

HEALTH PROMOTION ATTENDANCE SUPPORT PROGRAM
HUMAN RESOURCES SUPPORT SERVICES 47

1. Preamble

- 1.1. The Board is dedicated to providing a quality learning environment while being fiscally responsible. Each employee directly contributes to this goal by maintaining his/her health and ensuring regular punctual attendance. Regular attendance is an expectation of employment.
- 1.2. The Board is committed to assisting employees who experience difficulty in achieving regular attendance. The Board shall work as much as possible with an individual employee who is encountering attendance difficulties in order to meet its objective of reducing unnecessary absenteeism. It does not intend to diminish the provisions in the collective agreement nor does it intend that employees incapacitated due to illness or disability be influenced to work if unable to do so.
- 1.3. This program and procedures are intended to present a widespread understanding of health promotion in an attempt to reduce incidence and duration of an employee's absences through early intervention and support.
- 1.4. The Board provides proactive resources to provide early intervention support to employees who have personal challenges that impact their ability to attend work on a regular basis.

2. Health Promotion Attendance Support Program Objectives:

- 2.1 The Health Promotion Attendance Support Program is not a punitive process. The goal of this Program is to assist employees to remain at work and where an injury, illness, disability or other cause prevents an employee from working, ensure that the necessary supports are in place to promote the existing administrative procedures; Medical Leave of Absence and Medical Workplace Accommodation.

The objectives include:

- Support employees in maintaining optimal health.
- Promote optimal and regular attendance at work.
- Offer assistance and support to employees whose absenteeism has escalated.
- Treat all employees in a consistent and respectful manner.
- Provide a framework to work within and establish individualized goals for employees to work towards improving regular attendance at work.
- Reduce the financial and human impacts associated with sick leave, such as interruption to the student learning environment, loss of productivity, overtime, replacement staff, and staff morale.

3. Guiding Key Elements:

- 3.1 Regular attendance at work is an expectation of employment.
- 3.2 Employee absenteeism due to injury or illness is a legitimate use of sick leave unless determined otherwise.
- 3.3 The Employee's direct supervisor plays an integral role in supporting the Employee's ability to attend work regularly by working with the Employee to identify any workplace barriers and needs in a timely manner and directing the Employee to appropriate resources.
- 3.4 Individuals require time to make changes to their daily routine and personal situations that may affect their ability to maintain regular work. As such, monitoring periods will be completed quarterly.
- 3.5 The continuation and enhancements of the wellness approach to attendance which includes the Employee and Family Assistance Program for the prompt resolution of disability management issues, as required.
- 3.6 The timelines established are guidelines only and may be repeated, extended or shortened, based on the specific, individualized circumstances.

4. Definitions of Absenteeism:

- 4.1 "Non Culpable" or "Innocent Absenteeism" occurs when an employee, through no fault of his/her own, is absent from the workplace for medical or personal reasons. These types of absenteeism must be treated properly, recognizing that affected employees may require assistance to return to regular duties.
- 4.2 "Culpable Absenteeism" refers to lateness or fraudulent absences for which the employee should be held responsible because the absences are within the employee's power to address and correct. Culpable absenteeism is handled through the normal process of progressive discipline.

5. Roles and Responsibilities:

5.1 Employees

- 5.1.1 As the Board's greatest asset, employees are required to be at work, whenever possible. However, occasionally circumstances will occur that result in an employee being absent from work. It is the employee's responsibility to advise their immediate supervisors and ensure the accuracy of their individual employment records. This may include a review of the VISTA Self-Serve Portal absence account on a monthly basis to ensure absences have been posted accurately. All absence discrepancies should be forwarded to your immediate supervisor for further investigation and correction.
- 5.1.2 Provide notification of your personal illness absence prior to the start of your scheduled starting time.

- 5.1.3 Follow the absence reporting protocol as directed by your immediate supervisor.
- 5.1.4 In cases of 5 consecutive illness absence, refer to the Medical Leave of Absence Operating Procedure.
- 5.1.5 Provide requested medical documentation in a timely manner to the Abilities Office.
- 5.1.6 Notify the Peel Abilities Office as early as possible in order to explore possible accommodations, refer to the Medical Workplace Accommodation Operating Procedures. (HRS 46)
- 5.1.7 Participate in active treatment as directed by the treating health care provider to ensure a timely return to work.
- 5.1.8 Maintain treatment plan as directed by health care provider after you have returned to work.
- 5.1.9 Actively participate in the workplace accommodation process.
- 5.1.10 Actively participate in the Health Promotion Attendance Support Program when entering a given level.

5.2 Immediate Supervisors

- 5.2.1 Ensure all employee absences are accurate and verified in P.A.M./VISTA to ensure your working location is adequately staffed,
- 5.2.2 Monitor the attendance of all employees within your area of supervision,
- 5.2.3 Treat employees fairly and equitably in monitoring the attendance of your employees
- 5.2.4 Meet with employees to communicate expectations for attendance at work
- 5.2.5 Provide direction to employees of Board Administration Procedures, Medical Leave of Absence and Medical Workplace Accommodation Program, if appropriate
- 5.2.6 Provide assistance and support to your employees and,
- 5.2.7 Maintain regular contact with employee. Continue to ensure they are still recognized as part of the school/department community.

5.3 Union and Association Representatives

- 5.3.1 The Union/Association will act in accordance with obligations under the Ontario Human Rights and/or Collective Agreement provisions, when necessary.

- 5.3.2 Ensure employee is offered ongoing support available directly through Federation/Associations.

