DMEC 2026 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Employer Considerations for Modern Leave Planning Tools

Ken Cope, *Absence Management Practice Leader*, Spring Consulting Group

Whitney Day, *Absence Consulting Services Practice Leader*, Spring Consulting Group

Laura Gumrot, *Director of Benefits*, Banner Health

Chris Smith, *Vice President, Product Solutions*, Reliance Matrix

Spring Consulting Group AN ALERA GROUP COMPANY

Banner Health

reliance matrix

Agenda

- Introductions
- Background – Leave Planning Tools
- LEAVE Framework
- Client Experiences
- Q&A



Introductions



Ken Cope Spring Consulting Group, an Alera Group Company

Absence Management Practice Leader

Spring Consulting Group, an Alera Group Company

ken.cope@springgroup.com



Laura Gumrot Banner Health

Director of Benefits

Banner Health

laura.gumrot@bannerhealth.com



Whitney Day Spring Consulting Group, an Alera Group Company

Absence Consulting Services Practice Leader

Spring Consulting Group, an Alera Group Company

whitney.day@springgroup.com



Chris Smith reliance matrix

Vice President, Product Solutions

Reliance Matrix

chris.smith@reliancematrix.com

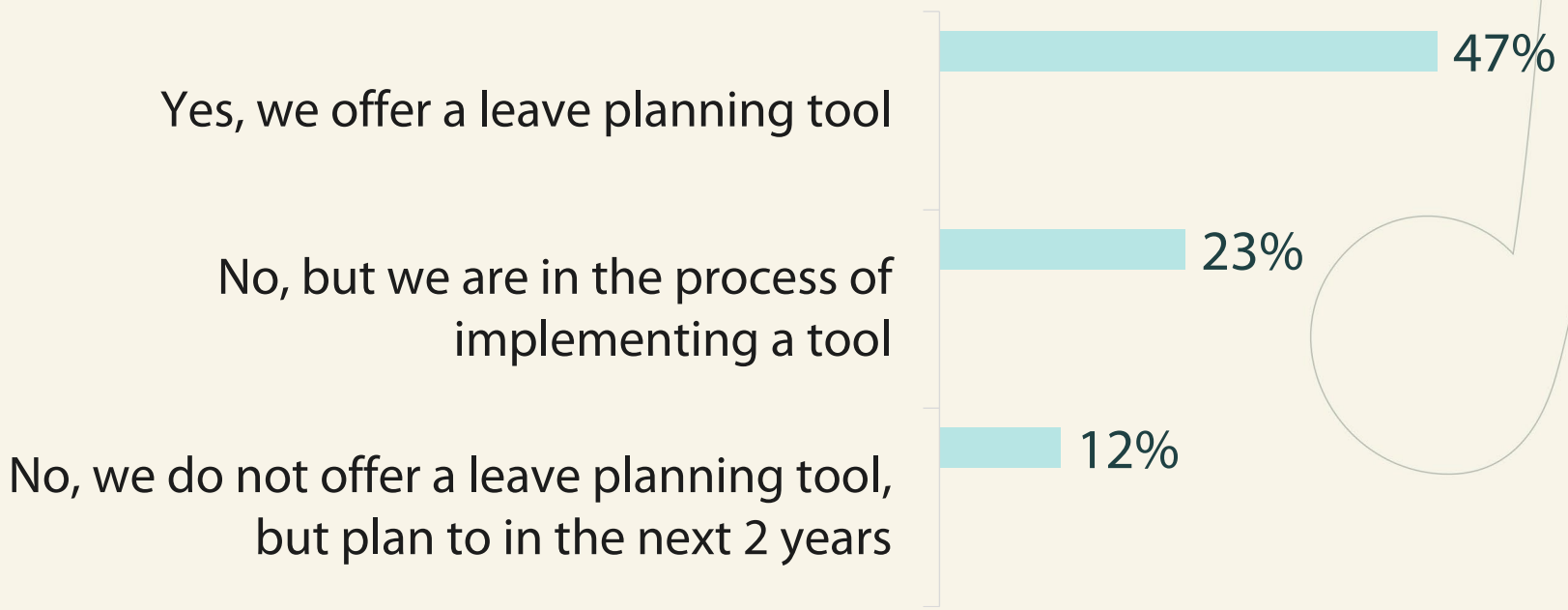
Background – Leave Planning Tools

- Moved from conversations at the manager's desk to high-tech solutions integrated with HR, payroll, and case management.
- Now central to absence management as expectations rise and programs grow more complex.
- Similar terminology hides very different capabilities, making options hard to compare.
- Increasingly tech-enabled, giving employees clear guidance and better coordination.
- What matters is fit with existing processes and priorities, not sophistication.
- The market is expanding fast, with carriers, TPAs, and vendors all offering new tools.

[1]Spring Consulting Group's 2025 Employee Survey



Do you currently or plan to offer a dynamic leave planning tool to support planning and estimating the amount of time an employee may have available that may be paid, unpaid and/or job protected before they take leave?



[2]2026 Employer Integrated Disability, Absence and Health Management Marketplace Survey

What features are most important to have in a leave planning tool? Select the three most important:



[2]2026 Employer Integrated Disability, Absence and Health Management Marketplace Survey

How important are each of the following in a leave planning tool?



[2]2026 Employer Integrated Disability, Absence and Health Management Marketplace Survey

Leave Framework

L – Lifecycle & Maturity

E – Experience

A – Architecture & Data

V – Vendor & Verification

E – Ethics, Compliance & Enablement



