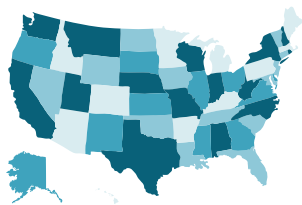


The HR Leader's Guide to Bringing Leave and Accommodations In-House

FMLA Compliance



Open Accommodation Cases by Type





New Leave Request

For HR leaders managing complex, high-volume leave programs, one of the most strategic decisions is how to structure them: fully insourced, outsourced to a vendor, or a hybrid model. There's no single right answer. Each approach can work, depending on your team, systems, and support.

According to [a DMEC survey](#), 45% of employers insource leave, 32% co-source, and 24% fully outsource. That split shows just how flexible the landscape has become, and how many teams are rethinking their leave management model.

Outsourcing can provide fast relief, especially for lean teams managing heavy volumes. But it can come with trade-offs. Slower decisions, less visibility, and limited access to data can make it harder to support employees and improve processes over time. Insourcing offers more control and clarity, but it also raises real questions:

- ▶ Will we need to hire?
- ▶ What if we miss something and create compliance risk?
- ▶ Do we really want to handle medical certifications in-house?
- ▶ Can our department handle the change?

Want a quick breakdown of the most common insourcing concerns?

Download our companion resource, *What HR Teams Ask Before Bringing Leave In-House*, for a clear look at what's true, what's not, and what your team should really consider.



These concerns are common, and the answers aren't always easy to find. Even when leave is outsourced, compliance under the FMLA, ADA, PWFA, and state laws remains the employer's responsibility. And with the right platform and structure, your team doesn't need to be compliance experts or clinicians. Most AbsenceSoft customers use guided workflows, prebuilt templates, and eligibility calculations powered by the AbsenceSoft Compliance Engine (ACE)™ to manage leave accurately and consistently.

You also don't always need a full call center. Modern platforms give employees self-service tools, status tracking, and the ability to ask questions and send documents via text, which dramatically reduces questions and improves communication. And rollout doesn't have to be

a heavy lift. Many organizations start with a phased plan and rely on experienced implementation teams that know where issues typically arise and how to address them.

This guide is for HR leaders who are exploring insourcing, considering a hybrid model, or simply want stronger oversight. Inside, you'll find a practical checklist, peer insights, and the steps to help you plan with confidence.

Whether you're ready to bring leave in-house or just want to understand what's possible, this guide will help you take the next step.

A graphic of a smartphone screen showing a 'New Leave Request' form. The form has a light blue header with the title 'New Leave Request'. Below the title is a section 'Reason for Case' with several buttons: 'Adoption/Foster Care', 'Bonding', 'Pregnancy/Maternity' (which is highlighted in dark blue), 'Child Care During Emergency', 'Employee Health Condition', 'Family Health Condition', 'Military', 'COVID 19', and 'Other'. Below this is a section 'Is this work related?' with 'Yes' and 'No' buttons, where 'No' is highlighted. The next section is 'Did you have medical complications?' with 'Yes' and 'No' buttons, where 'No' is highlighted. The final section is 'Have you been hospitalized?' with 'Yes' and 'No' buttons, where 'No' is highlighted. At the bottom of the form is a large dark blue button labeled 'Confirm and Continue'.

1 Choose the Right Technology Partner

Managing leave and accommodations manually isn't just inefficient. It increases the likelihood of missed deadlines, inconsistent decisions, and compliance risks under the FMLA, ADA, PWFA, and state laws. The right platform gives your team the structure, visibility, and automation to bring leave in-house with confidence.

But not every solution is built to scale. Some platforms were designed to support only a single leave type, or just accommodations. Others rely on large teams of their own people instead of true automation—or only provide workflow automation without robust compliance support. As your organization grows or policies change, those systems can often fall short, pushing more work back to your team in the form of workarounds.

Look for a platform that supports both leave and accommodations in a single system. This is especially important because many cases involve both, such as a shoulder surgery or pregnancy. Keeping those processes together ensures consistency, centrally stores full case records for both, and reduces the risk of something slipping through the cracks.

Also consider how the platform handles compliance. A reliable leave solution should be powered by a compliance engine maintained by real legal experts, not just AI or basic process automation. The AbsenceSoft Compliance Engine™ (ACE), for example, is kept up to date by a dedicated team with oversight from trusted legal advisors. That means your program stays aligned with federal and state changes—without needing a legal review every time a law updates.