5.4 Abilities Office

- 5.4.1 Interpret and administer sick leave provisions,
- 5.4.2 Analyze quarterly attendance data, prepare and distribute the Health Promotion correspondence to appropriate stakeholders,
- 5.4.3 Provide immediate supervisors with support and guidance in the various stages of the Health Promotion Attendance Support Program,
- 5.4.4 Assist employees with gathering proper medical documentation, as necessary,
- 5.4.5 Maintain medical documentation in a secure, confidential location,
- 5.4.6 Consult with respective bargaining agents, as requested/or required,
- 5.4.7 Assist with the development of an individualized attendance support improvement plan for various stages of this Program, and
- 5.4.8 Transition employee(s) to other programs (Medical Leave of Absence, Medical Workplace Accommodation, or refer to Employee Relations/Labour Relations Designate), as required,
- 5.4.9 Provide a bi-annual review of the Health Promotion Attendance Support Program, that includes consultation with the respective bargaining agents.

5.5 Senior Management

- 5.5.1 Promote and maintain a work environment which protects overall health, safety and wellness of all employees,
- 5.5.2 Demonstrate commitment to the Health Promotion Attendance Support Program by ensuring that all immediate supervisors act consistently in dealing with attendance issues at all levels of the organization,
- 5.5.3 Ensure fair and equitable application of the Health Promotion Attendance Support Program and,
- 5.5.4 Communicate expectations for attendance at work.

6. Attendance Threshold

- 6.1 The Employee will enter the HPASP once they exceed 11 sick days and/or 5 separate occurrences in a 12 month period starting August 1 to July 31. If the employee has reached more than 5 occurrences but less than 12 days, the board will review the specific case to determine enrollment in the HPASP

6.2 The Board will provide a bi-annual review of the Health Promotion Attendance Support Program and amend the above noted thresholds as necessary.

6.3 The following absences are included for the purposes of the program

- Personal Illness - Code 30
- Medical appointments - Code 307
- Dental appointments – Code 308
- Approved Unpaid Sick Leave

6.4 The Employee is responsible for ensuring absence records are correct and up to date through the VISTA Self-Serve Portal. Any discrepancies should be reported to their immediate Supervisor.

6.5 For the purpose of determining whether an Employee has exceeded the attendance threshold, absences greater than 5 days will be counted as 1 occurrence of 5 days.

7. Progression Through Levels

7.1. The process consists of a number of supporting letters and meetings that focus on proactive intervention in an effort to improve regular attendance at work. A high level program summary is provided below to the program at a glance view.

7.2. There are five levels in the process and each level is intended to raise individual absenteeism awareness and provide support and/or referrals to available resources in order to assist employees. The levels are categorized as follows:

- Level 1 - Attendance Awareness
- Level 2 - Attendance Support
- Level 3 - Abilities Referral and Support
- Level 4 - Attendance Concern
- Level 5 - Escalated Attendance Concern

7.3. It is important to emphasize that we are not challenging the employee's right to use the sick leave provision for an absence due to illness or injury of the employee.

7.4. Following entry into any level, the Employee's attendance will be monitored over 2 reporting (monitoring) periods. Each monitoring period is 3 months.

7.5. If the Employee exceeds 3 days and/or 2 occurrences in either monitoring period, the Employee will be progressed to the next level. Progression will only occur at the designated reporting dates (August 1st, November 1st, February 1st and May 1st)

8. Release from Program

8.1. During Levels 1,2, and 3: If at the end of the two monitoring periods at any of these levels, the Employee's absence has not exceeded the attendance goal, they will be released from the HPASP. The Employee will be advised that they have been released from the program in writing.

- 8.2. Level 4: If at the end of the 2 monitoring periods the Employee's absence has not exceeded the attendance goal, they will move to Level 3. If at the end of 2 monitoring periods the Employee's absence has not exceeded the attendance goal, they will be released from the HPASP.
- 8.3. Level 5: If at the end of the 2 reporting periods the Employee's absence has not exceeded the attendance goal, they will move to Level 4 and continue to be monitored as indicated for Level 4.
- 8.4. After exiting the program, if the Employee exceeds the program threshold during the following reporting year, the Employee will re-enter the program at the level where they exited.

9. Medical Accommodations (Chronic Accommodations)

- 9.1. When an employee's absenteeism record exceeds the established threshold number of occurrences and or sick days, this signals that the employee may require additional support.
- 9.2. It is important to recognize that each employee and their situation is unique, therefore each case must be reviewed independently with some consideration and flexibility given to the individual circumstance.
- 9.3. At any time during the HPASP, the Employee may request a referral to the Abilities Office to review the need for accommodation.
- 9.4. The Abilities Officer will work with the Employee to obtain appropriate medical documentation to identify the need for accommodation.
- 9.5. Once an accommodation is established, the Employee's attendance will be monitored based on the accommodation thresholds. If the Employee exceeds the thresholds, the Employee may be progressed to the next level.
- 9.6. Accommodation thresholds may be reviewed regularly for adjustments and appropriateness.

REFERENCES

Health Information Privacy Act
Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act
Human Rights Code
Workplace Safety and Insurance Board Act
Collective Agreement(s), if applicable
Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act
Service Canada
OMERS
Teachers' Pension Plan

[Board Policy 59 – Accommodation of Staff with Disabilities](#)

[Board Policy 23 – Leaves of Absence](#)

[Human Resources and Support Services 42 – Leaves of Absence](#)

[Human Resources Support Services 44 – Medical Leave of Absence](#)

[Human Resources Support Services 46 – Medical Workplace Accommodation Program](#)

Figure 1: HPASP Level Description



