



Employment Law Alert

Legal developments affecting human resource management

A publication of Nixon Peabody LLP

September 3, 2010

New York employers must provide funeral and bereavement leave to employees in same-sex relationships

By Todd R. Shinaman and Joseph A. Carello

On August 31, 2010, Governor David Paterson signed a law requiring New York employers to provide employees in committed same-sex relationships with the same funeral or bereavement leave that they provide to married employees. The law, which is an amendment to New York's Civil Rights Law, prohibits employers who provide such leave for the death of an employee's spouse, or the spouse's child, parent, or other relative, from denying leave for the death of an employee's same-sex committed partner, or the child, parent, or other relative of the committed partner. The statute defines "same-sex committed partner" as "those who are financially and emotionally interdependent in a manner commonly presumed of spouses." The text of the law indicates that it becomes effective October 30, 2010. Employers should prepare to revise their funeral or bereavement leave policies in order to comply with this change in the law.

For further information, please contact your Nixon Peabody attorney or:

- Todd R. Shinaman at 585-263-1265 or tshinaman@nixonpeabody.com
- Joseph A. Carello at 585-263-1434 or jcarello@nixonpeabody.com