



Department of Employee Relations

May 17, 2019

Tom Barrett
Mayor

Maria Monteagudo
Director

Renee Joos
Employee Benefits Director

Nicole Fleck
Labor Negotiator

To the Honorable
Finance and Personnel Committee
Common Council
City of Milwaukee

Dear Committee Members;

In February of this year, Sun Life Absence Management Services started functioning as the City's third party administrator (TPA) for leave benefits under the federal and state Family and Medical Leave Acts. The same team composed of members from DER, DPW, MPL, MFD, and MPD that participated in the selection process for the vendor worked with our department during the transition process.

On May 9th, the City notified Sun Life that we were terminating the relationship for leave administration benefits effective May 31, 2019. This decision was made after it became clear that Sun Life was unable to provide the services documented in the scope of services of the RFP in an effective and efficient manner. The deficiencies that led to this decision included: problems with Sun Life's organizational structure, business practices that were not consistent with the City's expectations, limited understanding of the provisions of the Wisconsin FMLA, and Sun Life's system's inability to reconcile leave occurrences with payroll status.

As a result of the decision to terminate this contract, DER is recommending that we revert to having City leave administrators support FMLA functions but under close oversight, direction and guidance by our Department and the City Attorney's Office. Having a Leave Administration Coordinator in DER will:

- ensure training and education of employees and supervisors is completed in a timely and regular basis,
- ensure City wide compliance with notification requirements,
- assist all departments, especially those without a designated human resources person, comply with all applicable provision of federal and state requirements,
- ensure tracking and record keeping procedures are in place and consistently followed.

We are therefore recommending using the 2019 approved budget SPA funding designated for an FMLA TPA to create a Leave Administrator Coordinator position in DER. If this recommendation is approved, the following change is needed in the Positions Ordinance:

In the Department of Employee Relations, Operations Division, Employee Relations and Compliance, add one position of "Leave Administration Coordinator".

Sincerely,

Maria Monteagudo

Maria Monteagudo
Employee Relations Director