L – Lifecycle & Maturity

LEAVE

- Market readiness and tool maturity
- Scalability across employers, populations, and leave types
- Current capabilities versus future roadmap
- Readiness to support complex leave scenarios



L

A

V

E

E – Experience

- Ease of use during high-stress leave moments
- Clarity around eligibility, pay, job protection, and next steps



Exit Planner

1 Reason

2 Details

3 Federal/State

4 Employer Policy Eligibility

If you have questions, please contact your Human Resources representative or call Reliance Matrix Customer Care at 877-202-0055

State: California

Select your scenario:



Pregnancy with bonding



Bonding



Adoption



Foster care



Own health condition



Care of family member



Military

Continue

© 2026 Copyright Absence Blueprint. All rights reserved.

L

E

- Required integrations with HRIS, payroll, timekeeping, and leave systems
- Data accuracy, timeliness, and ownership

A – Architecture & Data

V

E

- Configuration of employer-specific policies and rules
- Privacy, security, and sensitive data protections



L
E
A
V
E

- Roles and responsibilities across employer, vendor, carrier, and TPA
- Testing and validation of rules, calculations, and outputs

V – Vendor & Verification



Next Steps

Please review each step and complete the required actions by clicking the corresponding icons. Once all steps are completed, you can proceed with submitting or finalizing your leave plan.

File this claim. This is a plan only and is not a filed claim. You can file this claim up to 35 days prior to the start date of your leave.

File Your Claim

Download your Pregnancy Journey here - This will help you track all of your "To Do's" before your leave begins and after.

Pregnancy Journey

Log in to your time keeping system to request this time off per your company policy.

Request Time Off

Notify your manager about your leave

Notify Your Manager

As a California employee, you may be entitled to a number of California Statutory benefits. Please click on this button to be directed to the California EDD Website to file for additional benefits.

CA EDD Portal

Add your newborn to your insurance. You have 30 days from the date of delivery to add your newborn to your health insurance. If you do not complete this in the required timeframe, you will have to wait until annual open enrollment to make updates.

Your Benefit Portal

Life can be challenging, and you don't have to face those challenges alone. The ABC Company Employee Assistance Program is here to provide confidential, professional support for personal, family, or work-related concerns—at no cost to you.

