

PREAMBLE

The Board's Workplace Accommodation Program is an integrated partnership among employees, immediate supervisors, and health care providers that supports injured or ill employees to remain at work or return to work. This individualized Program fosters a widespread understanding with respect to reducing the number and duration of an employee's absences through early intervention and support.

PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAM:

- When medically supported, the Program assists employees by providing rehabilitation support, accommodations or modifications to work or the workplace by providing graduated hours, part-time or occasional work with access to sick leave benefits for the period of reintegration to work; When a permanent disability exists, the Board will endeavor to modify the work and/or the workplace to accommodate the needs of the permanently disabled employee, based on medically-supported restrictions/limitations, provided that it does not cause undue hardship to the Board.
- The goal of this Program is to support employees while recovering from injury and/or illness. The overall goal in returning an employee to work is, in priority order, as follows:
 - ✓ Pre-injury/illness job
 - ✓ Pre-injury/illness job with accommodations
 - ✓ Comparable work within the bargaining unit (may impact compensable earnings)
 - ✓ Alternative work for which an employee is capable and qualified to perform (may impact compensable earnings).

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Employee

- Is required to provide satisfactory medical documentation as outlined in the employee's respective Collective Agreement, Employment Provisions, and/or the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act. The cost of medical documentation is the responsibility of the employee unless the cost of medical documentation is covered by the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board. Employees can submit paid receipts for reimbursement to the Abilities Management Office and will be paid in accordance with Ontario Medical Associate fee guidelines.

- Pursuant to your employment provisions you can access the satisfactory medical documentation forms through;
 - i. Abilities, Wellness and Attendance webpage – [Medical Leave and Workplace Accommodation](#)
 - Or ii. [Vista Self-Serve](#) (under Forms Tab)

Employee Group/Union/Association	Short Term Disability Satisfactory Medical Documentation Forms	Workplace Safety and Insurance Board Satisfactory Medical Forms
ETFO (includes Occasional)	Attending Physician Statement(s)	Contact Abilities Office directly at 905-890-1010 Ext. 2428 or email abilities.office@peelsb.com
OSSTF (includes Occasional)	OSSTF – Abilities Form	
ERFP	ERFP – Abilities Form	
PSSP	PSSP – Abilities Form	
ASG	Attending Physician Statement(s)	
OPSEU 292/283	OPSEU – Abilities Form	
CUPE 1628/2544 (includes Casual)	Attending Physician Statement(s)	
Principals/Vice Principals (Elementary and Secondary)/Executive/non-union and contract employees.	Attending Physician Statement(s)	

- May, at the request of the employer and in consultation with the Union/Association, be required to sign a Consent to Release Medical Information form in order for the employer to obtain the information necessary to support facilitation of the Return to Work process and to determine if access to sick leave benefits should continue to be granted.
- Will engage in medical rehabilitation and/or treatment as recommended by their healthcare professionals to facilitate a timely return to work.
- Will cooperate and participate in the development and implementation of their Accommodation Plan or Return to Work Plan and recovery goals.
- Will maintain regular contact with the Abilities Officer or Designate to provide medical status and review progress through their Accommodation Plan or Return to Work Plan.
- Will comply with Abilities Office timelines for providing updated satisfactory medical documentation. Timelines will be assigned on a case-by-case basis depending on duration, nature of illness and treatment recovery time lines.

- When participating in an Accommodation or Return to Work Plan and is absent in regard to a medical accommodation, will notify their Immediate Supervisor, and the Abilities Officer or Designate to ensure a continuance of sick leave benefits.
- Will discuss, in consultation with the Union/Association, the level in which they may participate in ancillary duties (committee work, extra-curricular activities, professional development, Union/Association duties, etc.) during any period of time when they are unable to perform their primary duties with the Peel District School Board, or until they return to all regular duties with no restrictions.

