

Mandi

Mandi Brown, CISR
Client Relations Agent
Mom of Maddie (13), Liam (8) & Sebastien (3)

Briefly describe your family responsibilities that required you to take leave under FMLA

I needed to be home with my children, Maddie, Liam, and Sebastien.

Physical School location was closed for Maddie and Liam. We finished the school year virtually. Sebastien's daycare closed and I did not have alternate child care. My fiancée was considered an essential employee.

How did you feel about your situation and not being able to work remotely during that time?

I struggled with not being about to work remotely during quarantine. I am not fond of letting others down. I always strive to give 100% effort in every challenge or obstacle, and taking the FMLA offered made me feel like I was letting down my team. It felt like I was throwing in the towel and giving up during the time my co-workers and clients needed me the most.

During the quarantine lockdown, what did you miss the most about being in the office?

I missed the presence of my people, collaboration, kindness, laughs, smiles, and the feeling of being a team. I missed fresh baked cookies and a walk around the building to get my steps in for the day. I missed the overall confidence Deeley gave to me when I walked through the doors to start another day.

Deeley is my "me" happy place. The office is the one place I am able to let the stress of the world roll off my back and rock out. I enjoy the work I do and the career path I have chosen.

Do you feel Deeley was supportive during the pandemic?

Deeley was very supportive during the pandemic and are continuing to be supportive during this last phase of recovery. My family and myself would have struggled financially without the FMLA allowing me to stay home with my children and still receive a portion of my salary.





When faced with the uncertainty of quarantine, where did you SHINE?

This is a tough one for me to answer. Answering this one comes with a lot of parent guilt I did not expect to feel. I realized I was going through the motions of the day but not really soaking in the moments. I shined at being real.

I spent every day with my children and some days I hid from them in the bathroom. There were so many toddler tantrums, I lost count on day three. I almost gave them up for adoption a couple times. I had never felt more unappreciated in my entire life, and I am still unsure how to solve a common core math problem.

We struggled to communicate at times, we fought, we cried, but we also smiled, laughed, encouraged, and loved each other. We went for walks in our neighborhood, drew way too many chalk spiders in the driveway, blew enough bubbles to last us a lifetime, started a vegetable garden, and we absolutely spent way too many hours playing video games.

Before the quarantine, my family and I were always rushing around to get here or there. We have Speech/Occupational therapy appointments, Behavioral therapy appointments, doctors' appointments, school, work, extracurricular activities, school projects, birthday parties, etc. We were always on the go, always 15 minutes late. The quarantine allowed us to slow down and enjoy each other.