



ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

ABSENCE REPORTING (Policy Statement: Attendance Support)

Purpose

The purpose of this administrative procedure is to ensure a fair and equitable approach to absence reporting in order that the Board can ensure accurate reporting of absences and appropriate follow up in accordance with Board policy and administrative procedures.

References

Policy Statement: Attendance Support

Administrative Procedures: Confidentiality of Medical Records

Disability Management – Early Intervention, Accommodation and Return to Work

Attendance Assistance Program

Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA)

Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA)

Ontario Human Rights Code

Occupational Health and Safety Act

Education Act

Workplace Safety and Insurance Act

Procedures

1.0 Absences of five or more consecutive working days related to illness or injury:

- 1.1 Employees are required to advise their Principal or Supervisor, immediately following an illness or accident that prevents them from working to report their absence and to discuss a return to work date.
- 1.2 When an employee is going to be absent up to and including four consecutive working days, the employee may be referred to the Disability Management Program whereby medical documentation will be requested when accommodation (s) have been requested. The required documentation should be submitted directly to Disability and Wellness, Human Resources. Documentation can be submitted by scanned email, facsimiles or by hand directly to Disability and Wellness, Human Resources. Alternatively, facsimiles sent from the medical practitioner's

office will also be accepted.

1.3 The documentation required for accommodation purposes shall minimally consist of the following, as outlined on the Standardized Medical Certificate:

1.3.1 Medical restrictions and/or limitations that are preventing the employee performing their full regular duties;

1.3.2 Anticipated date of recovery.

2.0 Absences of five or more consecutive working days related to illness or injury:

2.1 When an employee is going to be absent for more than five or more consecutive working days, the employee will notify his/her Principal or Supervisor and Disability and Wellness, Human Resources immediately of absence.

2.2 The Principal or Supervisor shall indicate to the employee that Disability and Wellness, will be notified of the employee's absence to enable early intervention and to facilitate a safe and timely return to work.

2.3 The Principal or Supervisor will notify Disability and Wellness by email or telephone.

2.4 Disability and Wellness may require the employee to provide documentation completed on the Standard Medical Certificate or Abilities Form by the appropriate medical practitioner that shall include the following information:

2.4.1 the medically supported restrictions or limitations based on objective medical findings;

2.4.2 confirmation of a diagnosable medical illness or injury

2.4.3 confirmation that the employee is participating in the appropriate treatment to expedite the employee's safe and timely return to work;

2.4.4 confirmation of the employee's prognosis for recovery;

2.4.5 any other information required to safely return the employee to work in a timely manner;

2.4.6 treating medical practitioner's name, address, phone number and fax number;

2.4.7 treating medical practitioner's signature.

2.5 Unless otherwise arranged, this documentation must be submitted by the employee or appropriate treating medical practitioner to Disability and Wellness immediately following an employee being absent for 5 consecutive days.

The board must exercise discretion in each case in determining whether to ask for a medical certificate in accordance with 1.0 and 2.0.

3.0 Sick Leave Benefit:

- 3.1 As outlined below, an employee may access or is eligible for sick leave benefits if they become injured or ill and have a credit of unused sick leave or short-term disability leave.
- 3.2 An employee may access or is eligible for sick leave or short-term disability leave if he/she is disabled, which is defined as a state of incapacity which is due to bodily injury or sickness, preventing the employee from working for the Board for remuneration.
- 3.3 Sick leave or short-term disability leave benefits are not payable:
 - 3.3.1 in cases which are compensable by Workplace Safety & Insurance Board;
 - 3.3.2 for 12-month employees during scheduled vacation unless the illness requires hospitalization. This will be reviewed on a case by case basis;
 - 3.3.3 when an employee is on an authorized unpaid leave of absence;
 - 3.3.4 when an employee has exhausted all eligible days under the sick leave and short-term disability leave benefit plan;
 - 3.3.5 while in receipt of full Long-Term Disability Benefits, unless in receipt of part-time benefits;
 - 3.3.6 when appropriate medical documentation has not been received.
- 3.4 To be eligible for sick leave benefits, the employee must follow the Board's procedures for reporting absences related to illness or injury and for returning to work, in accordance with 5.0 of this administrative procedure.
- 3.5 The Board will endeavour to accommodate the return to work and placement of temporary and/or permanently and/or partially disabled employees in accordance with the Disability Management – Early Intervention, Accommodations and Return to Work Procedure.
- 3.6 Access to sick leave benefits may be denied for failure to provide all appropriate medical documentation requested. Appropriate medical documentation refers to, but is not limited to, medically supported restrictions and/or limitations as they relate to the employee's ability to meet the essential duties of their position. It is the employee's responsibility to submit appropriate documentation to Disability and Wellness, as applicable.
- 3.7 In order to maintain access to sick leave benefits, the Human Resources Officer – Disability and Wellness, or designate, may request the employee to attend an Independent Medical Assessment (IME) and/or have completed a Functional Abilities Evaluation to determine the employee's restrictions and/or limitations. This will assist in providing return to work and/or accommodation options. In requesting the IME, the following protocol will apply:

