November 11, 2019

Honoring and Supporting Veterans and Their Families: A Message from the Chief Diversity Officer

Dear Faculty and Staff,

In honor of Veterans Day today, I would like to acknowledge the service and bravery of our veterans as well as the contributions of their families.

This day provides an opportunity to remind our community of certain federal and state laws that protect both employees who take leave for military service and the relatives of these employees.

- The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA) creates obligations for employers to provide, among other provisions, unpaid leave for military service. It also requires employers to reinstate employees following a USERRA leave. There is an antidiscrimination provision of the statute, which prohibits retaliating or discriminating against employees due to past, present, or future military obligations.

- The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) provides two types of leave related to military service: (1) An employee can get up to 12 workweeks of unpaid leave for a “qualifying exigency” leave when a spouse, son, daughter, or parent of the employee is called to active duty. (2) Employees who need to care for a covered service member with a service-related injury or illness can qualify for 26 workweeks of military caregiver leave.

- New York is among the states that permit leave for employees with immediate family members or spouses who are involved in military service and are injured, ill, or killed during service.

The Office of Diversity, Compliance and Equity Initiatives collaborates with the Office of Human Resources to respond to any questions that might arise under these policies.

Our veterans and their families have made tremendous personal sacrifices. We salute them and are proud to support them today and every day.

Sincerely,

Mona Jha, Esq.
Chief Diversity Officer

P.S. I hope the veterans in our community have sent their RSVPs and plan to attend today’s Veterans Appreciation Luncheon.