Reason for Case

☒ Pregnancy/Maternity

☐ Illness or Injury

☐ Bonding

☐ Voting Leave

☐ Military

☐ COVID 19

Expected Case Dates

June 3

 to

Aug 19

Calculate Eligibility

Policy	Eligible
Family Medical Leave Act	Yes
Oregon Family Leave - Pregnancy/Maternity	Yes
Oregon Paid Leave	Yes
Oregon Paid Leave - Job Protection	Yes
Oregon Family Leave	Yes
ABC Company Parental Leave	Yes

With ACE, leave managers can instantly calculate an employee's eligibility for the FMLA and more than 200 active state leave laws.

Make sure your platform includes:

- ▶ Real-time eligibility calculations for the FMLA, ADA, PWFA, and all state and company policies
- ▶ A single source of truth for case documentation, status, and communication
- ▶ Automated workflows, reminders, and return-to-work support
- ▶ Mobile-friendly self-service portals for employees, HR, and managers
- ▶ Dashboards and configurable reporting
- ▶ Ongoing compliance updates and legal guidance from tools like ACE

Bonus capabilities to look for:

- ▶ Automated packet generation and mailing (batch fulfillment)
- ▶ Barcoding for medical certifications that attaches incoming faxes to cases
- ▶ Two-way text messaging with case tracking

Not quite ready to insource? These same features can still enhance visibility and accountability when you're working with a vendor, so be sure to ask them what technology they are using to manage your leave program.

Built-In Compliance for Any Leave Program

The AbsenceSoft Compliance Engine™ (ACE) helps HR teams and TPAs stay compliant with the FMLA, ADA, PWFA, and more than 200 state and federal laws, without needing legal review every time a policy changes. Maintained by in-house compliance experts and verified by external legal partners, ACE powers real-time eligibility checks, automates form generation, and prompts your team through every required step. ACE delivers consistent, compliant processes for leave and accommodations in one system so nothing slips through the cracks.





2 Organize Your Team

Team size and structure are important pieces of bringing leave and accommodations in-house. Some organizations are able to redistribute work among existing staff. Others need to hire or retrain team members to meet demand. There's no single formula, and that's why planning ahead is critical.

Start by asking:

- ▶ Who currently handles leave or accommodations requests, and where are the gaps?
- ▶ Are there team members who could take on more with the right support or training?
- ▶ What kind of experience or capacity do we need to add?
- ▶ How should we distribute cases? By location, volume, complexity, or department?

If new roles are needed, the good news is you don't have to hire for deep expertise with specific state leave laws. A leave platform with a built-in compliance engine like ACE allows you to upskill HR generalists or internal talent. Instead of needing a specialist for every state or policy, your team can rely on standardized workflows and real-time eligibility guidance built into the system.

The best team structure is the one that fits your organization's needs today and can scale with you tomorrow. Whether you centralize requests with a dedicated leave team or assign them regionally, your platform should help you balance workloads, route escalations, and ensure consistency across every case.

Still working with a vendor or shared services? Defining internal ownership and touchpoints will still improve oversight, accountability, and the employee experience.

3 Use Real-Time Data to Support Team Performance

One of the biggest benefits of managing leave in-house is visibility. When your platform gives you real-time access to case data, you can spot issues early, balance workloads, and make smarter decisions — without waiting on end-of-month reports or relying on guesswork.

Leave leaders using AbsenceSoft often:

- ▶ Run daily or weekly reports to track open cases and upcoming deadlines
- ▶ Use dashboards to prioritize which cases need follow-up each day
- ▶ Assign tasks based on real-time caseloads, or assign cases based on expertise and specialization
- ▶ Reassign or escalate cases quickly when volume spikes

If your team is small, even one overdue case can cause delays and stress. A platform with built-in task lists and automated notifications keeps work on track without sticky notes, calendar reminders, or email notifications.

Once you bring your leave program in-house, real-time reporting also helps you:

- ▶ Monitor how leave is distributed across departments or locations
- ▶ Identify trends in intermittent leave or extended absences
- ▶ See where in your process certain steps might become bottlenecks
- ▶ Uncover areas that additional team training could address

Still thinking of outsourcing? Look for a partner that offers technology-enabled reporting and faster access to case updates. While most vendors don't provide real-time visibility, those with strong platforms can deliver more frequent, actionable reports to help you stay informed and responsive.