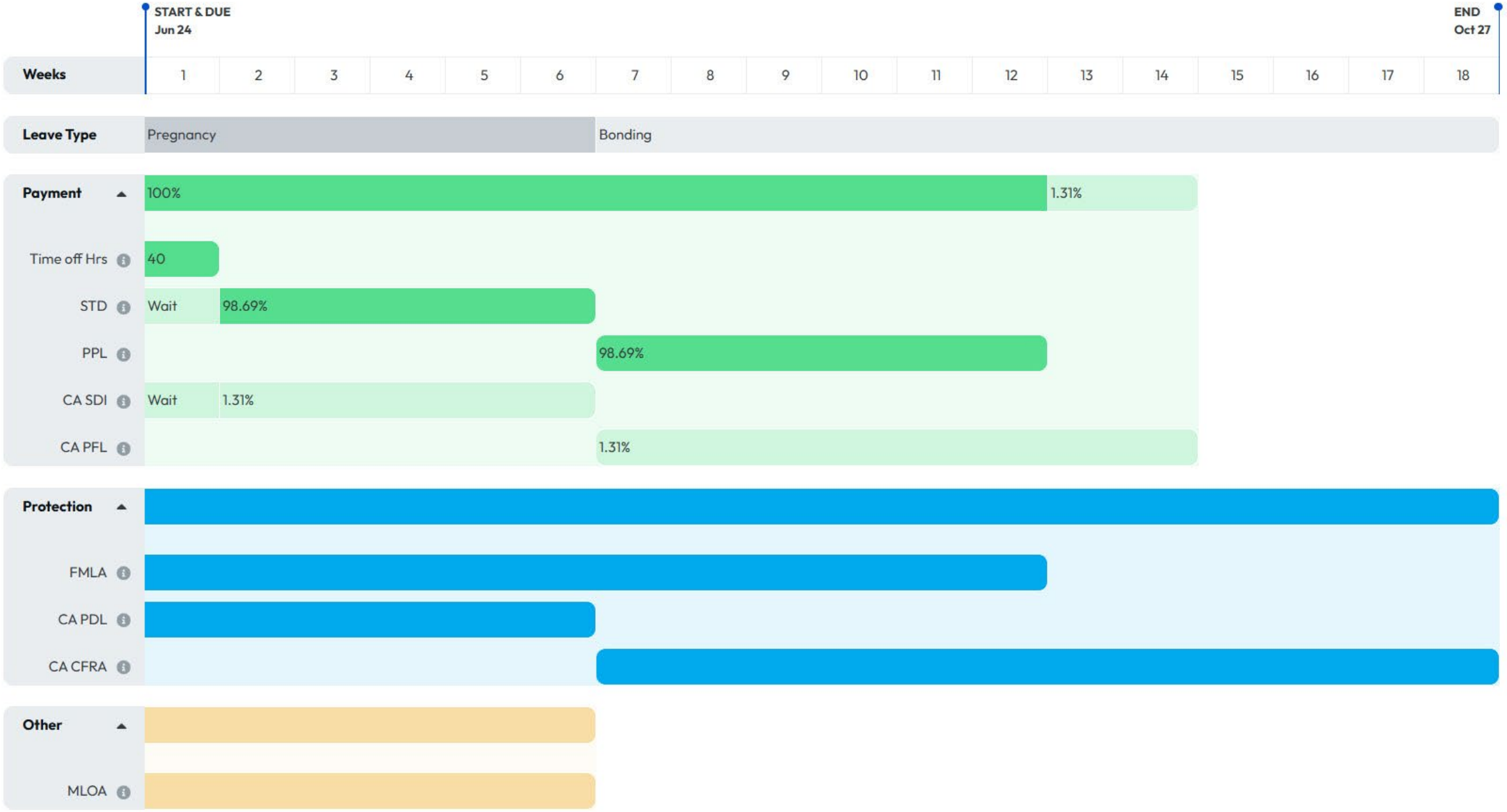
Employee Assistance Provider (EAP)

L
E
A
V

- Keeping pace with evolving leave requirements across federal, state, local, and employer-specific policies
- Managing expectations through transparency around estimates, assumptions, limitations, and planning outputs

E – Ethics, Compliance & Enablement




START & DUE
Jun 24
END
Oct 27
Weeks
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
Leave Type
Pregnancy
Bonding
Payment
100%
1.31%
Time off Hrs
40
STD
Wait
98.69%
PPL
98.69%
CA SDI
Wait
1.31%
CA PFL
1.31%
Protection
FMLA
CA PDL
CA CFRA
Other
MLOA

Questions?



The Rise of Leave Planning Tools



Learn More

