the employing office has given the employee an opportunity to cure any deficiencies as set forth in 825.305(c). To make such contact, the employing office must use a health care provider, a human resources professional, a leave administrator, or a management official. Under no circumstances, however, may the employee's direct supervisor contact the employee's health care provider.

For purposes of these regulations, *authentication* means providing the health care provider with a copy of the certification and requesting verification that the information contained on the certification form was completed and/or authorized by the health care provider who signed the document; no additional medical information may be requested. *Clarification* means contacting the health care provider to understand the handwriting on the medical certification or to understand the meaning of a response. Employing offices may not ask health care providers

for additional information beyond that required by the certification form. The requirements of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Privacy Rule, (*see* 45 CFR parts 160 and 164), which governs the privacy of individually-identifiable health information created or held by HIPAA-covered entities, must be satisfied when individually-identifiable health information of an employee is shared with an employing office by a HIPAA-covered health care provider. If an employee chooses not to provide the employing office with authorization allowing the employing office to clarify the certification with the health care provider, and does not otherwise clarify the certification, the employing office may deny the taking of FMLA leave if the certification is unclear. *See* 825.305(d). It is the employee's responsibility to provide the employing office with a complete and sufficient certification and to clarify the certification if necessary.

(b) *Second Opinion*. (1) An employing office that has reason to doubt the validity of a medical certification may require the employee to obtain a second opinion at the employing office's expense. Pending receipt of the second (or third) medical opinion, the employee is provisionally entitled to the benefits of the FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA, including maintenance of group health benefits. If the certifications do not ultimately establish the employee's entitlement to FMLA leave, the leave shall not be designated as FMLA leave and may be treated as paid or unpaid leave under the employing office's established leave policies. In addition, the consequences set forth in 825.305(d) will apply if the employee or the employee's family member fails to authorize his or her health care provider to release all relevant medical information pertaining to the serious health condition at issue if requested by the health care provider designated to provide a second opinion in order to render a sufficient and complete second opinion.

(2) The employing office is permitted to designate the health care provider to furnish the second opinion, but the selected health care provider may not be employed on a regular basis by the employing office. The employing office may not regularly contract with or otherwise regularly utilize the services of the health care provider furnishing the second opinion unless the employing office is located in an area where access to health care is extremely limited (*e.g.*, a rural area where no more than one or two doctors practice in the relevant specialty in the vicinity).

(c) *Third opinion*. If the opinions of the employee's and the employing office's designated health care providers differ, the employing office may require the employee to obtain certification from a third health care provider, again at the employing office's expense. This third opinion shall be final and binding. The third health care provider must be designated or approved jointly by the employing office and the employee. The employing office and the employee must each act in good faith to attempt to reach agreement on whom to select for the third opinion provider. If the employing office does not attempt in good faith to reach agreement, the employing office will be bound by the first certification. If the employee does not attempt in good faith to reach agreement, the employee will be bound by the second certification. For example, an employee who refuses to agree to see a doctor in the specialty in question may be failing to act in good faith. On the other hand, an employing office that refuses to agree to any doctor on a list of specialists in the appropriate field provided by the employee and whom the employee has not previously consulted may be failing to act in good faith. In addition, the consequences set forth in 825.305(d) will apply if the employee or the employee's family member fails to authorize his or her health care provider to release all relevant medical information pertaining to the serious health condition at issue if requested by the health care provider designated to provide a third opinion in order to render a sufficient and complete third opinion.

(d) *Copies of opinions*. The employing office is required to provide the employee with a copy of the second and third medical opinions, where applicable, upon request by the employee. Requested copies are to be provided within five business days unless extenuating circumstances prevent such action.

(e) *Travel expenses*. If the employing office requires the employee to obtain either a second or third opinion the employing office must reimburse an employee or family member for any reasonable ''out of pocket'' travel expenses incurred to obtain the second and third medical opinions. The employing office may not require the employee or family member to travel outside normal commuting distance for purposes of obtaining the second or third medical opinions except in very unusual circumstances.

(f) *Medical certification abroad*. In circumstances in which the employee or a family member is visiting in another country, or a family member resides in another country, and a serious health condition develops, the employing office shall accept a medical certification as well as second and third opinions from a health care provider who practices in that country. Where a certification by a foreign health care provider is in a language other than English, the employee must provide the employing office with a written translation of the certification upon request.

825.308 Recertifications for leave taken because of an employee's own serious health condition or the serious health condition of a family member.

(a) *30-day rule*. An employing office may request recertification no more often than every 30 days and only in connection with an absence by the employee, unless paragraphs (b) or (c) of this section apply.

(b) *More than 30 days*. If the medical certification indicates that the minimum duration of the condition is more than 30 days, an employing office must wait until that minimum duration expires before requesting a recertification, unless paragraph (c) of this section applies. For example, if the medical certification states that an employee will be unable to work, whether continuously or on an intermittent basis, for 40 days, the employing office must wait 40 days before requesting a recertification. In all cases, an employing office may request a recertification of a medical condition every six months in connection with an absence by the employee. Accordingly, even if the medical certification indicates that the employee will need intermittent or reduced schedule leave for a period in excess of six months (e.g., for a lifetime condition), the employing office would be permitted to request recertification every six months in connection with an absence.

(c) *Less than 30 days*. An employing office may request recertification in less than 30 days if:

(1) The employee requests an extension of leave;

(2) Circumstances described by the previous certification have changed significantly (*e.g.*, the duration or frequency of the absence, the nature or severity of the illness, complications). For example, if a medical certification stated that an employee would need leave for one to two days when the employee suffered a migraine headache and the employee's absences for his or her last two migraines lasted four days each, then the increased duration of absence might constitute a significant change in circumstances allowing the employing office to request a recertification in less than 30 days. Likewise, if an employee had a pattern of using unscheduled FMLA leave for migraines in conjunction with his or her scheduled days off, then the timing of the absences also might constitute a significant change in circumstances sufficient for an employing office to request a recertification more frequently than every 30 days; or

(3) The employing office receives information that casts doubt upon the employee's stated reason for the absence or the continuing validity of the certification. For example, if an employee is on FMLA leave for four weeks due to the employee's knee surgery, including recuperation, and the employee plays in company softball league games during the employee's third week of FMLA leave, such information might be sufficient to cast doubt upon the continuing validity of the certification allowing the employing office to request a recertification in less than 30 days.

(d) *Timing*. The employee must provide the requested recertification to the employing office within the time frame requested by the employing office (which must allow at least 15 calendar days after the employing office's request), unless it is not practicable under the particular circumstances to do so despite the employee's diligent, good faith efforts.

(e) *Content*. The employing office may ask for the same information when obtaining recertification as that permitted for the original certification as set forth in 825.306. The employee has the same obligations to participate and cooperate (including providing a complete and sufficient certification or adequate authorization to the health care provider) in the recertification process as in the initial certification process. *See* 825.305(d). As part of the information allowed to be obtained on recertification for leave taken because of a serious health condition, the employing office may provide the health care provider with a record of the employee's absence pattern and ask the health care provider if the serious health condition and need for leave is consistent with such a pattern.

(f) Any recertification requested by the employing office shall be at the employee's expense unless the employing office provides otherwise. No second or third opinion on recertification may be required.

825.309 Certification for leave taken because of a qualifying exigency.

(a) *Active Duty Orders*. The first time an employee requests leave because of a qualifying exigency arising out of the covered active duty or call to covered active duty status (or notification of an impending call or order to covered active duty) of a military member (*see* 825.126(a)), an employing office may require the employee to provide a copy of the military member's active duty orders or other documentation issued by the military which indicates that the military member is on covered active duty or call to covered active duty status, and the dates of the military member's covered active duty service. This information need only be provided to the employing office once. A copy of new active duty orders or other documentation issued by the military may be required by the employing office if the need for leave because of a qualifying exigency arises out of a different covered active duty or call to covered active duty status (or notification of an impending call or order to covered active

duty) of the same or a different military member;

(b) *Required information*. An employing office may require that leave for any qualifying exigency specified in 825.126 be supported by a certification from the employee that sets forth the following information:

(1) A statement or description, signed by the employee, of appropriate facts regarding the qualifying exigency for which FMLA leave is requested. The facts must be sufficient to support the need for leave. Such facts should include information on the type of qualifying exigency for which leave is requested and any available written documentation which supports the request for leave; such documentation, for example, may include a copy of a meeting announcement for informational briefings sponsored by the military, a document confirming an appointment with a counselor or school official, or a copy of a bill for services for the handling of legal or financial affairs;

(2) The approximate date on which the qualifying exigency commenced or will commence;

(3) If an employee requests leave because of a qualifying exigency for a single, continuous period of time, the beginning and end dates for such absence;

(4) If an employee requests leave because of a qualifying exigency on an intermittent or reduced schedule basis, an estimate of the frequency and duration of the qualifying exigency;

(5) If the qualifying exigency involves meeting with a third party, appropriate contact information for the individual or entity with whom the employee is meeting (such as the name, title, organization, address, telephone number, fax number, and email address) and a brief description of the purpose of the meeting; and

(6) If the qualifying exigency involves *Rest and Recuperation* leave, a copy of the military member's Rest and Recuperation orders, or other documentation issued by the military which indicates that the military member has been granted Rest and Recuperation leave, and the dates of the military member's Rest and Recuperation leave.

(c) The Office of Compliance has developed an optional form (Form E) for employees' use in obtaining a certification that meets FMLA's certification requirements. (*See* Form E). This optional form reflects certification requirements so as to permit the employee to furnish appropriate information to support his or her request for leave because of a qualifying exigency. Form E, or another form containing the same basic information, may be used by the employing office; however, no information may be required beyond that specified in this section.

(d) *Verification*. If an employee submits a complete and sufficient certification to support his or her request for leave because of a qualifying exigency, the employing office may not request additional information from the employee. However, if the qualifying exigency involves meeting with a third party, the employing office may contact the individual or entity with whom the employee is meeting for purposes of verifying a meeting or appointment schedule and the nature of the meeting between the employee and the specified individual or entity. The employee's permission is not required in order to verify meetings or appointments with third parties, but no additional information may be requested by the employing office. An employing office also may contact an appropriate unit of the Department of Defense to request verification that a military member is on covered active duty or call to covered active duty status (or has been notified of an impending call or order to covered active duty); no additional information may be requested and the employee's permission is not required.

825.310 Certification for leave taken to care for a covered servicemember (military caregiver leave).

(a) *Required information from health care provider*. When leave is taken to care for a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness, an employing office may require an employee to obtain a certification completed by an authorized health care provider of the covered servicemember. For purposes of leave taken to care for a covered servicemember, any one of the following health care providers may complete such a certification:

(1) A United States Department of Defense (''DOD'') health care provider;

(2) A United States Department of Veterans Affairs (''VA'') health care provider;

(3) A DOD TRICARE network authorized private health care provider;

(4) A DOD non-network TRICARE authorized private health care provider; or

(5) Any health care provider as defined in 825.125.

(b) If the authorized health care provider is unable to make certain military-related determinations outlined below, the authorized health care provider may rely on determinations from an authorized DOD representative (such as a DOD recovery care coordinator) or an authorized VA representative. An employing office may request that the health care provider provide the following information:

(1) The name, address, and appropriate contact information (telephone number, fax number, and/or email address) of the health care provider, the type of medical practice, the medical specialty, and whether the health care provider is one of the following:

(i) A DOD health care provider;

(ii) A VA health care provider;

(iii) A DOD TRICARE network authorized private health care provider;

(iv) A DOD non-network TRICARE authorized private health care provider; or

(v) A health care provider as defined in 825.125.

