**Expert Advice on Jury Duty and Witness Duty Leaves**

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**Adedayo:** Welcome to Leading Edge Online. My name is Adedayo Adeniyi. I am the Director of Leadership and Organizational Development in the Office of the Vice President for Human Resources.

Joining me today is Sharon Williams. Sharon is the Senior Employee Relations Specialist in Human Resources. Welcome Sharon.

**Sharon:** Thank you!

**Adedayo:** Sharon, today our focus and topic is going to be Jury Duty. Purdue University provides many forms of leave to its employees, and when we think about all of the leave types, and we think about Jury Duty Leave in comparison to the other leaves, is Jury Duty one of the more complex, or one of the more simpler leaves to actually implement?

**Sharon:** Jury duty is one of the simpler leaves to implement.

**Adedayo:** Sharon please explain what makes Jury Duty one of the simpler leaves.

**Sharon:** An employee lets the supervisor know they have been summoned to jury duty, the employee provides the supervisor with a copy of their summons (either before or after they go to jury duty) and then we fill out the forms and the employee goes on leave. Very simple!

**Adedayo:** Wow, so to your point, it’s pretty straightforward.

**Sharon:** Very much so.

**Adedayo:** Sharon, what I’d like to do now, is talk through each of the steps involved in Jury Duty Leave, and if possible, we’d appreciate you sharing some tips with each one of the steps. So when we look at Step 1 - Collecting a copy of the jury duty summons from the employee. What tips would you have for supervisors?

**Sharon:** I would encourage the supervisors not to get hung up on whether or not they have the form when the employee requests the leave. It may be that the court provides the employee with the form after they've already attended jury duty, and so if the employee tells you they need to go, you need to let them go.

**Adedayo:** Step 2 - of the Jury Duty Leave process deals with forms the employee uses. It’s really important that the supervisor understand a little bit about the forms. Sharon can you talk to us a little bit about what forms would be used for exempt and non-exempt employees?

**Sharon:** Exempt employees would either use a Form 33 Absence, or if their department has access to online leave requests, they would simply go online through SAP and request that leave. Non-exempt employees could also complete a Form 33 Absence if their department requests them to do so, in addition to that, there’s a place on their time card for them to fill in other leave with pay.
Adedayo: Sharon, you mentioned the SAP Employee Self Service, or the Form 33. Is it up to the supervisor which one they use, or is that something that’s actually determined by the department or area?

Sharon: If the department has access to online leave requests they would use the online version.

Adedayo: So it’s not really the supervisor’s choice, it’s something that the department would let them know. If a person is not sure which one to use, where should they go?

Sharon: They should ask their supervisor and their supervisor should know. If their supervisor is unsure, then Human Resources or their business office can help them.

Adedayo: Step 3 gets into the approval process, where the supervisor actually approves the leave. Can you give us any tips here, in terms of what the supervisor needs to do?

Sharon: If the supervisor receives an online leave request, they can approve it and that’s their electronic signature noting they approved it. If it’s a form, the supervisor should sign the form which notes their approval. The supervisor should get that form to the business office within 24 hours so that the business office can continue the process.

Adedayo: If a supervisor needs assistance with completing the leave process, specifically the Jury Duty Leave process, where should a supervisor go?

Sharon: The supervisor can ask initial questions of the business office, but they can also come to the Human Resources, Benefits -Leaves area. Also Human Resources, Employee Relations can assist. Housing and Food Services, Physical Facilities and Information Technology have specifically dedicated Human Resource areas that can help supervisors in those areas.

Adedayo: So it sounds as though supervisors have many avenues of help, but if supervisors have process questions they may go to their business office but if it’s more of a behavioral question, supervisors can come to Human Resources?

Sharon: Either that, or if it’s a policy interpretation question supervisors should come to Human Resources since we own the policy. Human Resources will be the best source for interpretation of our policy.

Adedayo: Sharon, thank you so much, those were excellent tips, we really appreciate that, sometimes it’s nice to hear from the expert, and get an expert opinion. Now, what are some of the consequences if the supervisor doesn’t administer this particular Jury Duty policy correctly?

Sharon: Well, it’s important for the supervisor to remember that they cannot deny Jury Duty Leave. Once an employee has been summoned, under Indiana Law they are required to show up, and if that employee fails to show up, they can be charged with criminal contempt. So it is important for supervisors to allow employees to go on Jury Duty Leave.
Adedayo: Sharon, it’s often said that “experience is a good teacher”, can you please draw on some of the experiences you’ve had and give us some takeaways, some things you’d like us to know?

Sharon: In one situation the individual worked the night shift, the supervisor thought the employee should come in for their shift, even though they had gone to jury duty during the day. This is not the case. If someone goes out on jury duty and they have a night shift, they are not required to come in for work that night. If it’s a day shift they aren’t required to come in for any part of the shift.

Adedayo: Perfect!

Sharon: Another example stresses the importance of knowing what kind of jury service the employee will have. For example, the local courts usually have trials that are 1-2 days, so a supervisor can plan work around that. If an individual is called for Grand Jury duty, that’s in Northern Indiana, the individual would probably serve for an 18-month period of time, and be out 1-2 days a month over that 18 months. So there are different types of service to plan for.

Adedayo: So that’s a very good point in terms of both the jury duty, as well as the witness duty aspect. As supervisors we have to review the information closely to understand what the expectation will be for the employee.

Sharon: Correct.

Adedayo: Sharon, thank you for sharing your knowledge with the Leading Edge Online audience. Would you like to leave the audience with any parting words or thoughts?

Sharon: I’d like supervisors to remember that Jury or Witness Duty Leave is one of the many leaves the University is required to provide by law, so following the easy steps discussed in this session will help you process leaves correctly.

Adedayo: Sharon, thank you very much!

Sharon: You’re welcome!

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