

**Local Government Mandate Statement
Kentucky Legislative Research Commission
2026 Regular Session**

Part I: Measure Information

Bill Request #:	955	Bill #:	HB 623
Document ID #:	918	Sponsor:	Rep. Rachel Roarx
Bill Title:	AN ACT relating to leave from employment		

Unit of	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> City	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> County	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Urban-County
Government:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Charter County	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consolidated Local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unified Local

Office(s) Impacted: Human Resources of local governments

Requirement: ☒ Mandatory ☐ Optional

Effect on Powers
& Duties: ☒ Modifies Existing ☒ Adds New ☐ Eliminates Existing

Other Fiscal Statement(s) that may exist: ☐ Actuarial Analysis ☐ Corrections Impact
☐ Health Benefit Mandate ☐ State Employee Health Plan

Part II: Bill Provisions and the Estimated Fiscal Impact Relating to Local Government

Current law at KRS 337.415 prohibits an employer from discharging an employee for taking time off work for an ordered court appearance so long as the employee gives prior notice. Consequences to the employer for violating the prohibition include reemployment and back pay to the employee, court costs and attorney fees.

Section 1 would amend KRS 337.415 to also prohibit an employer discharging, retaliating, or discriminating against an employee who is a victim of a crime because the employee takes leave from work to attend court or other proceedings associated with the prosecution of the crime. The bill defines “victim” to include immediate family of a minor or incompetent victim, or of a homicide victim. Section 1 would require that an employee give reasonable prior notice to an employer by providing a copy of the notice from the court or agency responsible for scheduling the hearing, conference, or meeting. The employer may require an employee use accrued leave time.

HB 623 would require an employer to maintain confidentiality of any verbal or written communication from an employee relative to the employee's request for leave pursuant to

KRS 337.415.

Section 2 would impose a civil penalty of \$100-\$1,000 on an employer for knowingly and willfully taking adverse action against an employee for taking leave as provided by the bill, or knowingly and willfully failing to maintain confidentiality. Each day the employer denies leave to an employee in violation of the Act would constitute a separate offense.

The fiscal impact of HB 623 on local government employers would be minimal.

Expanding the prohibition in KRS 337.415 to include discharging an employee crime victim for taking leave from work to attend court or other legal proceeding would not significantly increase costs for local governments. An employer could require the employee use accrued leave time and is not obligated to pay the employee if they have insufficient leave accrued.

It is not expected that many local government employers would knowingly and willfully violate the requirements of HB 623 and so incur a civil penalty. The fiscal impact otherwise depends on the nature and duration of court or other proceedings associated with prosecution of the crime, and the amount of accrued leave time the employee has. An employer could incur additional costs if an employer must hire a temporary replacement for the absent employee, or must pay for overtime earned by co-workers covering the duties of the employee on crime victim's leave. Most research and anecdotal evidence indicate that local government employers do not typically hire temporary workers when employees are on leave, but rather assign their work to other employees or otherwise "make do" while temporarily less than fully staffed.

Local governments may need to amend their human resources manuals or local ordinances to reflect the right of employees to crime victim's leave. If so, they will incur costs associated with the drafting, publication, indexing and recording of adopted ordinances.

According to Kentucky League of Cities, most cities, especially smaller ones, retain their city attorney on contract and pay on an hourly basis. Time spent drafting an ordinance is influenced by its complexity and the amount of research necessary. In 2024, the estimated average salary paid by a city to a retained attorney is approximately \$117 to \$128 per hour. Rates for posting legal notices in the newspaper vary greatly depending on the length of the publication, the number of times it needs to be published and the newspaper in which the publication is placed. Therefore, these costs are unknown.

Data Source(s): LRC Staff; Kentucky League of Cities

Preparer: TJ **Reviewer:** MS (MDA) **Date:** 1/5/26