(2) Whether the covered servicemember's injury or illness was incurred in the line of duty on active duty or, if not, whether the covered servicemember's injury or illness existed before the beginning of the servicemember's active duty and was aggravated by service in the line of duty on active duty;

(3) The approximate date on which the serious injury or illness commenced, or was aggravated, and its probable duration;

(4) A statement or description of appropriate medical facts regarding the covered servicemember's health condition for which FMLA leave is requested. The medical facts must be sufficient to support the need for leave.

(i) In the case of a current member of the Armed Forces, such medical facts must include information on whether the injury or illness may render the covered servicemember medically unfit to perform the duties of the servicemember's office, grade, rank, or rating and whether the member is receiving medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy;

(ii) In the case of a covered veteran, such medical facts must include:

(A) Information on whether the veteran is receiving medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy for an injury or illness that is the continuation of an injury or illness that was incurred or aggravated when the covered veteran was a member of the Armed Forces and rendered the servicemember medically unfit to perform the duties of the servicemember's office, grade, rank, or rating; or

(B) Information on whether the veteran is receiving medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy for an injury or illness that is a physical or mental condition for which the covered veteran has received a U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Service-Related Disability Rating (VASRD) of 50 percent or greater, and that such VASRD rating is based, in whole or in part, on the condition precipitating the need for military caregiver leave; or

(C) Information on whether the veteran is receiving medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy for an injury or illness that is a physical or mental condition that substantially impairs the covered veteran's ability to secure or follow a substantially gainful occupation by reason of a disability or disabilities related to military service, or would do so absent treatment; or

(D) Documentation of enrollment in the Department of Veterans Affairs Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers.

(5) Information sufficient to establish that the covered servicemember is in need of care, as described in 825.124, and whether the covered servicemember will need care for a single continuous period of time, including any time for treatment and recovery, and an estimate as to the beginning and ending dates for this period of time;

(6) If an employee requests leave on an intermittent or reduced schedule basis for planned medical treatment appointments for the covered servicemember, whether there is a medical necessity for the covered servicemember to have such periodic care and an estimate of the treatment schedule of such appointments;

(7) If an employee requests leave on an intermittent or reduced schedule basis to care for a covered servicemember other than for planned medical treatment (*e.g.*, episodic flare-ups of a medical condition), whether there is a medical necessity for the covered servicemember to have such periodic care, which can include assisting in the covered servicemember's recovery, and an estimate of the frequency and duration of the periodic care.

(c) *Required information from employee and/or covered servicemember*. In addition to the information that may be requested under 825.310(b), an employing office may also request that such certification set forth the following information provided by an employee and/or covered servicemember:

(1) The name and address of the employing office of the employee requesting leave to care for a covered servicemember, the name of the employee requesting such leave, and the name of the covered servicemember for whom the employee is requesting leave to care;

(2) The relationship of the employee to the covered servicemember for whom the employee is requesting leave to care;

(3) Whether the covered servicemember is a current member of the Armed Forces, the National Guard or Reserves, and the covered servicemember's military branch, rank, and current unit assignment;

(4) Whether the covered servicemember is assigned to a military medical facility as an outpatient or to a unit established for the purpose of providing command and control of members of the Armed Forces receiving medical care as outpatients (such as a medical hold or warrior transition unit), and the name of the medical treatment facility or unit;

(5) Whether the covered servicemember is on the temporary disability retired list;

(6) Whether the covered servicemember is a veteran, the date of separation from military service, and whether the separation was other than dishonorable. The employing office may require the employee to provide documentation issued by the military which indicates that the covered servicemember is

a veteran, the date of separation, and that the separation is other than dishonorable. Where an employing office requires such documentation, an employee may provide a copy of the veteran's Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty issued by the U.S. Department of Defense (DD Form 214) or other proof of veteran status. *See* 825.127(c)(2).

(7) A description of the care to be provided to the covered servicemember and an estimate of the leave needed to provide the care.

(d) The Office of Compliance has developed an optional form (Form F) for employees' use in obtaining certification that meets FMLA's certification requirements. (*See* Form F). This optional form reflects certification requirements so as to permit the employee to furnish appropriate information to support his or her request for leave to care for a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness. Form F, or Form WH–385 (developed by the Department of Labor), or another form containing the same basic information, may be used by the employing office; however, no information may be required beyond that specified in this section. In all instances the information on the certification must relate only to the serious injury or illness for which the current need for leave exists. An employing office may seek authentication and/or clarification of the certification under 825.307. However, second and third opinions under 825.307 are not permitted for leave to care for a covered servicemember. Additionally, recertifications under 825.308 are not permitted for leave to care for a covered servicemember. An employing office may require an employee to provide confirmation of covered family relationship to the seriously injured or ill servicemember pursuant to 825.122(j) of the FMLA.

(e) An employing office requiring an employee to submit a certification for leave to care for a covered servicemember must accept as sufficient certification, in lieu of the Office of Compliance's optional certification form (Form F) or an employing office's own certification form, invitational travel orders (ITOs) or invitational travel authorizations (ITAs) issued to any family member to join an injured or ill servicemember at his or her bedside. An ITO or ITA is sufficient certification for the duration of time specified in the ITO or ITA. During that time period, an eligible employee may take leave to care for the covered servicemember in a continuous block of time or on an intermittent basis. An eligible employee who provides an ITO or ITA to support his or her request for leave may not be required to provide any additional or separate certification that leave taken on an intermittent basis during the period of time specified in the ITO or ITA is medically necessary. An ITO or ITA is sufficient certification for an employee entitled to take FMLA leave to care for a covered servicemember regardless of whether the employee is named in the order or authorization.

(1) If an employee will need leave to care for a covered servicemember beyond the expiration date specified in an ITO or ITA, an employing office may request that the employee have one of the authorized health care providers listed under 825.310(a) complete the Office of Compliance optional certification form (Form F) or an employing office's own form, as requisite certification for the remainder of the employee's necessary leave period.

(2) An employing office may seek authentication and clarification of the ITO or ITA under 825.307. An employing office may not utilize the second or third opinion process outlined in 825.307 or the recertification process under 825.308 during the period of time in which leave is supported by an ITO or ITA.

(3) An employing office may require an employee to provide confirmation of covered family relationship to the seriously injured or ill servicemember pursuant to 825.122(k) when an employee supports his or her request for FMLA leave with a copy of an ITO or ITA.

(f) An employing office requiring an employee to submit a certification for leave to care for a covered servicemember must accept as sufficient certification of the servicemember's serious injury or illness documentation indicating the servicemember's enrollment in the Department of Veterans Affairs Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers. Such documentation is sufficient certification of the servicemember's serious injury or illness to support the employee's request for military caregiver leave regardless of whether the employee is the named caregiver in the enrollment documentation.

(1) An employing office may seek authentication and clarification of the documentation indicating the servicemember's enrollment in the Department of Veterans Affairs Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers under 825.307. An employing office may not utilize the second or third opinion process outlined in 825.307 or the recertification process under 825.308 when the servicemember's serious injury or illness is shown by documentation of enrollment in this program.

(2) An employing office may require an employee to provide confirmation of covered family relationship to the seriously injured or ill servicemember pursuant to 825.122(k) when an employee supports his or her request for FMLA leave with a copy of such enrollment documentation. An employing office may also require an employee to provide documentation, such as a veteran's Form DD–214, showing that the discharge was other than dishonorable and the date of the veteran's discharge.

(g) Where medical certification is requested by an employing office, an employee may not be held liable for administrative delays in the issuance of military documents, despite the employee's diligent, good-faith efforts to obtain such documents. *See* 825.305(b). In all instances in which certification is requested, it is the employee's responsibility to provide the employing office with complete and sufficient certification and failure to do so may result in the denial of FMLA leave. *See* 825.305(d).

825.311 Intent to return to work.

(a) An employing office may require an employee on FMLA leave to report periodically on the employee's status and intent to return to work. The employing office's policy regarding such reports may not be discriminatory and must take into account all of the relevant facts and circumstances related to the individual employee's leave situation.

(b) If an employee gives unequivocal notice of intent not to return to work, the employing office's obligations under FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA, to maintain health benefits (subject to COBRA requirements or 5 U.S.C. 8905a, whichever is applicable) and to restore the employee cease. However, these obligations continue if an employee indicates he or she may be unable to return to work but expresses a continuing desire to do so.

(c) It may be necessary for an employee to take more leave than originally anticipated. Conversely, an employee may discover after beginning leave that the circumstances have changed and the amount of leave originally anticipated is no longer necessary. An employee may not be required to take more FMLA leave than necessary to resolve the circumstance that precipitated the need for leave. In both of these situations, the employing office may require that the employee provide the employing office reasonable notice (*i.e.*, within two business days) of the changed circumstances where foreseeable. The employing office may also obtain information on such changed circumstances through requested status reports.

825.312 Fitness-for-duty certification.

(a) As a condition of restoring an employee whose FMLA leave was occasioned by the employee's own serious health condition that made the employee unable to perform the employee's job, an employing office may have a uniformly-applied policy or practice that requires all similarly-situated employees (*i.e.*, same occupation, same serious health condition) who take leave for such conditions to obtain and present certification from the employee's health care provider that the employee is able to resume work. The employee has the same obligations to participate and cooperate (including providing a complete and sufficient certification or providing sufficient authorization to the health care provider to provide the information directly to the employing office) in the fitness-for-duty certification process as in the initial certification process. *See* 825.305(d).

(b) An employing office may seek a fitness-for-duty certification only with regard to the particular health condition that caused the employee's need for FMLA leave. The certification from the employee's health care provider must certify that the employee is able to resume work. Additionally, an employing office may require that the certification specifically address the employee's ability to perform the essential functions of the employee's job. In order to require such a certification, an employing office must provide an employee with a list of the essential functions of the employee's job no later than with the designation notice required by 825.300(d), and must indicate in the designation notice that the certification must address the employee's ability to perform those essential functions. If the employing office satisfies these requirements, the employee's health care provider must certify that the employee can perform the identified essential functions of his or her job. Following the procedures set forth in 825.307(a), the employing office may contact the employee's health care provider for purposes of clarifying and authenticating the fitness-for-duty certification. Clarification may be requested only for the serious health condition for which FMLA leave was taken. The employing office may not delay the employee's return to work while contact with the health care provider is being made. No second or third opinions on a fitness-for-duty certification may be required.

(c) The cost of the certification shall be borne by the employee, and the employee is not entitled to be paid for the time or travel costs spent in acquiring the certification.

(d) The designation notice required in 825.300(d) shall advise the employee if the employing office will require a fitness-for-duty certification to return to work and whether that fitness-for-duty certification must address the employee's ability to perform the essential functions of the employee's job.

(e) An employing office may delay restoration to employment until an employee submits a required fitness-for-duty certification unless the employing office has failed to provide the notice required in paragraph (d) of this section. If an employing office provides the notice required, an employee who does

not provide a fitness-for-duty certification or request additional FMLA leave is no longer entitled to reinstatement under the FMLA. *See* 825.313(d).

