

# Iowa Leave Laws

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*This material is for general informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. For current and accurate guidance, please consult legal counsel in your jurisdiction.*

<b>Iowa Leave Laws</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Paid Time Off (PTO) in Iowa</b>	<b>2</b>
Leave Quota	2
Accruals	2
Roll Over	3
Statutory Provisions Addressing Vacation Pay	3
Payment of Accrued, Unused Vacation on Termination	3
<b>Sick Leave in Iowa</b>	<b>5</b>
Federal Laws – Leave Quota	5
Iowa State Laws	5
<b>Maternity, Paternity, FMLA in Iowa</b>	<b>6</b>
Federal law	6
Additional State Laws in Iowa	6
Iowa Pregnancy Disability Leave	6
<b>Bereavement Leave in Iowa (Funeral Leave)</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Jury Duty Leave in Iowa</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Military Leave in Iowa</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Voting Leave in Iowa</b>	<b>9</b>

# Paid Time Off (PTO) in Iowa

## Leave Quota

Iowa law requires 0 vacation days. In Iowa, state law doesn't require employers to provide vacation leave.

Iowa labor laws and regulations do not cover vacation leave and pay, meaning employers are not legally obliged to provide employees with vacation days. Each company can decide its vacation policies. Employers can choose to provide vacation benefits as it is one of the most desired perks for employees. If an employer chooses to implement vacation leave, it must comply with its established policies or employment contract.

State employees are entitled to some paid vacation.

## Accruals

Accruals are not required in Iowa, but they are widely used by businesses.

Employers are in general free to develop their system for vacation accrual, such as weekly, semimonthly, monthly basis, etc. It is usually based on the pay period.

An employer may cap the amount of leave an employee may accrue to prevent an employee from accruing vacation over a certain number of hours.

For new employees, the employer may set a reasonable period during which no vacation is accrued.

## Roll Over

A Use-It-or-Lose-It policy is not prohibited. An employer is not obligated to let employees roll over unused leave into the following year.

Employers in Iowa are free to adopt a “Use-It-or-Lose-It” vacation policy. A Use-It-or-Lose-It vacation policy means that an employer doesn’t have to pay employees for unused vacation leave at the end of the year. Consequently, an employee loses all remaining vacation days, unpaid. However, employees must be given the proper opportunity to take a vacation and must be made aware of the policy.

## Statutory Provisions Addressing Vacation Pay

An employer must abide by the terms of its policy or employment contract if it decides to offer paid vacation benefits. Paid vacation benefits are considered “wages”.

## Payment of Accrued, Unused Vacation on Termination

An employer’s policy or employment contract governs this issue.

An employer may legally establish a policy or enter into a contract that prohibits employees from receiving payment for accrued vacation leave upon termination of employment.

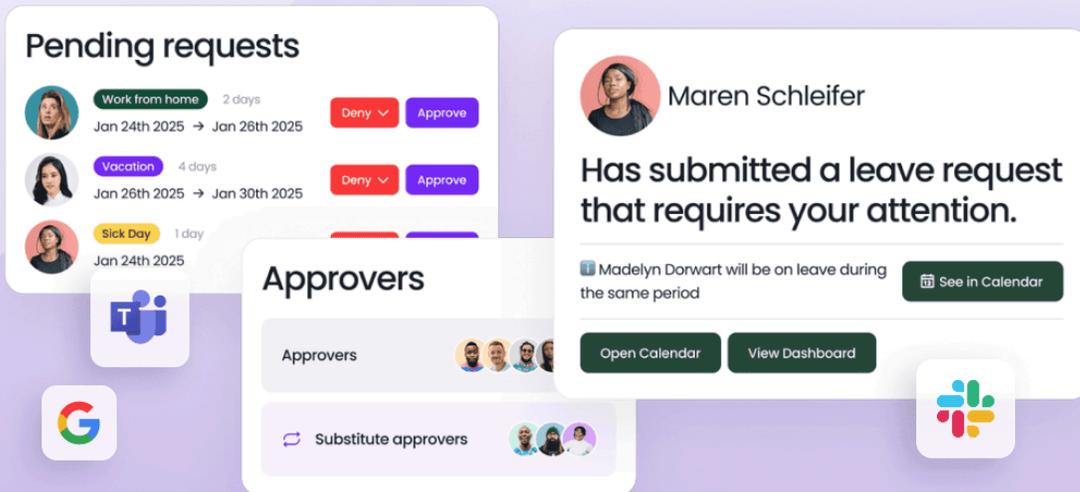
Employers may refuse to pay employees for accrued vacation leave upon separation or disqualify them from receiving payment for the leave if they fail to comply with specific requirements outlined in their contract (such as giving two weeks’ notice).

If the employer's established policy or employment contract is silent on the subject, the employer is not required to pay accrued vacation leave upon termination of employment.

An employer is only required to pay a terminating employee for unused vacation if the employer has a contract, policy, or procedure in place to do so.

## Manage All Employee Time Off In Minutes, Not Days

- ✔ Slack, Teams, and Calendar integrations
- ✔ Custom leave rules, accruals, and public holidays
- ✔ Compliant with Leave Laws in every location
- ✔ Rollout in 15 minutes, with live setup call



The screenshot displays the Vacation Tracker interface. On the left, a 'Pending requests' panel lists three requests: 'Work from home' (2 days, Jan 24th 2025 - Jan 26th 2025), 'Vacation' (4 days, Jan 26th 2025 - Jan 30th 2025), and 'Sick Day' (1 day, Jan 24th 2025). Each request has 'Deny' and 'Approve' buttons. Below this is an 'Approvers' section with a list of approvers and a 'Substitute approvers' section. On the right, a notification for Maren Schleifer states 'Has submitted a leave request that requires your attention.' Below the notification, it indicates 'Madelyn Dorwart will be on leave during the same period' with a 'See in Calendar' button. At the bottom of the notification are 'Open Calendar' and 'View Dashboard' buttons. The interface also features icons for Google, Microsoft Teams, and Slack.

