

Is it insubordination to call in sick after being turned down for leave?

Q. During the busiest period of the year, a veteran employee asked for time off to attend her nephew's graduation. After being turned down, she called in sick on graduation day. Is this considered insubordination? And how should we handle this situation?

A. You should confront the employee and ask for a doctor's note. If she provides one, you should follow your normal policy regarding sick time. If she cannot provide one, or admits that she was not really sick, you could discipline her if that is appropriate under your disciplinary policy.

You also need to be careful to treat this employee consistently with the way you have treated other employees who have called in sick after being denied time off.