

Employee Vacations Should be Fun for Employers Too!

As we enter the summer months and the weather gets warmer, employees may be lining up at your door to get their requests for vacation approved. This season is one of the most common periods of time for employees to request vacation however the volume of vacation requests may pose a problem for some employers from an operational perspective.

Some organizations may experience a slowdown in business during the summer and implement a company-wide shut down. Others may experience peak periods in the business during the summer months and must restrict the amount of vacation taken.

Whatever your situation may be, here are a few helpful tips to manage vacation requests and scheduling over the summer months.

- 1. Approving and denying vacation requests.** As an employer, it is within your discretion to approve and deny vacation requests. It is however important to ensure that vacation requests are approved or denied in accordance with any procedure in a vacation policy or collective agreement.
- 2. Scheduling employee vacation during a summer shutdown.** In all jurisdictions, employers have the right to decide when vacation time can be taken. As such, employers can force an employee to take their vacation time during a company-wide shut down. Depending on the jurisdiction, you may be required to provide employees with adequate notice (see below). If you force your employees to take their vacation at a particular time each summer (typically a shutdown), it is advisable to identify the shutdown in an employment agreement or vacation policy.
- 3. Scheduling employee vacation during peak periods.** As stated above, in all jurisdictions, employers have the right to decide when vacation time can be taken. If you have certain times when your employees cannot take vacation due to operational requirements, it is best to identify those periods in a vacation policy and communicate it clearly to employees.
- 4. Ensure compliance with employment standards legislation.** In several jurisdictions, such as Alberta, Saskatchewan and Quebec, employment standards legislation requires employers to provide its employee with notice where vacation is scheduled by the employer. The amount of notice required ranges from one (1) week to four (4) weeks.

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