(f) An employing office is not entitled to a certification of fitness to return to duty for each absence taken on an intermittent or reduced leave schedule. However, an employing office is entitled to a certification of fitness to return to duty for such absences up to once every 30 days if reasonable safety concerns exist regarding the employee's ability to perform his or her duties, based on the serious health condition for which the employee took such leave. If an employing office chooses to require a fitness-for-duty certification under such circumstances, the employing office shall inform the employee at the same time it issues the designation notice that for each subsequent instance of intermittent or reduced schedule leave, the employee will be required to submit a fitness-for-duty certification unless one has already been submitted within the past 30 days. Alternatively, an employing office can set a different interval for requiring a fitness-for-duty certification as long as it does not exceed once every 30 days and as long as the employing office advises the employee of the requirement in advance of the employee taking the intermittent or reduced schedule leave. The employing office may not terminate the employment of the employee while awaiting such a certification of fitness to return to duty for an intermittent or reduced schedule leave absence. *Reasonable safety concerns* means a reasonable belief of significant risk of harm to the individual employee or others. In determining whether reasonable safety concerns exist, an employing office should consider the nature and severity of the potential harm and the likelihood that potential harm will occur.

(g) If the terms of a collective bargaining agreement govern an employee's return to work, those provisions shall be applied.

(h) Requirements under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), as amended and as made applicable by the CAA, apply. After an employee returns from FMLA leave, the ADA requires any medical examination at an employing office's expense by the employing office's health care provider be job-related and consistent with business necessity. For example, an attorney could not be required to submit to a medical examination or inquiry just because her leg had been amputated. The essential functions of an attorney's job do not require use of both legs; therefore such an inquiry would not be job related. An employing office may require a warehouse laborer, whose back impairment affects the ability to lift, to be examined by an orthopedist, but may not require this employee to submit to an HIV test where the test is not related to either the essential functions of his or her job or to his/her impairment. If an employee's serious health condition may also be a disability within the meaning of the ADA, as made applicable by the CAA, the FMLA does not prevent the employing office from following the procedures for requesting medical information under the ADA.

825.313 Failure to provide certification.

(a) *Foreseeable leave*. In the case of foreseeable leave, if an employee fails to provide certification in a timely manner as required by 825.305, then an employing office may deny FMLA coverage until the required certification is provided. For example, if an employee has 15 days to provide a certification and does not provide the certification for 45 days without sufficient reason for the delay, the employing office can deny FMLA protections for the 30-day period following the expiration of the 15-day time period, if the employee takes leave during such period.

(b) *Unforeseeable leave*. In the case of unforeseeable leave, an employing office may deny FMLA coverage for the requested leave if the employee fails to provide a certification within 15 calendar days from receipt of the request for certification unless not practicable due to extenuating circumstances. For example, in the case of a medical emergency, it may not be practicable for an employee to provide the required certification within 15 calendar days. Absent such extenuating circumstances, if the employee fails to timely return the certification, the employing office can deny FMLA protections for the leave following the expiration of the 15-day time period until a sufficient certification is provided. If the employee never produces the certification, the leave is not FMLA leave.

(c) *Recertification*. An employee must provide recertification within the time requested by the employing office (which must allow at least 15 calendar days after the request) or as soon as practicable under the particular facts and circumstances. If an employee fails to provide a recertification within a reasonable time under the particular facts and circumstances, then the employing office may deny continuation of the FMLA leave protections until the employee produces a sufficient recertification. If the employee never produces the recertification, the leave is not FMLA leave. Recertification does not apply to leave taken for a qualifying exigency or to care for a covered servicemember.

(d) *Fitness-for-duty certification*. When requested by the employing office pursuant to a uniformly applied policy for similarly-situated employees, the employee must provide medical certification, at the time the employee seeks reinstatement at the end of FMLA leave taken for the employee's serious health condition, that the employee is fit for duty and able to return to work (*see* 825.312(a)) if the employing office has provided the required notice (*see* 825.300(e)); the employing office may delay restoration until the certification is provided. Unless the employee provides either a fitness-for-duty certification or a new medical certification for a serious health condition at the time FMLA leave is concluded, the employee may be terminated. *See also* 825.213(a)(3).

SUBPART D—ENFORCEMENT MECHANISMS

825.400 Enforcement of FMLA rights, as made applicable by the CAA.

(a) To commence a proceeding, a covered employee alleging a violation of the rights and protections of the FMLA, made applicable by the CAA, must request counseling by the Office of Compliance not later than 180 days after the date of the alleged violation. If a covered employee misses this deadline, the covered employee will be unable to obtain a remedy under the CAA.

(b) The following procedures are available under title IV of the CAA for covered employees who believe that their rights under FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA, have been violated:

(1) counseling;

(2) mediation; and

(3) election of either—

(A) a formal complaint, filed with the Office of Compliance, and a hearing before a hearing officer, subject to review by the Board of Directors of the Office of Compliance, and judicial review in the United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit; or

(B) a civil action in a district court of the United States.

(c) Regulations of the Office of Compliance describing and governing these procedures are found at **www.compliance.gov.**

825.401 [Reserved]

825.402 [Reserved]

825.403 [Reserved]

825.404 [Reserved]

SUBPART E—[RESERVED]

SUBPART F—SPECIAL RULES APPLICABLE TO EMPLOYEES OF SCHOOLS

825.600 Special rules for school employees, definitions.

(a) Certain special rules apply to employees of local educational agencies, including public school boards and elementary schools under their jurisdiction, and private elementary and secondary schools. The special rules do not apply to other kinds of educational institutions, such as colleges and universities, trade schools, and preschools.

(b) Educational institutions are covered by FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA (and these special rules). The usual requirements for employees to be eligible do apply.

(c) The special rules affect the taking of intermittent leave or leave on a reduced leave schedule, or leave near the end of an academic term (semester), by instructional employees. *Instructional employees* are those whose principal function is to teach and instruct students in a class, a small group, or an individual setting. This term includes not only teachers, but also athletic coaches, driving instructors, and special education assistants such as signers for the hearing impaired. It does not include, and the special rules do not apply to, teacher assistants or aides who do not have as their principal job actual teaching or instructing, nor does it include auxiliary personnel such as counselors, psychologists, or curriculum specialists. It also does not include cafeteria workers, maintenance workers, or bus drivers.

(d) Special rules which apply to restoration to an equivalent position apply to all employees of local educational agencies.

825.601 Special rules for school employees, limitations on intermittent leave.

(a) Leave taken for a period that ends with the school year and begins the next semester is leave taken consecutively rather than intermittently. The period during the summer vacation when the employee would not have been required to report for duty is not counted against the employee's FMLA leave entitlement. An instructional employee who is on FMLA leave at the end of the school year must be provided with any benefits over the summer vacation that employees would normally receive if they had been working at the end of the school year.

(1) If an eligible instructional employee needs intermittent leave or leave on a reduced leave schedule to care for a family member with a serious health condition, to care for a covered servicemember, or for the employee's own serious health condition, which is foreseeable based on planned medical treatment, and the employee would be on leave for more than 20 percent of the total number of working days over the period the leave would extend, the employing office may require the employee to choose either to:

(i) Take leave for a period or periods of a particular duration, not greater than the duration of the planned treatment; or

(ii) Transfer temporarily to an available alternative position for which the employee is qualified, which has equivalent pay and benefits and which better accommodates recurring periods of leave than does the employee's regular position.

(2) These rules apply only to a leave involving more than 20 percent of the working days during the period over which the leave extends. For example, if an instructional employee who normally works five days each week needs to take two days of FMLA leave per week over a period of several weeks, the

special rules would apply. Employees taking leave which constitutes 20 percent or less of the working days during the leave period would not be subject to transfer to an alternative position. *Periods of a particular duration* means a block, or blocks, of time beginning no earlier than the first day for which leave is needed and ending no later than the last day on which leave is needed, and may include one uninterrupted period of leave.

(b) If an instructional employee does not give required notice of foreseeable FMLA leave (*see* 825.302) to be taken intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule, the employing office may require the employee to take leave of a particular duration, or to transfer temporarily to an alternative position. Alternatively, the employing office may require the employee to delay the taking of leave until the notice provision is met.

825.602 Special rules for school employees, limitations on leave near the end of an academic term.

(a) There are also different rules for instructional employees who begin leave more than five weeks before the end of a term, less than five weeks before the end of a term, and less than three weeks before the end of a term. Regular rules apply except in circumstances when:

(1) An instructional employee begins leave more than five weeks before the end of a term. The employing office may require the employee to continue taking leave until the end of the term if—

(i) The leave will last at least three weeks, and

(ii) The employee would return to work during the three-week period before the end of the term.

(2) The employee begins leave during the five-week period before the end of a term because of the birth of a son or daughter; the placement of a son or daughter for adoption or foster care; to care for a spouse, son, daughter, or parent with a serious health condition; or to care for a covered servicemember. The employing office may require the employee to continue taking leave until the end of the term if—

(i) The leave will last more than two weeks, and

(ii) The employee would return to work during the two-week period before the end of the term.

(3) The employee begins leave during the three-week period before the end of a term because of the birth of a son or daughter; the placement of a son or daughter for adoption or foster care; to care for a spouse, son, daughter, or parent with a serious health condition; or to care for a covered servicemember. The employing office may require the employee to continue taking leave until the end of the term if the leave will last more than five working days.

(b) For purposes of these provisions, *academic term* means the school semester, which typically ends near the end of the calendar year and the end of spring each school year. In no case may a school have more than two academic terms or semesters each year for purposes of FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA. An example of leave falling within these provisions would be where an employee plans two weeks of leave to care for a family member which will begin three weeks before the end of the term. In that situation, the employing office could require the employee to stay out on leave until the end of the term.

825.603 Special rules for school employees, duration of FMLA leave.

(a) If an employee chooses to take leave for periods of a particular duration in the case of intermittent or reduced schedule leave, the entire period of leave taken will count as FMLA leave.

(b) In the case of an employee who is required to take leave until the end of an academic term, only the period of leave until the employee is ready and able to return to work shall be charged against the employee's FMLA leave entitlement. The employing office has the option not to require the employee to stay on leave until the end of the school term. Therefore, any additional leave required by the employing office to the end of the school term is not counted as FMLA leave; however, the employing office shall be required to maintain the employee's group health insurance and restore the employee to the same or equivalent job including other benefits at the conclusion of the leave.

825.604 Special rules for school employees, restoration to an equivalent position.

The determination of how an employee is to be restored to an equivalent position upon return from FMLA leave will be made on the basis of ''established school board policies and practices, private school policies and practices, and collective bargaining agreements.'' The ''established policies'' and collective bargaining agreements used as a basis for restoration must be in writing, must be made known to the employee prior to the taking of FMLA leave, and must clearly explain the employee's restoration rights upon return from leave. Any established policy which is used as the basis for restoration of an employee to an equivalent position must provide substantially the same protections as provided in the FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA, for reinstated employees. *See* 825.215. In other words, the policy or collective bargaining agreement must provide for restoration to an equivalent position with equivalent employment benefits, pay, and other terms and conditions of employment. For example, an employee may not be restored to a position requiring additional licensure or certification.

