

MN Paid Leave Readiness Check

A practical self-check for Minnesota employers — Mark each item: Yes / No / Not Sure

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Minnesota Paid Family & Medical Leave is now in effect. This is not a compliance audit — it's a starting point. Use it to spot gaps, start a conversation, or confirm you're in good shape. "Not Sure" is a valid and useful answer.

1. Awareness & Responsibility

- We understand that MN Paid Leave is now in effect
- We know which employees are covered
- We know who is responsible for handling leave questions (owner, office manager, payroll, etc.)
- Employees know who to go to when they have a leave question

In small companies, paid leave often "belongs to everyone." When ownership isn't clear, employees may get different answers — which creates risk.

Search on [mn.gov](#): "Minnesota Paid Family Medical Leave employer"

2. ESST (Earned Sick & Safe Time) Alignment

- Our PTO or sick time policy meets MN ESST requirements
- ESST is applied consistently to all eligible employees
- ESST usage is tracked accurately (hourly and salaried, if applicable)
- Owners or supervisors understand when ESST applies vs. other leave

ESST did not go away when MN Paid Leave began. Many employers discover ESST gaps only after an employee raises a concern.

Search on [mn.gov](#): "Minnesota Earned Sick Safe Time employer"

3. Paid Leave in Practice

- We can explain MN Paid Leave in plain language
- Our written policies match what we actually do, day-to-day
- Everyone gives the same answer when an employee asks about leave
- Someone has looked at our policies since January 1, 2026

Most paid leave problems are not legal misunderstandings — they are communication and consistency issues.

Search on [mn.gov](#): "Minnesota Paid Family Medical Leave program overview"

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Sections 4 & 5 — Mark each item: Yes / No / Not Sure

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4. Payroll & Time Tracking

- Whoever runs payroll understands how MN Paid Leave affects deductions and reporting
- Time is tracked consistently (including job-site or field work, if applicable)
- Payroll and leave tracking are aligned
- We can produce time and pay records if requested

Payroll often works well until leave enters the picture. Paid leave tends to expose tracking gaps that were previously manageable.

Search on mn.gov or dol.gov: "Minnesota Paid Family Medical Leave employer payroll"

5. Owners, Supervisors & Real-Life Situations

- Owners or supervisors know what to do when an employee asks about leave
- We know when to pause and seek clarification instead of guessing
- We write things down when a leave conversation happens
- Similar situations are handled consistently

Risk usually shows up in real conversations — not policies. A simple, repeatable approach matters more than a perfect one.

Not sure where to start with this section? This is exactly what a quick conversation can help clarify.

QUICK REALITY CHECK

Mostly Yes → You're in a solid place — keep refining and documenting.

Several No or Not Sure → Very common for small employers — and fixable.

Gaps across multiple sections → Paid Leave may be surfacing broader compliance risks worth looking at.

What We Commonly Find

Employers working through paid leave frequently uncover related issues:

- Timekeeping inconsistencies
- Exempt vs. non-exempt classification questions
- Contractor vs. employee concerns
- Inconsistent or missing documentation

These issues are usually connected, not isolated.

Options Moving Forward

As businesses grow, many move from informal practices to more intentional design. Some choose to:

- Use state and federal guidance to self-review and self-correct
- Work with payroll, accounting, or insurance partners to improve coordination
- Get outside HR help to fill the gaps and build something that holds up as you grow

No single right approach — only what fits your business today and where you're headed.