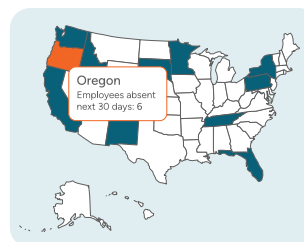
Overview by Assignee

Open ToDos	Overdue	Avg. Days Overdue	Max Days Overdue
63	11	3.8	9

ToDos Pending & Overdue by Assignee

Johnson, Kara	7
Li, Xiao	4
Hoffman, Jay	2
Ramirez, Ana	3
Jameson, Kerri	3

Employees Absent by Work State



Current Employees
7,982

Absent Today
37

Absent Next 30 Days
51

With the right leave management platform, you gain access to real-time data and reporting that can transform your leave operations. You can distribute cases across your team more effectively, understand trends in leave usage, and much more.

4 Streamline Your Process with Built-In Workflows

When you bring leave in-house with the right technology, everyone's day-to-day becomes streamlined and modernized. Intake, communication, tracking, and follow-up all become easier to manage and improve. Instead of relying on email threads, spreadsheets, or shared drives, a centralized leave platform lets you:

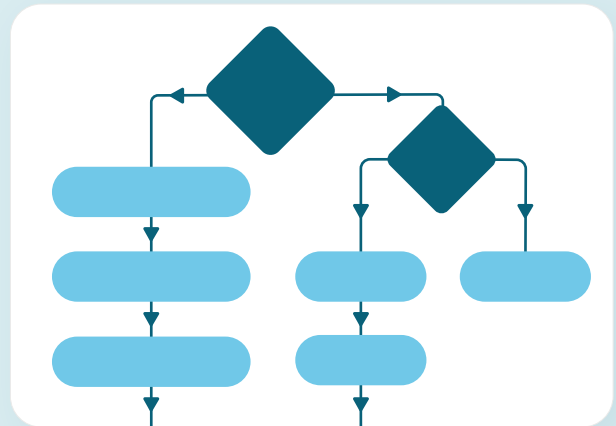
- ▶ Standardize how requests come in, such as employee self-service portals
- ▶ Automate administrative tasks like eligibility calculations, entitlement tracking, communications, and packet generation
- ▶ Track next steps and deadlines without creating your own checklists
- ▶ Include critical human decision points, such as paperwork review, determinations, and escalations

With AbsenceSoft, teams can also customize and add workflows to reflect their own policies and internal processes. Whether you're managing a workforce with different benefit levels or rolling out a new parental leave policy, the AbsenceSoft platform can be easily configured to meet additional needs over time. Our platform can scale and evolve alongside your organizational changes.

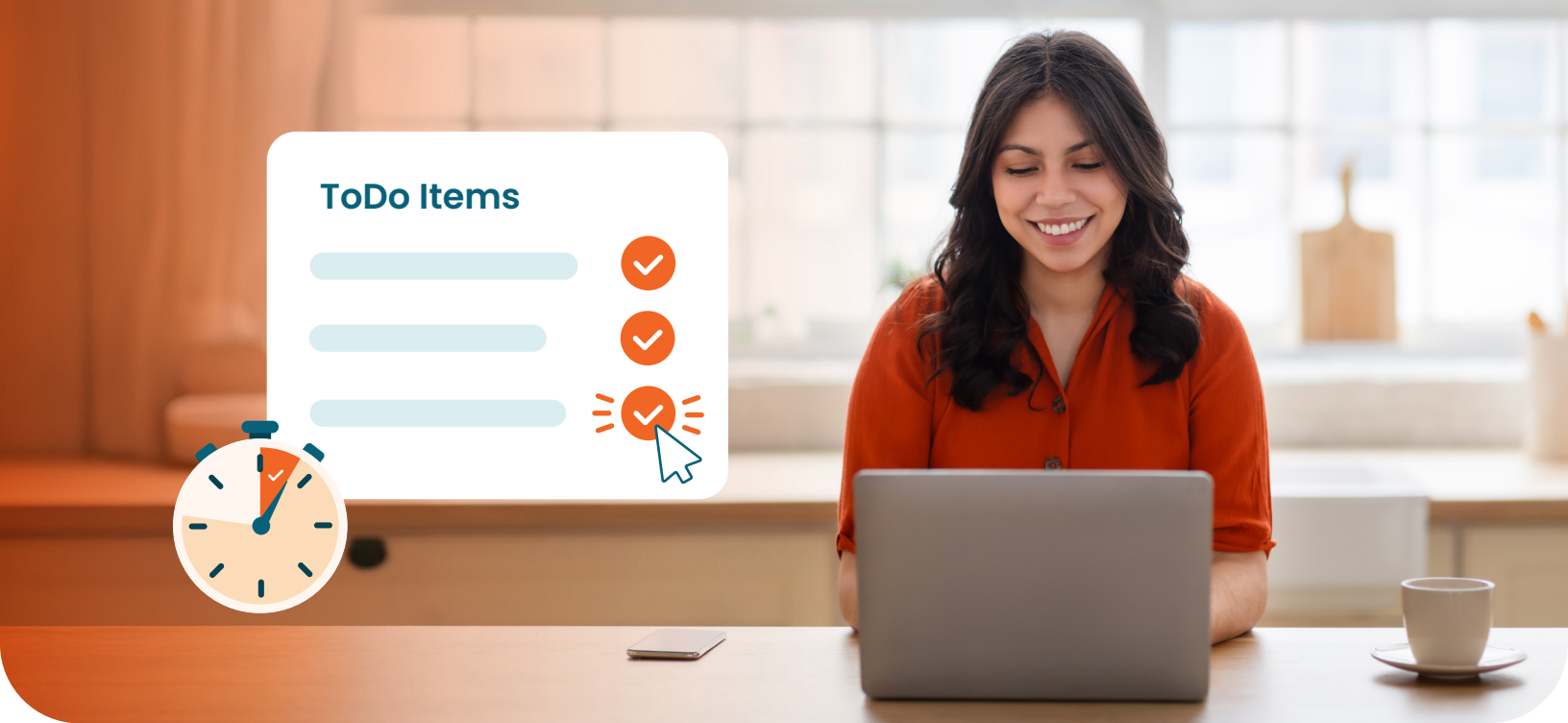
Many HR teams find that once the system is in place, the number of questions from managers and employees drops, because the process is clear, consistent, and easy to follow.

