

Workplace Investigations

Contributing Editors

Phil Linnard at Slaughter and May
Clare Fletcher at Slaughter and May

17. What other support can employees involved in the investigation be given?

Nigeria

Author: *Adekunle Obebe*
at Bloomfield LP

An employee being investigated has a right to be heard before a decision being made by the employer. Further, the body responsible for investigating the employee must be independent, so as not to be considered biased.

Last updated on 15/09/2022

Switzerland

Author: *Laura Widmer, Sandra Schaffner*
at Bär & Karrer

The employer does not generally need to provide specific support for employees that are subject to an internal investigation. The employer may, however, allow concerned employees to be accompanied by a trusted third party such as family members or friends.^[1] These third parties will need to sign separate non-disclosure agreements before being involved in the internal investigation.

In addition, a company may appoint a so-called lawyer of confidence who has been approved by the employer and is thus subject to professional secrecy. This lawyer will not be involved in the internal investigation but may look after the concerned employees and give them confidential advice as well as inform them about their rights and obligations arising from the employment relationship.^[2]

^[1] Roger Rudolph, Interne Untersuchungen: Spannungsfelder aus arbeitsrechtlicher Sicht, SJZ 114/2018, p. 390.

^[2] David Rosenthal et al., Praxishandbuch für interne Untersuchungen und eDiscovery, Release 1.01, Zürich/Bern, 2021, p. 133.

20. What if the employee under investigation goes off sick during the investigation?

Nigeria

Author: *Adekunle Obebe*
at Bloomfield LP

The investigation would be suspended until the employee returns from sick leave. The investigation will immediately restart upon the return of the employee.

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Switzerland

Author: *Laura Widmer, Sandra Schaffner*
at Bär & Karrer

The time spent on the internal investigation by the employee should be counted as working time^[1]. The general statutory and internal company principles on sick leave apply. Sick leave for which the respective employee is not responsible must generally be compensated (article 324a paragraph 1 and article 324b, Swiss Code of Obligations). During certain periods of sick leave (blocking period), the employer may not ordinarily terminate the employment contract; however, immediate termination for cause remains possible.

The duration of the blocking period depends on the employee's seniority, amounting to 30 days in the employee's first year of service, 90 days in the employee's second to ninth year of service and 180 days thereafter (article 336c paragraph 1 (lit. c), Swiss Code of Obligations).

^[1] Ullin Streiff/Adrian von Kaenel/Roger Rudolph, Arbeitsvertrag, Praxiskommentar zu Art. 319–362 OR, 7. A. 2012, Art. 328b N 8 OR.

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Contributors

Nigeria

Adekunle Obebe
Bloomfield LP

Switzerland

Laura Widmer
Sandra Schaffner

www.internationalemploymentlawyer.com