SUBPART G—EFFECT OF OTHER LAWS, EMPLOYING OFFICE PRACTICES, AND COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENTS ON EMPLOYEE RIGHTS UNDER THE FMLA, AS MADE APPLICABLE BY THE CAA.

825.700 Interaction with employing office's policies.

(a) An employing office must observe any employment benefit program or plan that provides greater family or medical leave rights to employees than the rights established by the FMLA. Conversely, the rights established by the FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA, may not be diminished by any employment benefit program or plan. For example, a provision of a collective bargaining agreement (CBA) which provides for reinstatement to a position that is not equivalent because of seniority (*e.g.*, provides lesser pay) is superseded by FMLA. If an employing office provides greater unpaid family leave rights than are afforded by FMLA, the employing office is not required to extend additional rights afforded by FMLA, such as maintenance of health benefits (other than through COBRA or 5 U.S.C. 8905a, whichever is applicable), to the additional leave period not covered by FMLA.

(b) Nothing in the FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA, prevents an employing office from amending existing leave and employee benefit programs, provided they comply with FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA. However, nothing in the FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA, is intended to discourage employing offices from adopting or retaining more generous leave policies.

825.701 [Reserved]

825.702 Interaction with anti-discrimination laws, as applied by section 201 of the CAA.

(a) Nothing in FMLA modifies or affects any applicable law prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability (*e.g.*, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by the Pregnancy Discrimination Act and as made applicable by the CAA). FMLA's legislative history explains that FMLA is ''not intended to modify or affect the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, the regulations concerning employment which have been promulgated pursuant to that statute, or the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 [as amended] or the regulations issued under that act. Thus, the leave provisions of the [FMLA] are wholly distinct from the reasonable accommodation obligations of employers covered under the [ADA] . . . or the Federal government itself. The purpose of the FMLA, as applied by the CAA, is to make leave available to eligible employees and [employing offices] within its coverage, and not to limit already existing rights and protection.'' S. Rep. No. 3, 103d Cong., 1st Sess. 38 (1993). An employing office must therefore provide leave under whichever statutory provision provides the greater rights to employees. When an employer violates both FMLA and a discrimination law, an employee may be able to recover under either or both statutes (double relief may not be awarded for the same loss; when remedies coincide a claimant may be allowed to utilize whichever avenue of relief is desired. *Laffey v. Northwest Airlines, Inc.*, 567 F.2d 429, 445 (D.C. Cir. 1976), *cert. denied*, 434 U.S. 1086 (1978).

(b) If an employee is a qualified individual with a disability within the meaning of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the employing office must make reasonable accommodations, *etc.*, barring undue hardship, in accordance with the ADA. At the same time, the employing office must afford an employee his or her FMLA rights. ADA's ''*disability*'' and FMLA's ''*serious health condition*'' are different concepts, and must be analyzed separately. FMLA entitles eligible employees to 12 weeks of leave in any 12-month period due to their own serious health condition, whereas the ADA allows an indeterminate amount of leave, barring undue hardship, as a reasonable accommodation. FMLA requires employing offices to maintain employees' group health plan coverage during FMLA leave on the same conditions as coverage would have been provided if the employee had been continuously employed during the leave period, whereas ADA does not require maintenance of health insurance unless other employees receive health insurance during leave under the same circumstances.

(c)(1) A reasonable accommodation under the ADA might be accomplished by providing an individual with a disability with a part-time job with no health benefits, assuming the employing office did not ordinarily provide health insurance for part-time employees. However, FMLA would permit an employee to work a reduced leave schedule until the equivalent of 12 workweeks of leave were used, with group health benefits maintained during this period. FMLA permits an employing office to temporarily transfer an employee who is taking leave intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule to an alternative position, whereas the ADA allows an accommodation of reassignment to an equivalent, vacant position only if the employee cannot perform the essential functions of the employee's present position and an accommodation is not possible in the employee's present position, or an accommodation in the employee's present position would cause an undue hardship. The examples in the following paragraphs of this section demonstrate how the two laws would interact with respect to a qualified individual with a disability.

(2) A qualified individual with a disability who is also an eligible employee entitled to FMLA leave requests 10 weeks of medical leave as a reasonable accommodation, which the employing office grants because it is not an undue hardship. The employing office advises the employee that the 10 weeks of leave is also being designated as FMLA leave and will count towards the employee's FMLA leave entitlement. This designation does not prevent the parties from also treating the leave as a reasonable accommodation and reinstating the employee into the same job, as required by the ADA, rather than an equivalent position under FMLA, if that is the greater right available to the employee. At the same time, the employee would be entitled under FMLA to have the employing office maintain group health plan coverage during the leave, as that requirement provides the greater right to the employee.

(3) If the same employee needed to work part-time (a reduced leave schedule) after returning to his or her same job, the employee would still be entitled under FMLA to have group health plan coverage maintained for the remainder of the two-week equivalent of FMLA leave entitlement, notwithstanding an employing office policy that part-time employees do not receive health insurance. This employee would be entitled under the ADA to reasonable accommodations to enable the employee to perform the essential functions of the part-time position. In addition, because the employee is working a part-time schedule as a reasonable accommodation, the FMLA's provision for temporary assignment to a different alternative position would not apply. Once the employee has exhausted his or her remaining FMLA leave entitlement while working the reduced (part-time) schedule, if the employee is a qualified individual with a disability, and if the employee is unable to return to the same full-time position at that time, the employee might continue to work part-time as a reasonable accommodation, barring undue hardship; the employee would then be entitled to only those employment benefits ordinarily provided by the employing office to part-time employees.

(4) At the end of the FMLA leave entitlement, an employing office is required under FMLA to reinstate the employee in the same or an equivalent position, with equivalent pay and benefits, to that which the employee held when leave commenced. The employing office's FMLA obligations would be satisfied if the employing office offered the employee an equivalent full-time position. If the employee were unable to perform the essential functions of that equivalent position even with reasonable accommodation, because of a disability, the ADA may require the employing office to make a reasonable accommodation at that time by allowing the employee to work part-time or by reassigning the employee to a vacant position, barring undue hardship.

(d)(1) If FMLA entitles an employee to leave, an employing office may not, in lieu of FMLA leave entitlement, require an employee to take a job with a reasonable accommodation. However, ADA may require that an employing office offer an employee the opportunity to take such a position. An employing office may not change the essential functions of the job in order to deny FMLA leave. *See* 825.220(b).

(2) An employee may be on a workers' compensation absence due to an on-the-job injury or illness which also qualifies as a serious health condition under FMLA. The workers' compensation absence and FMLA leave may run concurrently (subject to proper notice and designation by the employing office). At some point the health care provider providing medical care pursuant to the workers' compensation injury may certify the employee is able to return to work in a light duty position. If the employing office offers such a position, the employee is permitted but not required to accept the position. *See* 825.220(d). As a result, the employee may no longer qualify for payments from the workers' compensation benefit plan, but the employee is entitled to continue on unpaid FMLA leave either until the employee is able to return to the same or equivalent job the employee left or until the 12-week FMLA leave entitlement is exhausted. *See* 825.207 (e). If the employee returning from the workers' compensation injury is a qualified individual with a disability, he or she will have rights under the ADA.

(e) If an employing office requires certifications of an employee's fitness for duty to return to work, as permitted by FMLA under a uniform policy, it must comply with the ADA requirement that a fitness for duty physical be job-related and consistent with business necessity.

(f) Under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by the Pregnancy Discrimination Act, and as made applicable by the CAA, an employing office should provide the same benefits for women who are pregnant as the employing office provides to other employees with short-term disabilities. Because Title VII does not require employees to be employed for a certain period of time to be protected, an employee employed for less than 12 months by the employing office (and, therefore, not an ''eligible'' employee under FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA) may not be denied maternity leave if the employing office normally provides short-term disability benefits to employees with the same tenure who are experiencing other short-term disabilities.

(g) Under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA), 38 U.S.C. 4301, *et seq.*, veterans are entitled to receive all rights and benefits of employment that they would have obtained if they had been continuously employed. Therefore, under USERRA, a returning servicemember would be eligible for FMLA leave if the months and hours that he or she would have worked for the civilian employing office during the period of absence due to or necessitated by USERRA-covered service, combined with the months employed and the hours actually worked, meet the FMLA eligibility threshold of 12 months of employment and the hours of service requirement. *See* 825.110(b)(2)(i) and (c)(2) and 825.802(c).

(h) For further information on Federal antidiscrimination laws applied by section 201 of the CAA (2 U.S.C. 1311), including Title VII, the Rehabilitation Act, and the ADA, individuals are encouraged to contact the Office of Compliance.

ENDNOTES

1. In contrast, the committee report accompanying the bill containing the ADA Amendments Act of 2008 complied with section 102(b)(3) of the CAA and contained a provision that indicated an intent to apply the ADA Amendments to the legislative branch. Committee on Education and Labor, H.Rpt. 110–730 § VII (June 23, 2008).

2. By regulation, the Board can require employing offices to provide the additional rights and protections for servicemembers and their families added to the FMLA since 1996. This is because, unlike executive branch agencies, the rulemaking power of the Board (after Congressional approval) is ''an exercise of the rulemaking power of the House of Representatives and the Senate'' under the Constitution. 2 U.S.C. § 1431(1). The rulemaking power of Congress under the Constitution, U.S. Const. Art. 1, § 5, cl. 2, is a ''broad grant of authority'' that allows each house of Congress to determine its own internal rules bounded only by ''constitutional restraints and fundamental rights.'' *Consumers Union of U.S., Inc. v. Periodical Correspondents' Ass'n*, 515 F.2d 1341, 1343 (D.C. Cir. 1975); *United States v. Ballin*, 144 U.S. 1, 5 (1892).

Office of Compliance
advancing safety, health, and workplace rights in the legislative branch

Certification of Health Care Provider for Employee's Serious Health Condition
(Family and Medical Leave Act, as made applicable by the Congressional Accountability Act)

Form A

SECTION I: For Completion by the EMPLOYING OFFICE

INSTRUCTIONS to the EMPLOYING OFFICE: The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), as made applicable by the Congressional Accountability Act (CAA), provides that an employing office may require an employee seeking FMLA protections because of a need for leave due to a serious health condition to submit a medical certification issued by the employee's health care provider. Please complete Section I before giving this form to your employee. Your response is voluntary. While you are not required to use this form, you may not ask the employee to provide more information than allowed under the FMLA regulations issued by the Office of Compliance (OOC) Board of Directors (the Board) at 825.306-825.308. Employing offices must generally maintain records and documents relating to medical certifications, recertifications, or medical histories of employees created for FMLA purposes as confidential medical records in separate files/records from the usual personnel files, if the Americans with Disabilities Act and/or the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act apply, as made applicable by the CAA.

Employing office name and contact: _____

Employee's job title: _____ Regular work schedule: _____

Employee's essential job functions: _____

_____

Check if job description is attached: ☐

SECTION II: For Completion by the EMPLOYEE

INSTRUCTIONS to the EMPLOYEE: Please complete Section II before giving this form to your medical provider. The FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA, permits an employing office to require that you submit a timely, complete, and sufficient medical certification to support a request for FMLA leave due to your own serious health condition. If requested by your employing office, your response is required to obtain or retain the benefit of FMLA protections. Failure to provide a complete and sufficient medical certification may result in a denial of your FMLA request. OOC regulations at 825.313.Your employing office must give you at least 15 calendar days to return this form. OOC regulations at 825.305(b).