- 3.7.1 If the Human Resources Officer – Disability and Wellness, or designate, reasonably requires medical information to determine whether an employee is able to return to work or should properly remain off of work and in receipt of sick leave benefits, the Human Resources Officer – Disability and Wellness, or designate, shall so advise the employee and request that such information be provided;
- 3.7.2 The employee is required to provide the requested medical documentation to the Human Resources Officer – Disability and Wellness, or designate, in response to the request;
- 3.7.3 The Human Resources Officer– Disability and Wellness, or designate, will review the documentation provided by the employee. If the Human Resources Officer – Disability and Wellness, or designate, is not satisfied with the adequacy of the medical information provided, the Human Resources Officer – Disability and Wellness, or designate, will clearly identify to the employee why the information is not adequate;
- 3.7.4 The employee will be given an opportunity to provide the Human Resources Officer – Disability and Wellness, or designate, with further medical information;
- 3.7.5 The Human Resources Officer – Disability and Wellness, or designate, will review any further documentation provided by the employee. If the entirety of the medical documentation provided does not reasonably permit the Human Resources Officer – Disability and Wellness, or designate, to determine whether the employee should return to work or remain off of work, the employee may be requested to submit to an IME;
- 3.7.6 If the employee fails to attend the IME or does not, prior to the IME, provide the Human Resources Officer– Disability and Wellness, or designate, with further medical information to reasonably permit the Human Resources Officer – Disability and Wellness, or designate, to determine whether the employee should return to work or remain off of work, the employee’s wages and benefits may be discontinued.

4.0 Responsibilities of the Employee:

- 4.1 Personally, report an absence, unless the employee is incapacitated and unable to do so. Failure to report absences at the first opportunity in accordance with these procedures may result in denial of pay or benefits.
- 4.2 Indicate, in general terms, the reason for the absence, i.e. due to accident, illness, contractual, etc.
- 4.3 To call in directly to their Principal or supervisor and if not immediately available, the principal or supervisor will return the call. Unless otherwise arranged with the principal or supervisor, the employee is to call in on each day of absence. Employees will also call in to the callout system, if applicable, as per the school’s practice.
- 4.4 Assume responsibility for the cost associated with the documentation from the appropriate treating medical practitioner in relation to the absence, unless addressed specifically in the Collective Agreement specific to the employee’s union/association. Costs associated with subsequent request

(s) for medical documentation by the Human Resources Officer-Disability and Wellness or designate will be borne by the Board.

- 4.5 To be eligible for sick leave and/or short term disability leave benefits, employees may be required to provide satisfactory medical documentation in the form of a Standardized Medical Certificate completed by the appropriate treating medical practitioner, in accordance with 1.0 and 2.0 of this Procedure.
- 4.6 Maintain regular contact with their Principal or Supervisor and/or Disability and Wellness during his/her absence when he /she is unable to perform the essential duties of their position due to disability.
- 4.7 Participate in appropriate treatment, as determined by the treating medical practitioner(s), to ensure a safe and timely return to work.
- 4.8 Participate in the development of his/her Return to Work Plan, including taking the proposed Return to Work Plan (including accommodations and/or modifications) to the appropriate treating medical practitioner(s) for approval, if necessary.

5.0 Responsibilities of the Principal/Vice-Principal or Immediate Supervisor:

- 5.1 Communicate the applicable Policy and Administrative Procedures to the employee.
- 5.2 Ensure the daily maintenance of accurate, up-to-date records regarding employees' absences as designated by Financial Services and Human Resources.
- 5.3 Monitor individual employee absenteeism records as designated by Human Resources.
- 5.4 Receive call-ins or return employees' calls should a message be received from employees and determine the reason for absence.
- 5.5 Ensure employee confidentiality in relation to absences and medical information.
- 5.6 Contact Disability and Wellness for assistance when restrictions and /or limitations have been identified.
- 5.7 Forward all medical documentation (if received) directly to Disability and Wellness in a secure and confidential manner.
- 5.8 Participate in the development of the employee's Return to Work Plan, including providing accommodations and/or modifications to the employee's duties and/or hours, based on recommendations from the Human Resources Officer – Disability and Wellness, or designate.

6.0 Responsibilities of the Human Resources Officer – Disability and Wellness, or Designate:

- 6.1 Request proof of continuing disability from the employee in the case of absences exceeding 5 consecutive working days, at appropriate intervals, in order to maintain the sick leave benefit or determine if participation in a Return to Work Program is appropriate.
- 6.2 Receive all medical documentation required and provide support to the employee during their time of disability.
- 6.3 Assist the Principal or Supervisor by maintaining contact with employees disabled for more than 5 consecutive working days, verifying that the employee is under the active care of the appropriate medical practitioner and following an appropriate treatment plan, and advise the Principal or Supervisor of the expected return to work date, when known.
- 6.4 Develop an appropriate Return to Work Plan (including appropriate accommodation and/or modification recommendations) based on the employee's restrictions and/or limitations.

7.0 Responsibilities of Superintendent(s)

- 7.1 It is the responsibility of the appropriate Supervisory Officer or Designate to administer this Policy and Administrative Procedure.
- 7.2 The appropriate Supervisory Officer or Designate shall review this Procedure and Program Guidelines on a regular basis or as required by legislative change.

For further direction beyond this Procedure, refer to Disability Management – Early Intervention, Accommodations and Return to Work Administrative Procedure.

Reviewed November 13, 2018