
HOW TO TALK TO YOUR EMPLOYER ABOUT ELDERCARE

If, as an employee, you find that you are:

- ▲ Having excessive personal phone use during working hours
- ▲ Having tardiness and absenteeism that exceeds company standards and your employer has already started disciplinary actions
- ▲ You are using claims for sickness benefits that are disproportionate to others in your work group
- ▲ You are often distracted, experience mood swings, or harbor unreasonable hostility, sometimes resulting in poor work performance and problems with co workers

Then you may be dealing with stress from dealing with eldercare caregiving issues.

Tips For Talking With A Supervisor or Boss:

- ▲ Ask your supervisor to suggest a good time for the two of you to meet, letting him or her know briefly why you need to talk.
- ▲ Prior to speaking with your employer, think about what you actually need from him or her and even suggest some possible ways to meet those needs without negatively affecting your work. For example, an employed caregiver may ask for an additional half hour of lunchtime on Tuesdays so that he can check in on a loved one at mealtime. In turn, he may offer to come to work 30 minutes earlier one workday each week.
- ▲ If you feel nervous or are afraid that you will be “too emotional” when trying to talk, let your employer know how you feel at the beginning of your meeting. When a person feels stressed or nervous, it helps to mention those feelings – once acknowledged, they become less of a burden.
- ▲ A simple thank-you note to an understanding employer is often appreciated.

If, you acknowledge to your employer that there is an issue with eldercare, you can ask if any of the following may be available to you through your company:

- ▲ Community resources
- ▲ Either paid or unpaid leave of absence to care for relatives, or friends
- ▲ Flex-time
- ▲ Compressed work schedules that allow employees to work fewer days
- ▲ Telecommuting
- ▲ Job sharing
- ▲ Employee leave sharing where employees can donate unused leave time to others
- ▲ Shift exchange as needed or on an emergency basis
- ▲ Funeral and bereavement leave policies
- ▲ Employee Assistance Programs

You are not alone. The national trend is for family members to care for their aging loved ones. Although this can be personally rewarding, it can often be overwhelming. An average caregiver spends 18 hours a week on eldercare issues. In some cases this is in addition to taking care of children and holding down a full time job.

Your employer wants to help, it is a win/win situation for both of you to discuss this subject honestly and openly. Make an appointment with your Human Resources Office today and get the assistance you need.

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