



## Karnataka's Menstrual Leave Policy

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### A. Background

In October 2025, the Chief Minister of Karnataka announced that the Karnataka Cabinet of Ministers had taken a decision to provide women employees with one day's leave per month towards menstrual leave.

### B. Menstrual Leave

By means of an order dated November 12, 2025 ("**Order**"), the Labour Department of Karnataka has directed various industries and establishments (including commercial establishments registered under the Karnataka Shops and Commercial Establishments Act, 1961) to provide twelve (12) days' paid leave annually at the rate of one (1) day's paid leave per month ("**Menstrual Leave**").

### C. Applicability

The Order applies to all industries and establishments in the State of Karnataka registered under:

- i. The Factories Act, 1948,
- ii. The Karnataka Shops and Commercial Establishments Act, 1961,
- iii. The Plantations Labour Act, 1951,
- iv. The Beedi and Cigar Workers (Conditions of Employment) Act, 1966, and
- v. The Motor Transport Workers Act, 1961.

All permanent, contract and outsourced women employees of industries and establishments detailed above, who are between the ages of 18 and 52, are eligible to receive Menstrual Leave.

#### **D. Other Conditions**

- i. Menstrual Leave for a particular month should be availed only within that same month and cannot be carried forward to (or accumulated in) the subsequent month, and
- ii. Women employees are entitled to avail Menstrual Leave without having to provide any medical certificate/documentation supporting the same.

#### **E. Kochhar & Co. Recommendations**

The Order does not specify an 'enforcement date'. Hence, the understanding is that employers should consider the Order as being effective from November 12, 2025. Accordingly, employers in Karnataka should incorporate the Menstrual Leave entitlement in their internal policies immediately and permit eligible employees to avail Menstrual Leave from the month of November 2025.

From a practical perspective, employers relying on human resource management systems (HRMS) may expect certain implementation challenges when incorporating the Menstrual Leave entitlement. However, eligible employees should be permitted to avail Menstrual Leave from November 2025, even if the HRMS is not updated to reflect the same. Further, employers may consider sensitising employees (including managers) to ensure that Menstrual Leave requests are processed/approved without delay.