Note: The Abilities Officer or Designate will review medical documentation provided by the employee to determine if a workplace accommodation plan can be facilitated. If the Abilities Officer or Designate is not satisfied with the adequacy of the medical information provided, the Abilities Officer or Designate:

- Will clearly identify to the employee and Union/Association representative why the information is not adequate.
- May request additional medical information, or access to regular updated medical information, depending on the circumstances.
- May request that the employee undergo an Independent Medical Examination (IME). If the employee fails to undergo the IME or fails to provide the Abilities Officer or Designate with further medical information to reasonably permit the Abilities Officer or Designate to determine eligibility may result in suspension of sick leave benefits.

Abilities Officer or Designate will:

- On initial contact, inform the employee that, should they desire, they may have a union representative attend any meetings.
- Contact the employee directly in one of two ways:
 - phone to discuss the Board's Workplace Accommodation Program. and/or
 - send information regarding the Workplace Accommodation Program to the employees' Board email account or home address.
- Notify the appropriate union(s) of an employee's participation in the Workplace Accommodation Program.
- Work with employees and the appropriate treating medical practitioner(s) to obtain restrictions and/or limitations.
- Assess the employee's working capabilities in conjunction with medically-supported restrictions and/or limitations provided by the appropriate treating medical practitioner(s).
- Inform the employee's Immediate Supervisor of the work restrictions/limitations and initiate the development of the Workplace Accommodation Program or Return to Work Plan.

- Perform a workplace assessment with the Immediate Supervisor and, as required, with appropriate Board Resource (Health and Safety Officer, Ergonomics and Assisted Devices Specialist, or designate), to ensure compatibility of work restrictions and the duties to be performed within the work environment:
- Will co-ordinate the modification of the work or workplace, as needed, in conjunction with medically-supported restrictions/limitations;
- Will review proper ergonomics with the employee and provides instruction, as required;
- Will assess the need for change in location and/or assignment.
- Co-ordinate the development of an Accommodation or Return to Work Plan with the employee, his/her Immediate Supervisor the appropriate treating medical practitioner(s), the employee's union representative, Workplace Safety and Insurance Board, LTD Insurance Carrier, Human Resources and Superintendents, as appropriate.
- Distribute a copy of the Accommodation Plan or Return to Work Plan to the above parties (as appropriate) and the employee.
- Maintain regular contact with the employee and his/her Immediate Supervisor for the duration of the Accommodation Plan or Return to Work Plan.
- Maintain an ongoing assessment of the Accommodation Plan or Return to Work Plan.
- Arrange regular follow-up during the Accommodation Plan or Return to Work Plan to modify the Plan, as required.

Employee Relations Officer (ERO) or Designate will:

- Monitor employees sick time to ensure that it is being entered in P.A.M. or Time Entry appropriately by the school / location.
- Calculate when an employee is going to run out of paid sick time and notify Payroll, Benefits and the Employee in a timely manner. (Note the employee also has the responsibility of monitoring their sick time through Vista Self -Serve).
- Update VISTA profile, place the employee on an unpaid medical leave, LTD, or WSIB in Vista.
- Work with the Immediate Supervisor to advertise jobs replacing absent employees.
- Work collaboratively with other workplace stakeholders to assist in finding suitable alternative locations for accommodation of employees when necessary.

Benefits Officers or Designate will:

- Communicate to employees any information about Benefit Plan continuation when necessary.
- Communicate to employees any information about pension plan impacts when necessary.

Payroll Officer or Designate will:

- Ensure continuance of wages is processed in accordance with VISTA profile.
- Prepare record of employment and electronically submit to Service Canada, as required.

Immediate Supervisor (Superintendent/Principal/Vice-Principal or Manager) may/will:

- Participate in the development of the employee's Accommodation Plan or Return to Work Plan.
- Modify the work or workplace as outlined in the Accommodation Plan or Return to Work Plan.
- Assign work or duties according to the employee's Accommodation Plan or Return to Work Plan.
- Work with the employee to support and assess the progress of the employee through the Accommodation Plan or Return to Work Plan and immediately report any problems or concerns to the Abilities Officer or Designate.
- Arrange supply coverage, if required, as per the Accommodation or Return to Work Plan and submit appropriate notification to Employee Relations Officer or Designate.
- Ensure employee absences are being entered into PAM/Time Entry. Questions about entering employee absences should be directed to the PAM Operator or appropriate Human Resources Support Services representative.
- Notify the Abilities Officer or Designate of any other ancillary duties the employee is performing or has performed.
- Share the accommodation plan with any other appropriate parties, as required.

