



Policy: Employee Attendance Support Program

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1.0 Policy Statement

- 1.1 The purpose of the Attendance Support Program is to provide a comprehensive and positive approach to support Board employees in the maintenance of regular work attendance. The program integrates three practices: disability management, attendance management and wellness.

2.0 Purpose

- 2.1 The Superior North Catholic District School Board is committed to creating and maintaining a healthy workplace. The Board believes that both individual and organizational health are important factors affecting the ability of all employees to attend work and to contribute to its mission and vision. This strategy

combines prevention and intervention to achieve the goals of personal and workplace wellness.

2.2 The Board Employee Attendance Support Program includes the following goals:

- The purpose of the program is to support regular attendance of all employees as an essential element of their employment. The program will improve employee attendance through non-disciplinary support and wellness initiatives.
- The program will positively support the overall health of the employees and the organization.
- The overarching program will be supported by the Disability Management, Attendance Management and Wellness Programs.
- The program is consistent with the Ontario Human Rights Code, the Workplace Safety Act and the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

3.0 Definitions of Absenteeism

3.1 **Culpable Absenteeism** refers to lateness or absences for which the employee should be held responsible, (i.e. taking a sick day when not sick). Culpable absenteeism is handled through the normal process of progressive discipline.

3.2 **Non-culpable or Innocent Absenteeism** occurs when an employee, through no fault of their own, is absent from the workplace for medical or personal illness reasons.

4.0 Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Employee

It is an expectation that an employee who is hired to perform a job will:

- Attend work as scheduled;
- Report their absences;
- Maintain regular contact with their supervisor;
- Take precautions against illness;
- Attend meetings regarding absences and be an active participant in improving their overall attendance.

4.2 **Principal/Manager/Supervisor**

As an employee of the Board the expectations in 4.1 apply. It is an expectation that the employer, through the supervisor, will:

- Review attendance reports provided by Organizational Support Services - Human Resources;
- Monitor the attendance of all employees within their area of supervision;
- Treat employees fairly and equitably in the monitoring of their attendance;
- Communicate expectations for attendance at work;
- Ensure consistent and timely application of the program;
- Provide assistance and support to their employees; and
- Maintain contact with absent employees as appropriate.

4.3 **Unions/Associations/Federations**

It is requested that union/associations/federations will:

- Provide ongoing support and assistance to the employee;
- Encourage the employee to cooperate with the employer in ensuring a timely and successful return to work; and
- Participate in Return to Work.

4.4 **Human Resources Manager or Designate**

It is expected that the Human Resource Manager will:

- Promote and maintain a work environment which protects the overall health, safety and wellness of all employees;
- Document and record attendance issues;
- Bring forward attendance issues to the appropriate Superintendent.

4.5 **Senior Management**

It is expected that Senior Management will:

- Promote and maintain a work environment which protects the overall health, safety and wellness of all employees;

- Demonstrate a commitment to an attendance support program by ensuring that:
 - All supervisors act consistently in dealing with attendance issues at all levels of the organization
 - There is a fair and equitable application of the attendance support program
 - Communicate expectations for attendance at work.

4.6 Director of Education

It is expected that the Director will:

- In addition to 4.5, he/she will promote this policy as a joint responsibility of all Board stakeholders.

5.0 Framework

5.1 Prevention

The Attendance Support Program (ASP) is a program aimed at positively supporting the health of employees and our organization. The Board supports an environment whereby “employee wellness” is at the center of this policy.

5.2 Reporting Absences

Employees are expected to make every reasonable effort to attend work as scheduled, but it is understood that there will be times when employees are unable to attend work.

In order to ensure a consistent and equitable approach throughout the Board, it is imperative that all absences are reported for all positions through normal reporting procedures for their work positions.

5.3 Managing Attendance

The process of addressing **innocent absenteeism** is supportive and non-disciplinary in nature. The intent is to understand the absences, discuss the impact the absences are having on the specific school, department or location, if appropriate, provide support and indicate support services available to the employee, and allow sufficient time for the employee to access supports and where reasonably possible, improve their attendance.

5.4 **Disability Management**

Is a partnership among employees, supervisors, administrators, unions and/or health care providers that supports employees to attend work. This program fosters a widespread understanding that the way to reduce incidence and duration of an employee's absences is through early intervention and support.

5.5 **Training and Communicating Expectations**

The Board will ensure that clear general guidelines and responsibilities are set out so that the responsibilities are carried out appropriately by every party. Training will be given to Principals, Managers, Supervisors, and Senior Administration in all aspects of this program with the focus on supporting the health of employees.

5.6 **Referral to Employee Assistance Program (EAP)**

It is important to reassure employees that the Board is interested in assisting them to improve their health and attendance. If employees indicate that they are having difficulties or challenges in achieving regular attendance, they will be reminded of the EAP as an additional resource.

5.7 **Wellness**

The goal of the Wellness program is for all employees to attain health and balance in their lives. It is designed to promote and raise staff awareness of a healthy workplace and lifestyle through a holistic approach including preventative strategies and educational programs.

5.8 **Confidentiality**

The confidential nature of all personal and medical information provided by the employee or treating practitioner(s) to the school board will be respected by all involved parties and is confidential.

References

- Ontario Human Rights Code
- Occupational Health and Safety Act
- Workplace Safety and Insurance Act
- Employment Standards Act

- Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
- Employee Assistance Program
- Equity and Inclusive Education
- Education Act and Regulations
- Collective Agreement
- Principal/VP Terms and Conditions

Approval and Review Dates

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