Your Name: _____
First Middle Last

SECTION III: For Completion by the HEALTH CARE PROVIDER

INSTRUCTIONS to the HEALTH CARE PROVIDER: Your patient has requested leave under the FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA. Answer, fully and completely, all applicable parts. Several questions seek a response as to the frequency or duration of a condition, treatment, etc. Your answer should be your best estimate based upon your medical knowledge, experience, and examination of the patient. Be as specific as you can; terms such as "lifetime," "unknown," or "indeterminate" may not be sufficient to determine FMLA coverage. Limit your responses to the condition for which the employee is seeking leave. Do not provide information about genetic tests

as defined in 29 C.F.R §1635.3(f), genetic services, as defined in 29 C.F.R. §1635.3(e), or the manifestation of disease or disorder in the employee's family members, 29 C.F.R. §1635.3(b). Please be sure to sign the form on the last page.

Provider's name and business address: _____

Type of practice / Medical specialty: _____

Telephone: (_____) _____ - _____ Fax: (_____) _____ - _____

PART A: MEDICAL FACTS

1. Approximate date condition commenced: _____

   Probable duration of condition: _____

   Mark below as applicable:

   Was the patient admitted for an overnight stay in a hospital, hospice, or residential medical care facility?
   ☐ No ☐ Yes If so, dates of admission:

   _____

   Date(s) you treated the patient for condition:

   _____

   Will the patient need to have treatment visits at least twice per year due to the condition? ☐ No ☐ Yes

   Was medication, other than over-the-counter medication, prescribed? ☐ No ☐ Yes

   Was the patient referred to other health care provider(s) for evaluation or treatment (*e.g.*, physical therapist)?
   ☐ No ☐ Yes If so, state the nature of such treatments and expected duration of treatment:

   _____

2. Is the medical condition pregnancy? ☐ No ☐ Yes If so, expected delivery date: _____

3. Use the information provided by the employing office in Section I to answer this question. If the employing office fails to provide a list of the employee's essential functions or a job description, answer these questions based upon the employee's own description of his/her job functions.

   Is the employee unable to perform any of his/her job functions due to the condition: ☐ No ☐ Yes

   If so, identify the job functions the employee is unable to perform:

   _____

4. Describe other relevant medical facts, if any, related to the condition for which the employee seeks leave (such medical facts may include symptoms, diagnosis, or any regimen of continuing treatment such as the use of specialized equipment):

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

_____

_____

_____

PART B: AMOUNT OF LEAVE NEEDED

5. Will the employee be incapacitated for a single continuous period of time due to his/her medical condition, including any time for treatment and recovery? ☐ No ☐ Yes

   If so, estimate the beginning and ending dates for the period of incapacity: _____

6. Will the employee need to attend follow-up treatment appointments or work part-time or on a reduced schedule because of the employee's medical condition? ☐ No ☐ Yes

   If so, are the treatments or the reduced number of hours of work medically necessary? ☐ No ☐ Yes

   Estimate treatment schedule, if any, including the dates of any scheduled appointments and the time required for each appointment, including any recovery period:

   _____

   Estimate the part-time or reduced work schedule the employee needs, if any:

   _____ hour(s) per day; _____ days per week from _____ through _____

7. Will the condition cause episodic flare-ups periodically preventing the employee from performing his/her job functions? ☐ No ☐ Yes

   Is it medically necessary for the employee to be absent from work during the flare-ups? ☐ No ☐ Yes

   If so, explain: _____

   _____

   Based upon the patient's medical history and your knowledge of the medical condition, estimate the frequency of flare-ups and the duration of related incapacity that the patient may have over the next 6 months (*e.g.*, 1 episode every 3 months lasting 1-2 days):

   Frequency: _____ times per _____ week(s) _____ month(s)

   Duration: _____ hours or _____ day(s) per episode

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: IDENTIFY QUESTION NUMBER WITH YOUR ADDITIONAL ANSWER.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Signature of Health Care Provider **Date**

Office of Compliance
advancing safety, health, and workplace rights in the legislative branch

Certification of Health Care Provider for Family Member's Serious Health Condition

(Family and Medical Leave Act, as made applicable by the Congressional Accountability Act)

Form B

SECTION I: For Completion by the EMPLOYING OFFICE

INSTRUCTIONS to the EMPLOYING OFFICE: The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), as made applicable by the Congressional Accountability Act (CAA), provides that an employing office may require an employee seeking FMLA protections because of a need for leave to care for a covered family member with a serious health condition to submit a medical certification issued by the health care provider of the covered family member. Please complete Section I before giving this form to your employee. Your response is voluntary. While you are not required to use this form, you may not ask the employee to provide more information than allowed under the FMLA regulations issued by the Office of Compliance (OOC) Board of Directors (the Board) at 825.306-825.308. Employing offices must generally maintain records and documents relating to medical certifications, recertifications, or medical histories of employees' family members created for FMLA purposes as confidential medical records in separate files/records from the usual personnel files, if the Americans with Disabilities Act and/or the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act apply, as made applicable by the CAA.

Employing office name and contact: _____

_____

SECTION II: For Completion by the EMPLOYEE

INSTRUCTIONS to the EMPLOYEE: Please complete Section II before giving this form to your family member or his/her medical provider. The FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA, permits an employing office to require that you submit a timely, complete, and sufficient medical certification to support a request for FMLA leave to care for a covered family member with a serious health condition. If requested by your employing office, your response is required to obtain or retain the benefit of FMLA protections. Failure to provide a complete and sufficient medical certification may result in a denial of your FMLA request. OOC regulations at 825.313. Your employing office must give you at least 15 calendar days to return this form to your employing office. OOC regulations at 825.305(b).

Your Name: _____
First Middle Last

Name of family member for whom you will provide care: _____
First Middle Last

Relationship of family member to you: _____

If family member is your son or daughter, date of birth: _____

Describe care you will provide to your family member and estimate leave needed to provide care:

_____

_____

_____

_____ _____

Employee Signature Date

SECTION III: For Completion by the HEALTH CARE PROVIDER

INSTRUCTIONS to the HEALTH CARE PROVIDER: The employee listed above has requested leave under the FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA, to care for your patient. Answer, fully and completely, all applicable parts below. Several questions seek a response as to the frequency or duration of a condition, treatment, etc. Your answer should be your best estimate based upon your medical knowledge, experience, and examination of the patient. Be as specific as you can; terms such as "lifetime," "unknown," or "indeterminate" may not be sufficient to determine FMLA coverage. Limit your responses to the condition for which the patient needs leave. Do not provide information about genetic tests as defined in 29 C.F.R §1635.3(f), or genetic services, as defined in 29 C.F.R. §1635.3(e). Page 3 provides space for additional information, should you need it. Please be sure to sign the form on the last page.

Provider's name and business address: _____

Type of practice / Medical specialty: _____

Telephone: (_____) _____ - _____ Fax: (_____) _____ - _____

PART A: MEDICAL FACTS

1. Approximate date condition commenced: _____

   Probable duration of condition: _____

   Was the patient admitted for an overnight stay in a hospital, hospice, or residential medical care facility?

   ☐ No ☐ Yes If so, dates of admission: _____

   Date(s) you treated the patient for condition: _____

   Was medication, other than over-the-counter medication, prescribed? ☐ No ☐ Yes

   Will the patient need to have treatment visits at least twice per year due to the condition? ☐ No ☐ Yes

   Was the patient referred to other health care provider(s) for evaluation or treatment (*e.g.*, physical therapist)?

   ☐ No ☐ Yes If so, state the nature of such treatments and expected duration of treatment:

   _____

   _____

2. Is the medical condition pregnancy? ☐ No ☐ Yes If so, expected delivery date: _____

3. Describe other relevant medical facts, if any, related to the condition for which the patient needs care (such medical facts may include symptoms, diagnosis, or any regimen of continuing treatment such as the use of specialized equipment):

   _____

   _____

_____

_____

PART B: AMOUNT OF CARE NEEDED: When answering these questions, keep in mind that your patient's need for care by the employee seeking leave may include assistance with basic medical, hygienic, nutritional, safety or transportation needs, or the provision of physical or psychological care:

4. Will the patient be incapacitated for a single continuous period of time, including any time for treatment and recovery? ☐ No ☐ Yes

   Estimate the beginning and ending dates for the period of incapacity: _____

   During this time, will the patient need care? ☐ No ☐ Yes

   Explain the care needed by the patient and why such care is medically necessary: _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

5. Will the patient require follow-up treatments, including any time for recovery? ☐ No ☐ Yes

   Estimate treatment schedule, if any, including the dates of any scheduled appointments and the time required for each appointment, including any recovery period:

   _____

   Explain the care needed by the patient, and why such care is medically necessary: _____

   _____

6. Will the patient require care on an intermittent or reduced schedule basis, including any time for recovery? ☐ No ☐ Yes

   Estimate the hours the patient needs care on an intermittent basis, if any:

   _____ hour(s) per day;_____ days per week from _____ through _____

   Explain the care needed by the patient, and why such care is medically necessary: _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

7. Will the condition cause episodic flare-ups periodically preventing the patient from participating in normal daily activities? ☐ No ☐ Yes

   Based upon the patient's medical history and your knowledge of the medical condition, estimate the frequency of flare-ups and the duration of related incapacity that the patient may have over the next 6 months (*e.g.*, 1 episode every 3 months lasting 1-2 days):

   Frequency: _____ times per _____ week(s) _____ month(s)

   Duration: _____ hours or _____ day(s) per episode

   Does the patient need care during these flare-ups? ☐ No ☐ Yes

   Explain the care needed by the patient, and why such care is medically necessary: _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: IDENTIFY QUESTION NUMBER WITH YOUR ADDITIONAL ANSWER.

_____

_____

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_____ _____

Signature of Health Care Provider Date:

Office of Compliance
advancing safety, health, and workplace rights in the legislative branch

Notice of Eligibility Rights and Responsibilities
(Family and Medical Leave Act, as made applicable by the Congressional Accountability Act)

Form C

In general, to be eligible a covered employee must have worked for an employing office for at least 12 months and have worked at least 1,250 hours in the 12 months preceding the leave. While use of this form by employing offices is optional, a fully completed form provides employees with the information required by the FMLA regulations issued by the Office of Compliance (OOC) Board of Directors (the Board) at 825.300(b), which must be provided within five business days of the employee notifying the employing office of the need for FMLA leave. Part B provides employees with information regarding their rights and responsibilities for taking FMLA leave, as required by the Board's FMLA regulations at 825.300(b), (c).

[Part A – NOTICE OF ELIGIBILITY]

TO: _____
Employee

FROM: _____
Employing Office Representative

DATE: _____

On _____, you informed us that you needed leave beginning on _____ for:

☐ The birth of a child, or placement of a child with you for adoption or foster care;

☐ Your own serious health condition;

☐ Because you are needed to care for your ☐ spouse; ☐ child; ☐ parent due to his/her serious health condition.

☐ Because of a qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that your ☐ spouse; ☐ son or daughter; ☐ parent is on covered active duty or call to covered active duty status with the Armed Forces.

☐ Because you are the ☐ spouse; ☐ son or daughter; ☐ parent; ☐ next of kin of a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness.