But you can still make the process your own to deliver a fully personalized experience for each employee. With AbsenceSoft, you can customize communications templates to reflect your brand and work culture. Teams can access real-time data and reporting to identify areas to fine-tune workflows over time.

If you're used to juggling everything manually, a streamlined process powered by workflows will feel much more modern. Cases keep moving. Tasks and to-do's show up when they are needed. And employees get a more responsive experience, without your team needing to babysit every step.



With the right leave management solution, the entire leave process can be transformed into a streamlined, automated workflow that includes critical human touchpoints.



How Employers Save Time and Manage High Volumes

Across industries, from schools to resorts, healthcare, and retail, HR teams using AbsenceSoft show that insourcing doesn't always rely on major additions in headcount. It requires the right platform and provider. Here's what HR teams are achieving with modern leave technology:

- ▶ A national healthcare team **increased case volume per person by 174%**, jumping from 250 to 685 cases per year.
- ▶ Two leave specialists at a Nevada resort **manage 4,500 cases annually**, thanks to self-service and automation.
- ▶ Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School District **saved 530 hours** in one year by automating eligibility and cutting intake time from 15 minutes to a few clicks.
- ▶ Cache Creek Casino Resort eliminated folder chaos and saved **"hours upon hours"** by centralizing documentation and tasks.
- ▶ Carvana **shaved 30–40 minutes off each internal leave case** by automating their company policy workflows.

These teams didn't just save time. They used AbsenceSoft to deliver better employee experiences and better compliance. You can read about their journeys of leave transformation in [our library of Customer Stories](#).

No Matter How You Manage Leave, Build on the Right Foundation

Whether you're ready to bring leave fully in-house or just taking a closer look at how it's managed today, it's always important to step back and evaluate your processes holistically. HR leaders already support the most sensitive parts of the leave process. You and your teams guide employees through major life events, coordinate with managers, and handle increasingly complex requests, often behind the scenes and with little fanfare.

With the right platform, you can streamline your efforts, gain visibility, and feel confident your team is covered, both legally and operationally. A better leave experience isn't just about checking boxes. It's a reflection of how your organization shows up when people need it most.



And there are clear benefits to showing up for your employees during a vulnerable, stressful time in their lives. According to our [2025 State of Leave and Accommodations](#) report, employees who had a positive leave or accommodations experience were significantly more likely to feel valued, stay loyal to their organization, and remain productive. On the flip side, 40% of employees who had a poor experience said they started looking for a new job. In other words, doing leave well isn't just the right thing to do. It leads to better outcomes for everyone.

Cases

Employee	Reason	Updated
Marcus Garcia	Military Leave	08/15
Callie Jacobson	Pregnancy/Maternity	08/13
Alberto Fowler	Family Health Condition	08/13
Camilla Meyer	Pregnancy/Maternity	08/11
Vera Valdez	Health Condition	08/11

With in-house leave management and the right leave software, you can centrally manage and view all open leave cases across your organization.

Want to see how AbsenceSoft can help you transform your leave program?
Schedule a conversation to talk through your goals and see how AbsenceSoft can support your strategy.

[Schedule a Demo](#)