Development of Individualized Workplace Accommodation or Return to Work Plan (All Workplace Stakeholders):

- Identification of likely candidates for the Program shall be made initially by the Abilities Officer or Designate based on the medically supported restrictions/limitations identified by the appropriate treating medical practitioner and, when appropriate, representatives of the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board, Long Term Disability (LTD) Insurance, other Board

officials and Union Representatives; The Abilities Officer or Designate will review the medically supported restrictions and/or limitations and contact the employee to discuss the employee's participation in an individualized Accommodation or Return to Work Plan.

- The Abilities Officer or Designate will develop an Accommodation or Return to Work Plan based on the supported restrictions and/or limitations, and in consultation with the employee, the employee's Immediate Supervisor, and the employee's union representative.
- The Accommodation or Return to Work Plan will be shared, in writing, with the employee and their Immediate Supervisor, their Union/Association, and any other appropriate parties involved in the development or implementation of the plan.
- The Accommodation and Return to Work Plan, in general, may include, but is not restricted to, some or all of the following:
 - volunteer work (continue of wages it be paid from sick leave bank, if available)
 - reduced work hours
 - modification of duties
 - workplace modifications
 - removal of physical barriers
 - reassignment to another position if the employee has the necessary skills and abilities to perform the essential duties of that position (may impact compensable earnings)
 - relocation to an alternate worksite on a temporary or permanent basis.
- Any necessary changes to the work environment will take place prior to the employee's commencement of an Accommodation or Return to Work Plan.
- Modified work is provided within the employee's own school or service area, wherever possible (see Purpose of the Program Goal).
- The employee may be provided with a letter to be given to the appropriate treating healthcare practitioner that outlines the Accommodation or Return to Work Plan. A medical information consent form may include information regarding the employee's job description and a physical and/or cognitive demands analysis. A release of medical information consent form will also be provided.
- While participating in the Medical Workplace Accommodation Program, the employee's progress will be monitored by the Abilities Officer or Designate and Immediate Supervisor in consultation with the appropriate treating medical practitioner(s).
- Regular follow-up may occur during the Accommodation or Return to Work Plan to ensure that employee's needs are being met and make any necessary amendments to the plan should there be any change in the employee's restrictions and limitations.
- The employee continues to participate in their Accommodation or Return to Work Plan until they have fully recovered from their injury or illness. If an employee has permanent restrictions or limitations and improvement is not expected, the Medical Workplace Accommodation Plan will be reviewed annually to ensure they remain in the Medical Workplace Accommodation Program.

- Should the employee not be able to participate in an Accommodation or Return to Work Plan, the employee and the Abilities Officer or Designate, will maintain regular contact. Ongoing, updated documentation will be obtained to determine when participation in the Accommodation or Return to Work Plan might be feasible.
- The employee may be required to participate in a Functional Abilities Evaluation and/or Independent Medical Evaluation, as per collective agreements, conducted by a third party assessor. This is to determine restrictions and/or limitations and to assist in the development of an individualized Accommodation or Return to Work Plan. If necessary, the employee will be required to sign a release of information consent form before a third party assessment may take place. Refusal to sign a release of information consent form will constitute noncooperation and eligibility to sick leave benefits may be suspended until such time as an action plan for moving forward can be developed.
- If the Workplace Safety & Insurance Board (WSIB) rules an accommodation or Return to Work Plan suitable and the employee continues to be absent as a result of the workplace injury, the employee may not be eligible for sick leave benefits and could be immediately placed on a leave of absence without pay and will be paid directly by WSIB.
- If a Return to Work Plan has been deemed suitable by the employer and healthcare practitioners and the employee continues to be absent, eligibility for sick leave benefits will be reviewed.

REFERENCES

Health Information Privacy Act
 Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act
 Human Rights Code
 Workplace Safety and Insurance Board Act
 Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act

[Human Resources Support Services 44](#)

[Human Resources Support Services 45](#)

Further information is available on the [Medical Leave and Workplace Accommodation](#) page.