This Notice is to inform you that you:

☐ Are eligible for FMLA leave (See Part B below for Rights and Responsibilities)

☐ Are **not** eligible for FMLA leave, because (only one reason need be checked, although you may not be eligible for other reasons):

- ☐ You have not met the FMLA's 12-month length of service requirement. As of the first date of requested leave, you will have worked approximately _____ months towards this requirement.
- ☐ You have not met the FMLA's 1,250-hours-worked requirement.

If you have any questions, contact: _____ or view the FMLA poster located in _____.

[PART B-RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR TAKING FMLA LEAVE]

As explained in Part A, you meet the eligibility requirements for taking FMLA leave and still have FMLA leave available in the applicable 12-month period. **However, in order for us to determine whether your absence qualifies as FMLA leave, you must return the following information to us by _____.** (If a certification is requested, employing offices must allow at least 15 calendar days from receipt of this notice; additional time may be required in some circumstances.) If sufficient information is not provided in a timely manner, your leave may be denied.

☐ Sufficient certification to support your request for FMLA leave. A certification form that sets forth the information necessary to support your request ___ **is**/___ **is not** enclosed.

☐ Sufficient documentation to establish the required relationship between you and your family member.

☐ Other information needed (such as documentation for military family leave): _____

_____

_____

☐ No additional information requested

If your leave does qualify as FMLA leave, you will have the following **responsibilities** while on FMLA leave (only checked blanks apply):

☐ Contact _____ at _____ to make arrangements to continue to make your share of the premium payments on your health insurance to maintain health benefits while you are on leave. You have a minimum 30-day (or, indicate longer period, if applicable) grace period in which to make premium payments. If payment is not made timely, your group health insurance may be cancelled, provided we notify you in writing at least 15 days before the date that your health coverage will lapse, or, at our option, we may pay your share of the premiums during FMLA leave, and recover these payments from you upon your return to work.

☐ You will be required to use your available paid ___ **sick**, ___ **vacation**, and/or ___**other leave** during your FMLA absence. This means that you will receive your paid leave and the leave will also be considered protected FMLA leave and counted against your FMLA leave entitlement.

☐ Due to your status within the company, you are considered a "key employee" as defined in the FMLA. As a "key employee," restoration to employment may be denied following FMLA leave on the grounds that such restoration will cause substantial and grievous economic injury to us. We ___**have**/___ **have not** determined that restoring you to employment at the conclusion of FMLA leave will cause substantial and grievous economic harm to us.

☐ While on leave you will be required to furnish us with periodic reports of your status and intent to return to work every _____. (Indicate interval of periodic reports, as appropriate for the particular leave situation).

If the circumstances of your leave change, and you are able to return to work earlier than the date indicated on this form, you will be required to notify us at least two workdays prior to the date you intend to report for work.

If your leave does qualify as FMLA leave you will have the following **rights** while on FMLA leave:

- You have a right under the FMLA for up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave in a 12-month period calculated as:

☐ the calendar year (January – December).

☐ a fixed leave year based on_____.

☐ the 12-month period measured forward from the date of your first FMLA leave usage.

☐ a "rolling" 12-month period measured backward from the date of any FMLA leave usage.

- You have a right under the FMLA for up to 26 weeks of unpaid leave in a single 12-month period to care for a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness. This single 12-month period commenced on _____.
- Your health benefits must be maintained during any period of unpaid leave under the same conditions as if you continued to work.
- You must be reinstated to the same or an equivalent job with the same pay, benefits, and terms and conditions of employment on your return from FMLA-protected leave. (If your leave extends beyond the end of your FMLA entitlement, you do not have return rights under FMLA.)
- If you do not return to work following FMLA leave for a reason other than: 1) the continuation, recurrence, or onset of a serious health condition which would entitle you to FMLA leave; 2) the continuation, recurrence, or onset of a covered servicemember's serious injury or illness which would entitle you to FMLA leave; or 3) other circumstances beyond your control, you may be required to reimburse us for our share of health insurance premiums paid on your behalf during your FMLA leave.
- If we have not informed you above that you must use accrued paid leave while taking your unpaid FMLA leave entitlement, you have the right to have ____ **sick**, ____**vacation**, and/or ___ **other leave** run concurrently with your unpaid leave entitlement, provided you meet any applicable requirements of the leave policy. Applicable conditions related to the substitution of paid leave are referenced or set forth below. If you do not meet the requirements for taking paid leave, you remain entitled to take unpaid FMLA leave.

☐ For a copy of conditions applicable to sick/vacation/other leave usage please refer to _____ available at: _____.

☐ Applicable conditions for use of paid leave: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Once we obtain the information from you as specified above, we will inform you, within 5 business days, whether your leave will be designated as FMLA leave and count towards your FMLA leave entitlement. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact: _____ at _____.

Office of Compliance
advancing safety, health, and workplace rights in the legislative branch

Designation Notice

(Family and Medical Leave Act, as made applicable by the Congressional Accountability Act)

Form D

Leave covered under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), as made applicable by the Congressional Accountability Act (CAA), must be designated as FMLA-protected and the employing office must inform the employee of the amount of leave that will be counted against the employee's FMLA leave entitlement. In order to determine whether leave is covered under the FMLA, the employing office may request that the leave be supported by a certification. If the certification is incomplete or insufficient, the employing office must state in writing what additional information is necessary to make the certification complete and sufficient. While use of this form by employing offices is optional, a fully completed form provides an easy method of providing employees with the written information required by the regulations issued by the Office of Compliance (OOC) Board of Directors (the Board) at 825.300(d), 825.301, and 825.305(c).

To: _____

Date: _____

We have reviewed your request for leave under the FMLA and any supporting documentation that you have provided. We received your most recent information on _____ and decided:

____ **Your FMLA leave request is approved. All leave taken for this reason will be designated as FMLA leave.**

The FMLA requires that you notify us as soon as practicable if dates of scheduled leave change or are extended, or were initially unknown. Based on the information you have provided to date, we are providing the following information about the amount of time that will be counted against your leave entitlement:

____ Provided there is no deviation from your anticipated leave schedule, the following number of hours, days, or weeks will be counted against your leave entitlement: _____.

____ Because the leave you will need will be unscheduled, it is not possible to provide the hours, days, or weeks that will be counted against your FMLA entitlement at this time. You have the right to request this information once in a 30-day period (if leave was taken in the 30-day period).

Please be advised (check if applicable):

____ You have requested to use paid leave during your FMLA leave. Any paid leave taken for this reason will count against your FMLA leave entitlement.

____ We are requiring you to substitute or use paid leave during your FMLA leave.

____ You will be required to present a fitness-for-duty certificate to be restored to employment. If such certification is not timely received, your return to work may be delayed until certification is provided. A list of the essential functions of your position __ **is** __**is not** attached. If attached, the fitness-for-duty certification must address your ability to perform these functions.

____ **Additional information is needed to determine if your FMLA leave request can be approved:**

____ The certification you have provided is not complete and sufficient to determine whether the FMLA applies to your leave request. You must provide the following information no later than _____,
(Provide at least seven calendar days)
unless it is not practicable under the particular circumstances despite your diligent good faith efforts, or your leave may be denied.

_____
(Specify information needed to make certification complete and sufficient)

_____

____ We are exercising our right to have you obtain a second or third opinion medical certification at our expense, and we will provide further details at a later time.

____ Your FMLA Leave request is Not Approved.

____ The FMLA does not apply to your leave request.

____ You have exhausted your FMLA leave entitlement in the applicable 12-month period.

Office of Compliance
advancing safety, health, and workplace rights in the legislative branch

Certification of Qualifying Exigency for Military Family Leave

(Family and Medical Leave Act, as made applicable by the Congressional Accountability Act)

Form E

SECTION I: For Completion by the EMPLOYING OFFICE

INSTRUCTIONS to the EMPLOYING OFFICE: The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), as made applicable by the Congressional Accountability Act (CAA), provides that an employing office may require an employee seeking FMLA leave due to a qualifying exigency to submit a certification. Please complete Section I before giving this form to your employee. Your response is voluntary, and while you are not required to use this form, you may not ask the employee to provide more information than allowed under the FMLA regulations issued by the Office of Compliance (OOC) Board of Directors (the Board) at 825.309.

Employing office name: _____

Contact Information: _____

SECTION II: For Completion by the EMPLOYEE

INSTRUCTIONS to the EMPLOYEE: Please complete Section II fully and completely. The FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA, permits an employing office to require that you submit a timely, complete, and sufficient certification to support a request for FMLA leave due to a qualifying exigency. Several questions in this section seek a response as to the frequency or duration of the qualifying exigency. Be as specific as you can; terms such as "unknown," or "indeterminate" may not be sufficient to determine FMLA coverage. Your response is required to obtain a benefit. OOC regulations at 825.310. While you are not required to provide this information, failure to do so may result in a denial of your request for FMLA leave. Your employing office must give you at least 15 calendar days to return this form to your employing office.

Your Name: _____
First Middle Last

Name of military member on covered active duty or call to covered active duty status:

_____
First Middle Last

Relationship of military member to you: _____

Period of military member's covered active duty: _____

A complete and sufficient certification to support a request for FMLA leave due to a qualifying exigency includes written documentation confirming a military member's covered active duty or call to covered active duty status. Please check one of the following and attach the indicated document to support that the military member is on covered active duty or call to covered active duty status.

___ A copy of the military member's covered active duty orders is attached.

___ Other documentation from the military certifying that the military member is on covered active duty (or has been notified of an impending call to covered active duty) is attached.

___ I have previously provided my employing office with sufficient written documentation confirming the military member's covered active duty or call to covered active duty status.

PART A: QUALIFYING REASON FOR LEAVE

1. Describe the reason you are requesting FMLA leave due to a qualifying exigency (including the specific reason you are requesting leave):

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. A complete and sufficient certification to support a request for FMLA leave due to a qualifying exigency includes any available written documentation which supports the need for leave; such documentation may include a copy of a meeting announcement for informational briefings sponsored by the military, a document confirming the military member's Rest and Recuperation leave; a document confirming an appointment with a third party, such as a counselor or school official, or staff at a care facility; or a copy of a bill for services for the handling of legal or financial affairs. Available written documentation supporting this request for leave is attached.
Yes ☐ No ☐ None Available ☐

PART B: AMOUNT OF LEAVE NEEDED:

1. Approximate date exigency commenced: _____

Probable duration of exigency: _____

2. Will you need to be absent from work for a single continuous period of time due to the qualifying exigency? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If so, estimate the beginning and ending dates for the period of absence:

_____

3. Will you need to be absent from work periodically to address this qualifying exigency? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Estimate schedule of leave, including the dates of any scheduled meetings or appointments:

_____

_____

_____

Estimate the frequency and duration of each appointment, meeting, or leave event, including any travel time (*i.e.*, 1 deployment-related meeting every month lasting 4 hours):

Frequency: _____ times per _____ week(s) _____ month(s)

Duration: _____ hours _____ day(s) per event.

PART C:

If leave is requested to meet with a third party (such as to arrange for childcare, to attend counseling, to attend meetings with school, childcare or parental care providers, to make financial or legal arrangements, to act as the military member's representative before a federal, state, or local agency for purposes of obtaining, arranging or appealing military service benefits, or to attend any event sponsored by the military or military service organizations), a complete and sufficient certification includes the name, address, and appropriate contact

information of the individual or entity with whom you are meeting (*i.e.*, either the telephone or fax number or email address of the individual or entity). This information may be used by your employing office to verify that the information contained on this form is accurate.

