

Is Vacation On Your Mind? If Not, Here's Why It Should Be...

As summer comes to an end, many employees are returning to work after taking some time off. Although it is common for employees to use their vacation time during the summer months, organizations must also pay attention to those employees who did not schedule their vacation over the summer. Generally, the beginning of fall is a great time for employers to direct their attention to avoiding the possible consequences of unused vacation.

Many employers attempt to implement policies stipulating that an employee will lose all their unused vacation at the end of the vacation entitlement year. Requiring employees to “use it or lose it” when it comes to vacation entitlement is permissible as long as the employee is not deprived of their minimum statutory vacation entitlement. In a situation where an employee does not use their vacation, the employer may be required to “bank” the unused vacation to ensure compliance with minimum employment standards requirements, resulting in financial liability for the company. Here are a few helpful tips to avoid the negative outcomes that may arise as a result of unscheduled vacation.

1. **Conduct a vacation audit.** Determine which employees, if any, have not taken or scheduled their vacation.
2. **Schedule employee vacation.** As an employer, it is within your power to schedule an employee’s vacation for them. Where an employee is unwilling to schedule their own vacation time, take the initiative and do it for them!
3. **Ensure compliance with employment standards legislation.** In some jurisdictions, employment standards legislation requires employers to provide its employee with notice where vacation is scheduled by the employer. For example, in Alberta, employers must give its employees at least two weeks’ written notice of the date on which the employee’s vacation is to commence. Similarly, in Manitoba, employers must give its employees fifteen days’ notice of when the vacation is to begin. Notably, in Quebec, four weeks written notice must be given to employees.

We encourage you to contact e2r Solutions® to discuss how your organization can manage its employees’ vacation entitlement effectively.