



Question:

Can we deny vacation requests?

Answered by the HR Experts

Yes, but we recommend having a legitimate business reason for doing so. For example, it would be understandable to deny a vacation request if it would leave you without adequate coverage or because the employee asked with significantly less notice than required by your policy. On the other hand, denying a request because an employee might be needed, or because they used a few days off the month prior, will likely feel arbitrary and unfair and ultimately reduce morale.

If you do need to deny a request, note the business reason you couldn't approve it and work with the employee to find an alternative time they can take off. If you discover the request is related to a medical issue, you'll need to consider whether any local, state, or federal leave or accommodation laws apply. If one or more does, time off will likely need to be granted regardless of business needs, and whether vacation can be used at the same time will be a secondary inquiry.

This Q&A does not constitute legal advice and does not address state or local law.