Name of Individual: _____ Title: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: (_____)_____ Fax: (_____)_____

Email: _____

Describe nature of meeting: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

PART D:

I certify that the information I provided above is true and correct.

_____ _____

Signature of Employee Date:

Office of Compliance
advancing safety, health, and workplace rights in the legislative branch

Certification for Serious Injury or Illness of a Current Servicemember – for Military Family Leave
(Family and Medical Leave Act, as made applicable by the Congressional Accountability Act)

Form F

Notice to the EMPLOYING OFFICE

INSTRUCTIONS to the EMPLOYING OFFICE: The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), as made applicable by the Congressional Accountability Act (CAA), provides that an employing office may require an employee seeking FMLA leave due to a serious injury or illness of a current servicemember to submit a certification providing sufficient facts to support the request for leave. Your response is voluntary. While you are not required to use this form, you may not ask the employee to provide more information than allowed under the FMLA regulations issued by the Office of Compliance (OOC) Board of Directors (the Board) at 825.310. Employing offices must generally maintain records and documents relating to medical certifications, recertifications, or medical histories of employees or employees' family members created for FMLA purposes as confidential medical records in separate files/records from the usual personnel files, if the Americans with Disabilities Act and/or the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act apply, as made applicable by the CAA.

SECTION I: For Completion by the EMPLOYEE and/or the CURRENT SERVICEMEMBER for whom the Employee is Requesting Leave

INSTRUCTIONS to the EMPLOYEE or CURRENT SERVICEMEMBER: Please complete Section I before having Section II completed. The FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA, permits an employing office to require that an employee submit a timely, complete, and sufficient certification to support a request for FMLA leave due to a serious injury or illness of a servicemember. If requested by the employing office, your response is required to obtain or retain the benefit of FMLA-protected leave. Failure to do so may result in a denial of an employee's FMLA request. Board's regulations at 825.310(f). The employing office must give an employee at least 15 calendar days to return this form to the employing office.

SECTION II: For Completion by a UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE ("DOD") HEALTH CARE PROVIDER or a HEALTH CARE PROVIDER who is either: (1) a United States Department of Veterans Affairs ("VA") health care provider; (2) a DOD TRICARE network authorized private health care provider; (3) a DOD non-network TRICARE authorized private health care provider; or (4) a health care provider as defined in the OOC regulations at 825.125.

INSTRUCTIONS to the HEALTH CARE PROVIDER: The employee listed on Page 2 has requested leave under the FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA, to care for a family member who is a current member of the Regular Armed Forces, the National Guard, or the Reserves who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy, is otherwise in outpatient status, or is otherwise on the temporary disability retired list for a serious injury or illness. For purposes of FMLA leave, a serious injury or illness is one that was incurred in the line of duty on active duty in the Armed Forces or that existed before the beginning of the member's active duty and was aggravated by service in the line of duty on active duty in the Armed Forces that may render the servicemember medically unfit to perform the duties of his or her office, grade, rank, or rating.

A complete and sufficient certification to support a request for FMLA leave due to a covered servicemember's serious injury or illness includes written documentation confirming that the servicemember's injury or illness was incurred in the line of duty on active duty or if not, that the current servicemember's injury or illness existed before the beginning of the servicemember's active duty and was aggravated by service in the line of duty on active duty in the Armed Forces, and that the current servicemember is undergoing treatment for such injury or illness by a health care provider listed above. Answer, fully and completely, all applicable parts. Several questions seek a response as

to the frequency or duration of a condition, treatment, etc. Your answer should be your best estimate based upon your medical knowledge, experience, and examination of the patient. Be as specific as you can; terms such as "lifetime," "unknown," or "indeterminate" may not be sufficient to determine FMLA coverage. Limit your responses to the servicemember's condition for which the employee is seeking leave. Do not provide information about genetic tests, as defined in 29 C.F.R. §1635.3(f), or genetic services, as defined in 29 C.F.R. §1635.3(e).

SECTION I: For Completion by the EMPLOYEE and/or the CURRENT SERVICEMEMBER for whom the Employee Is Requesting Leave:

(This section must be completed first before any of the below sections can be completed by a health care provider.)

Part A: EMPLOYEE INFORMATION

Name and Address of Employing Office (this is the employing office of the employee requesting leave to care for the current servicemember):

_____

Name of Employee Requesting Leave to Care for Current Servicemember:

_____

Name of the Current Servicemember (for whom employee is requesting leave to care):

_____

Relationship of Employee to the Current Servicemember:

☐ Spouse ☐ Parent ☐ Son ☐ Daughter ☐ Next of Kin

Part B: SERVICEMEMBER INFORMATION

(1) Is the Servicemember a Current Member of the Regular Armed Forces, the National Guard or Reserves?
☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please provide the servicemember's military branch, rank and unit currently assigned to:

_____

Is the servicemember assigned to a military medical treatment facility as an outpatient or to a unit established for the purpose of providing command and control of members of the Armed Forces receiving medical care as outpatients (such as a medical hold or warrior transition unit)?
☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please provide the name of the medical treatment facility or unit:

_____

(2) Is the Servicemember on the Temporary Disability Retired List (TDRL)?
☐ Yes ☐ No

Part C: CARE TO BE PROVIDED TO THE SERVICEMEMBER

Describe the Care to Be Provided to the Current Servicemember and an Estimate of the Leave Needed to Provide the Care:

_____

_____

SECTION II: For Completion by a United States Department of Defense ("DOD") Health Care Provider or a Health Care Provider who is either: (1) a United States Department of Veterans Affairs ("VA") health care provider; (2) a DOD TRICARE network authorized private health care provider; (3) a DOD non-network TRICARE authorized private health care provider; or (4) a health care provider as defined in the OOC regulations at 825.125.

If you are unable to make certain of the military-related determinations contained below in Part B, you are permitted to rely upon determinations from an authorized DOD representative (such as a DOD recovery care coordinator).

(Please ensure that Section I above has been completed before completing this section. Please be sure to sign the form on the last page.)

Part A: HEALTH CARE PROVIDER INFORMATION

Health Care Provider's Name and Business Address:

_____

Type of Practice/Medical Specialty:

_____

Please state whether you are either: (1) a DOD health care provider; (2) a VA health care provider; (3) a DOD TRICARE network authorized private health care provider; (4) a DOD non-network TRICARE authorized private health care provider; or (5) a health care provider as defined in the OOC regulations at 825.125:

_____

Telephone: (_____) _____ - _____ Fax: (_____) _____ - _____

Email: _____

PART B: MEDICAL STATUS

(1) The current Servicemember's medical condition is classified as (Check One of the Appropriate Boxes):

☐ **(VSI) Very Seriously Ill/Injured** – Illness/Injury is of such a severity that life is imminently endangered. Family members are requested at bedside immediately. (Please note this is an internal DOD casualty assistance designation used by DOD healthcare providers.)

☐ **(SI) Seriously Ill/Injured** – Illness/injury is of such severity that there is cause for immediate concern, but there is no imminent danger to life. Family members are requested at bedside. (Please note this is an internal DOD casualty assistance designation used by DOD healthcare providers.)

☐ **OTHER Ill/Injured** – a serious injury or illness that may render the servicemember medically unfit to perform the duties of the member's office, grade, rank, or rating.

☐ **NONE OF THE ABOVE** (Note to Employee: If this box is checked, you may still be eligible to take leave to care for a covered family member with a "serious health condition" under 825.113 of the FMLA,

as made applicable by the CAA. If such leave is requested, you may be required to complete the OOC's optional certification form (Form B) or an employing office-provided form seeking the same information.)

(2) Is the current Servicemember being treated for a condition which was incurred or gravitated by service in the line of duty on active duty in the Armed Forces? ☐ Yes ☐ No

(3) Approximate date condition commenced: _____

(4) Probable duration of condition and/or need for care: _____

(5) Is the servicemember undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy for this condition?
☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please describe medical treatment, recuperation or therapy:

_____

PART C: SERVICEMEMBER'S NEED FOR CARE BY FAMILY MEMBER

(1) Will the servicemember need care for a single continuous period of time, including any time for treatment and recovery? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, estimate the beginning and ending dates for this period of time:

_____

(2) Will the servicemember require periodic follow-up treatment appointments? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, estimate the treatment schedule: _____

(3) Is there a medical necessity for the servicemember to have periodic care for these follow-up treatment appointments? ☐ Yes ☐ No.

(4) Is there a medical necessity for the servicemember to have periodic care for other than scheduled follow-up treatment appointments (*e.g.*, episodic flare-ups of medical condition)? ☐ Yes ☐ No.

If yes, please estimate the frequency and duration of the periodic care:

_____

_____

Signature of Health Care Provider: _____ **Date**:_____

Office of Compliance
advancing safety, health, and workplace rights in the legislative branch

Certification for Serious Injury or Illness of a Veteran for Military Caregiver Leave

(Family and Medical Leave Act, as made applicable by the Congressional Accountability Act)

Form G

Notice to the EMPLOYING OFFICE

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), as made applicable by the Congressional Accountability Act (CAA), provides that an employing office may require an employee seeking military caregiver leave under the FMLA leave due to a serious injury or illness of a covered veteran to submit a certification providing sufficient facts to support the request for leave. Your response is voluntary. While you are not required to use this form, you may not ask the employee to provide more information than allowed under the FMLA regulations issued by the Office of Compliance (OOC) Board of Directors (the Board) at 825.310. Employing offices must generally maintain records and documents relating to medical certifications, recertifications, or medical histories of employees or employees' family members, created for FMLA purposes as confidential medical records in separate files/records from the usual personnel files, if the Americans with Disabilities Act and/or the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act apply, as made applicable by the CAA.

SECTION I: For Completion by the EMPLOYEE and/or the VETERAN for whom the employee is requesting leave

INSTRUCTIONS to the EMPLOYEE and/or VETERAN: Please complete Section I before having Section II completed. The FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA, permits an employing office to require that an employee submit a timely, complete, and sufficient certification to support a request for military caregiver leave under the FMLA leave due to a serious injury or illness of a covered veteran. If requested by the employing office, your response is required to obtain or retain the benefit of FMLA-protected leave. Failure to do so may result in a denial of an employee's FMLA request. OOC regulations at 825.310(g). The employing office must give an employee at least 15 calendar days to return this form to the employing office.

(This section must be completed before Section II can be completed by a health care provider.)

Part A: EMPLOYEE INFORMATION

Name and address of employing office (this is the employing office of the employee requesting leave to care for a veteran):

_____

Name of employee requesting leave to care for a veteran:

_____
First Middle Last

Name of veteran (for whom employee is requesting leave):

_____
First Middle Last

Relationship of employee to veteran:

☐ Spouse ☐ Parent ☐ Son ☐ Daughter ☐ Next of Kin ☐ _____ (please specify relationship):

Part B: VETERAN INFORMATION

(1) Date of the veteran's discharge: _____

(2) Was the veteran **dishonorably** discharged or released from the Armed Forces (including the National Guard or Reserves)? ☐ Yes ☐ No

(3) Please provide the veteran's military branch, rank and unit at the time of discharge:

_____

(4) Is the veteran receiving medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy for an injury or illness?
☐ Yes ☐ No

Part C: CARE TO BE PROVIDED TO THE VETERAN

Describe the care to be provided to the veteran and an estimate of the leave needed to provide the care:

_____

_____

SECTION II: For completion by: (1) a United States Department of Defense ("DOD") health care provider; (2) a United States Department of Veterans Affairs ("VA") health care provider; (3) a DOD TRICARE network authorized private health care provider; (4) a DOD non-network TRICARE authorized private health care provider; or (5) a health care provider as defined in the OOC regulations at 825.125.