## Sick Leave in Iowa

Federal law requires up to 12 weeks of unpaid job-protected sick leave.

### Federal Laws – Leave Quota

FMLA provides up to 12 weeks of leave for personal or family reasons.

The federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) entitles qualified employees to take up to 12 weeks off for personal medical reasons, to care for a close family member suffering from a severe illness, or for maternity or paternity leave.

Employees qualify for FMLA benefits if they:

- have been working for their employer for at least 12 months (at least 25 hours per week) or 1,250 hours in the previous year
- work in a location where at least 50 people are employed by the company (in a 75-mile radius)

Each employer can propose additional sick leave benefits that are greater than the minimum federal requirement.

### Iowa State Laws

No additional sick leave laws in Iowa.

Eligible employers in Iowa must follow FMLA, but there are no additional sick leave laws. Employers in Iowa aren't required to provide either paid or unpaid sick leave. Still, they must comply with established policies in their employee handbook if they decide to implement one.

## Maternity, Paternity, FMLA in Iowa

### Federal law

FMLA provides 12 weeks of unpaid maternity or paternity leave.

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) requires employers in the U.S. to provide employees with at least 12 workweeks of unpaid leave after the birth of a child or after the adoption of a child. Unless otherwise specified by an employer, this leave must be bordering.

For more information about eligibility for FMLA benefits, look above under the section [Sick Leave in Iowa: Federal Laws – Leave Quota](#).

The Pregnancy Discrimination Act is yet another federal law that protects pregnant employees. This applies to any employer in the U.S. with 15 or more workers.

According to the Pregnancy Discrimination Act (PDA), discrimination against pregnant people is prohibited in all areas of employment: hiring, firing, pay, job assignments, promotions, layoffs, fringe benefits, training, leave, and health insurance.

### Additional State Laws in Iowa

Companies with 4 or more employees must offer up to 8 weeks of unpaid leave.

### Iowa Pregnancy Disability Leave

The Iowa Civil Rights Act mandates that employers with at least 4 employees give employees up to 8 weeks of unpaid leave for temporary disabilities related to pregnancy and childbirth. This Act also bans disability discrimination at workplaces. Iowa law mandates that disabilities related to childbirth or pregnancy be treated the same as any other temporary disability.

For more information, please visit [vacationtracker.io](https://vacationtracker.io)

An employee with a pregnancy-related disability is entitled to leave, if leave is not otherwise available (other time off, sick leave, or disability leave) or has been exhausted.

Employees must give the same notice as they would for any other disability leave.

### **Payout**

Maternity leave in Iowa is unpaid.

## **Bereavement Leave in Iowa (Funeral Leave)**

Employers in Iowa aren't required to give bereavement leave.

Bereavement leave is taken by an employee in the event of the death of a close relative.

No federal or Iowa law requires an employer to provide employees with paid or unpaid bereavement leave or any time off to attend an immediate family member's funeral. In the event that an employer decides to provide bereavement leave for employees, they may be required to follow a bereavement policy they have in place.

### **Payout**

Bereavement leave in Iowa is unpaid.

## **Jury Duty Leave in Iowa**

Employers are required to provide employees with unpaid time off to perform their jury duties.

For more information, please visit [vacationtracker.io](https://vacationtracker.io)

Employees are entitled to job-protected, unpaid time off for jury duty, serving as a witness in court, responding to a subpoena, or representing themselves as a party in a legal proceeding. Notice requirements apply; employees may have to show their employer their jury summons to be given the necessary leave.

An employer can never penalize an employee for missing work to attend jury duty.

## **Payout**

Employers are not obligated to pay an employee for jury duty leave. However, many employers pay employees because of the importance of jury service.

## **Military Leave in Iowa**

Employers must provide unpaid leave to eligible workers who are called to active duty.

Employers in Iowa may not discriminate against individuals because they are members of the National Guard, organized reserves of the United States armed forces, or any member of the Civil Air Patrol.

Employees who are members of the National Guard, organized reserves of the armed forces, or Civil Air Patrol are entitled to a leave of absence when ordered to temporary duty for any purpose. The leave may be with or without pay, at the employer's discretion. An employee returning from duty is entitled to be reinstated to the same position, or a position of like seniority, status, and pay, as long as the employee provides evidence to the employer of satisfactory completion of the duty of service, and the employee is still qualified to perform the duties of the position. Temporary employees are not entitled to reinstatement. The period of absence must not affect the employee's

rights to vacation, sick leave, bonus, or other employment benefits. The law covers all public and private employers.

## **Payout**

In the private sector, military leave is unpaid (or paid at the employer's discretion).

## **Voting Leave in Iowa**

Employees may be granted up to 3 hours of paid time off to vote.

Employers in Iowa are required to provide eligible employees (who are entitled to vote) with a total time of 3 consecutive hours of paid leave, in addition to the employees' non-working hours, within which to vote while polls are open. The exception is if an employee has three consecutive hours of non-working time while the polls are open; then the employer is not required to provide voting leave.

Leave must be requested in writing before the elections.

Employers may specify the hours in which an employee is allowed to be away from work.

## **Payout**

An employer pays a regular wage to an employee while he or she is taking time to vote.