INSTRUCTIONS to the HEALTH CARE PROVIDER: The employee named in Section I has requested leave under the military caregiver leave provision of the FMLA, as made applicable by the CAA, to care for a family member who is a veteran. For purposes of FMLA military caregiver leave, a serious injury or illness means an injury or illness incurred by the servicemember in the line of duty on active duty in the Armed Forces (or that existed before the beginning of the servicemember's active duty and was aggravated by service in the line of duty on active duty in the Armed Forces) and manifested itself before or after the servicemember became a veteran, and is:

(i) a continuation of a serious injury or illness that was incurred or aggravated when the covered veteran was a member of the Armed Forces and rendered the servicemember unable to perform the duties of the servicemember's office, grade, rank, or rating; or
(ii) a physical or mental condition for which the covered veteran has received a U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Service Related Disability Rating (VASRD) of 50 percent or greater, and such VASRD rating is based, in whole or in part, on the condition precipitating the need for military caregiver leave; or
(iii) a physical or mental condition that substantially impairs the covered veteran's ability to secure or follow a substantially gainful occupation by reason of a disability or disabilities related to military service, or would do so absent treatment; or
(iv) an injury, including a psychological injury, on the basis of which the covered veteran has been enrolled in the Department of Veterans' Affairs Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers.

A complete and sufficient certification to support a request for FMLA military caregiver leave due to a covered veteran's serious injury or illness includes written documentation confirming that the veteran's injury or illness was incurred in the line of duty on active duty or existed before the beginning of the veteran's active duty and was aggravated by service in the line of duty on active duty, and that the veteran is undergoing treatment, recuperation, or therapy for such injury or illness by a health care provider listed above. Answer fully and completely all applicable parts. Several questions seek a response as to the frequency or duration of a condition, treatment, etc. Your answer should be your best estimate based upon your medical knowledge, experience, and examination of the patient. Be as specific as you can; terms such as "lifetime," "unknown," or "indeterminate" may not be sufficient to determine FMLA military caregiver leave coverage. Limit your responses to the veteran's condition for which the

employee is seeking leave. Do not provide information about genetic tests, as defined in 29 C.F.R. §1635.3(f), or genetic services, as defined in 29 C.F.R. §1635.3(e).

(Please ensure that Section I has been completed before completing this section. Please be sure to sign the form on the last page and return this form to the employee requesting leave (See Section I, Part A above). **DO NOT SEND THE COMPLETED FORM TO THE OFFICE OF COMPLIANCE.)**

Part A: HEALTH CARE PROVIDER INFORMATION

Health care provider's name and business address: _____

_____

Telephone: (_____) _____ - _____ Fax: (_____) _____ - _____

Email: _____

Type of Practice/Medical Specialty: _____

Please indicate if you are:

- ☐ a DOD health care provider
- ☐ a VA health care provider
- ☐ a DOD TRICARE network authorized private health care provider
- ☐ a DOD non-network TRICARE authorized private health care provider
- ☐ other health care provider

PART B: MEDICAL STATUS

Note: If you are unable to make certain of the military-related determinations contained in Part B, you are permitted to rely upon determinations from an authorized DOD representative (such as, DOD Recovery Care Coordinator) or an authorized VA representative.

(1) The Veteran's medical condition is:

- ☐ A continuation of a serious injury or illness that was incurred or aggravated when the covered veteran was a member of the Armed Forces and rendered the servicemember unable to perform the duties of the servicemember's office, grade, rank, or rating.
- ☐ A physical or mental condition for which the covered veteran has received a U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Service Related Disability Rating (VASRD) of 50% or higher, and such VASRD rating is based, in whole or in part, on the condition precipitating the need for military caregiver leave.
- ☐ A physical or mental condition that substantially impairs the covered veteran's ability to secure or follow a substantially gainful occupation by reason of a disability or disabilities related to military service, or would do so absent treatment.
- ☐ An injury, including a psychological injury, on the basis of which the covered veteran is enrolled in the Department of Veterans' Affairs Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers.
- ☐ None of the above.

(2) Is the veteran being treated for a condition which was incurred or aggravated by service in the line of duty on active duty in the Armed Forces? ☐ Yes ☐ No

(3) Approximate date condition commenced: _____

(4) Probable duration of condition and/or need for care: _____

(5) Is the veteran undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy for this condition? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please describe medical treatment, recuperation or therapy: _____

_____

PART C: VETERAN'S NEED FOR CARE BY FAMILY MEMBER

"Need for care" encompasses both physical and psychological care. It includes situations where, for example, due to his or her serious injury or illness, the veteran is unable to care for his or her own basic medical, hygienic, or nutritional needs or safety, or is unable to transport him or herself to the doctor. It also includes providing psychological comfort and reassurance which would be beneficial to the veteran who is receiving inpatient or home care.

(1) Will the veteran need care for a single continuous period of time, including any time for treatment and recovery? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, estimate the beginning and ending dates for this period of time: _____

(2) Will the veteran require periodic follow-up treatment appointments? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, estimate the treatment schedule: _____

(3) Is there a medical necessity for the veteran to have periodic care for these follow-up treatment appointments? ☐ Yes ☐ No

(4) Is there a medical necessity for the veteran to have periodic care for other than scheduled follow-up treatment appointments (*e.g.*, episodic flare-ups of medical condition)? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please estimate the frequency and duration of the periodic care: _____

_____

_____

Signature of Health Care Provider: _____ **Date**: _____

AUTHORIZING THE USE OF THE CAPITOL GROUNDS FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA SPECIAL OLYMPICS LAW ENFORCEMENT TORCH RUN

AUTHORIZING THE USE OF THE CAPITOL GROUNDS FOR THE 2ND ANNUAL FALLEN FIREFIGHTERS CONGRESSIONAL FLAG PRESENTATION CEREMONY

AUTHORIZING THE USE OF THE CAPITOL GROUNDS FOR AN EVENT TO COMMEMORATE THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MILLION MAN MARCH

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following House concurrent resolutions, which are at the desk: H. Con. Res. 70, H. Con. Res. 73, and H. Con. Res. 74.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolutions en bloc.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the resolutions be agreed to and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The concurrent resolutions were agreed to.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2015

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Thursday, September 17; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of H.J. Res. 61, with the time until 11 a.m. equally divided between the two leaders or their designees; finally, that the filing deadline for all second-degree amendments be at 10:30 a.m. tomorrow.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned, following the remarks of Senator DAINES.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Montana.

CYBER SECURITY

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, this generation is at the forefront of technological advances. In fact, it is making the United States and this generation that lives here one of the best networked in history, in fact, not only here but around the world.

The need for new and better technology to accommodate such a generation has also left a gaping hole in the security of our country. In recent years, cyber security attacks and breaches have multiplied and left American citizens incredibly vulnerable. Make no mistake, the cyber security of the United States is in great danger. But, unfortunately, proper precautions and reforms needed to set a better course have yet to be taken.

Just look at last week's headlines. USA Today recently reported hackers have attempted to compromise the Department of Energy over 1,100 times between 2010 and 2014, and these attackers have been successful over 150 times.

In a 2013 breach these attackers gained access to the information of over 104,000 Energy Department employees. After these attacks, the auditors noted ''unclear lines of responsibility'' and ''lack of awareness by responsible officials.'' Yet nothing was done to mitigate the potential for future attacks.

Our government needs to stop being content with simply being reactive to serious cyber threats. There are no deterrents or consequences to these foreign attackers. Not one person at the Department of Energy has faced consequences. The CIO of the Office of Personnel Management, or OPM, remains in charge after one of the largest hacks on Federal employees.

In an age ruled by technology, it is our responsibility to make sure we take the necessary steps to protect the information of the American people.

This past Monday I held the first biannual Montana High Tech Jobs Summit in my hometown of Bozeman at my alma mater, Montana State University. We had over 600 Montanans attend.

We need to be more disruptive of the status quo in the technology sector, rather than passively sitting by as other nations innovate and leave us behind. We need to encourage STEM education in our classrooms and bring more people into the science and technology sector.

In my home State of Montana, high-tech jobs are growing 10 times faster than the statewide job growth rate. Last year alone, 40 percent of the wage growth in our entire State took place in Gallatin County, the county where Bozeman is located, and it has become a hub of technology. Yet too often Montana kids have to leave to find work. We need more high-paying technology jobs in Montana.

During my time at the cloud computing company RightNow Technologies, which was founded, started up, and grew to a company that was acquired by Oracle for $1.8 billion, over the 12 years I was there, I saw firsthand how Montana is becoming a leading hub for innovation and high-tech job growth. Montana has a qualified workforce and an unparalleled quality of life that makes our State a wise investment for tech companies. In fact, where the campus of our software company is located in Bozeman we are just minutes away from the Gallatin River. The Gallatin River is where the movie ''A River Runs Through It'' was filmed, where Brad Pitt made his debut, and directed by Robert Redford.

This tech summit showcased the great work done in our State, a State where we can combine the quality of life of fishing, hunting, backpacking, mountain climbing, spending time with family outdoors with technology and create a world-class high-tech company, because millennials want to have that quality of life, but they also want to have a world-class career in building global companies.

This tech summit allowed our Nation's tech leaders to share their views and experiences and encouraged our future tech leaders to lead. It provided a unique opportunity for our State's tech and business leaders to learn from one another. We had a great slate of speakers and panelists from across the technology industry: Laef Olson, the senior VP for cloud operations at Oracle; Dr. Dava Newman, a Montana native and the new Deputy Administrator at NASA. We had two of the five FCC Commissioners, Ajit Pai and Michael O'Rielly. We had Doug Burgum, the former CEO and chairman of Great Plains Software. Great Plains Software was started up in North Dakota. He grew that company. It was acquired by Microsoft in 2001 for $1.1 billion, the largest acquisition at that time for Microsoft. Now Doug is cofounder and partner of Arthur Ventures and chairman of the Kilbourne Group. We had Craig Barrett. Dr. Craig Barrett received his undergrad, master's, and Ph.D. at Stanford and was a professor at Stanford for 10 years in metallurgical engineering and then went to this small company in 1974 called Intel. There, he rose all the way to CEO, and in fact, worked with Gordon Moore, who became CEO of Intel and who is famous for Moore's law.

Mike Goguen, the managing director of Sequoia Capital, a company that was an early initial investor in companies such as Google, YouTube, Apple, PayPal. We had Will Lansing, a former board member of RightNow Technologies who is now the CEO of FICO. We had Matt Rose, the BNSF Railway executive chairman.

We had panelists as well who explored issues of critical importance to our technology sector, cyber security infrastructure, and our economy. All convened in Bozeman on Monday. One doesn't think of the Gallatin Valley as being a hub of technology—maybe the Silicon Valley—but as the world is changing, as technology removes geography as a constraint, you have a quality of life that is exceptional, where