



# OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH, SAFETY & WELLNESS Policy/Procedure

<b>TITLE:</b>	ATTENDANCE SUPPORT	<b>NUMBER:</b>	<b>1004.0</b>
Sponsor:	Steve Ashton, VP People & Organization Development	Page:	1 of 6
Approved by:	Steve Ashton, VP People & Organization Development	Approval date:	April 5, 2016
		Effective date:	March 22, 2016
Applies to:	All IWK Health Centre Employees		

## POLICY STATEMENTS

Regular attendance at work is essential to achieving the IWK Health Centre's objective of providing consistent high quality health care service. When employees are unable to attend work on a regular and consistent basis, this policy provides for the provision of ongoing support by way of the employer's Attendance Support Policy (ASP).

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

When an employee's level of absenteeism becomes excessive, the ASP is initiated, whereby the employee is provided an opportunity to improve his/her attendance through regular monitoring, awareness, and resource support, as appropriate. The purpose of this Policy is to:

- Provide support to employees on matters of regular attendance at work;
- Provide a consistent and equitable approach for the management of employee attendance;
- Provide options to the employees if and when it is determined they are unable to fulfill the essential duties of the job and;
- Ensure employees are aware of the consequences of their absenteeism.

Absences addressed under this Policy are considered legitimate and no fault of the employee. The IWK will take every reasonable measure to assist employees in achieving regular attendance at work, including modifying job duties and accommodating disabled employees who have medical restrictions.

Placement on and removal from the ASP occurs as follows:

*This is a CONTROLLED document for internal use only. Any documents appearing in paper form are not controlled and should be checked against the electronic file version prior to use.*

- Sick hours, which are equal to the equivalent percentage of one and a half (1.5) times or greater than the IWK average over the designated six month reporting period, triggers an employee to be placed on the ASP.
- Removal from the ASP occurs when the employee has sustained consistent attendance at work for an equal period of time that they have been on the ASP (excluding periods in which they were held at the same step), to a maximum of 24 months.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Employees are responsible to:**

- Attend work on a regular and consistent basis unless for reasonable and unavoidable causes
- Follow the departmental absence reporting procedures
- Provide appropriate documentation to support absences and/or fitness to attend work when requested
- Inform their Manager and Occupational Health, Safety & Wellness (OHSW) about issues that impede their ability to work
- Work with the Manager in achieving and sustaining regular and consistent attendance
- Consider OHSW recommendations to achieve a level of fitness to perform duties of their job
- Provide the employer (Occupational Health Safety and Wellness) with sufficient information to allow the employer to satisfy any obligation it may have to accommodate the employee and to participate in reasonable forms of accommodation
- Make every effort to work safely by following the proper safety rules, policies and procedures to prevent illness or injury.

### **Management is responsible to:**

- Fairly and consistently apply the ASP Policy and Procedures
- Effectively implement and adhere to the ASP by maintaining accurate records which monitor, manage and document the attendance of employees at work on a daily basis
- Analyze Attendance Reports
- Consult with OHSW to identify employees placed on the ASP
- Consult with OHSW to determine the appropriate action for an absent employee in accordance with the Attendance Support Policy and Procedures process, considering the employee's overall record and any other information that may be relevant
- Effectively communicate with and educate employees about their roles and responsibilities as they relate to the ASP
- Monitor and coach employees with legitimate, non-culpable absences who are placed on the ASP
- Acknowledge sustained employee improvements in attendance

*This is a CONTROLLED document for internal use only. Any documents appearing in paper form are not controlled and should be checked against the electronic file version prior to use.*

- Notify OHSW when employee attendance does not improve
- Respect the confidentiality of employee health information
- Initiate, support and encourage a healthy workplace environment
- Support employees in attending the workplace

**Occupational Health Safety and Wellness is responsible to:**

- Provide Departmental Managers with Attendance Statistics
- Establish case management activities with employees when deemed necessary
- Act as a liaison with employee's treating physician
- Follow up with employee when attendance is not improving
- Maintain security and confidentiality of the employee's health record
- Refer employees on the ASP for assessments, job demands analysis, functional capacity assessments or request additional medical information as needed
- Advise Managers when medical information does/ does not support proof of illness
- Provide education and consultation regarding legitimate absences and the ASP

**Human Resources is responsible to:**

- Provide advice, education and consultation on the ASP
- Provide ongoing coaching and education to Managers on the Attendance Support Policy and Procedures

**Unions are responsible to:**

- Support their members to adhere to this policy
- Attend ASP employee meetings as a support to their members

**PROCEDURES**

- Employee's report their absence(s) according to their department protocol, including notifying the appropriate individual(s) in advance of any absence from work when applicable. Adherence to the Health Centre's. Attending Physician's Report and Sick Leave Benefit Policy is required, specifically, but not inclusively, regarding the provision to submit medical documentation to support prolonged absences.
- Managers and/or their designated time keepers will keep accurate and up to date attendance records for all employees indicating necessary information on employee absences (i.e. type, frequency, duration)
- OHSW runs the attendance report for the designated six month reporting period, identifies all employees who meet the program trigger, and provides the statistics to Managers and Human Resources.

*This is a CONTROLLED document for internal use only. Any documents appearing in paper form are not controlled and should be checked against the electronic file version prior to use.*

- Managers will work in consultation with OHSW and Human Resources to determine the appropriate action or if appropriate, Case Management Plan for an absent employee in accordance with the Attendance Support Policy, considering the employee's overall record and any other information that may be relevant.
- Managers, and when applicable with OHSW and Human Resources, will meet with individual employees who meet the program trigger for either placement on or progression through the ASP to discuss the employee's excessive absenteeism and make recommendations regarding appropriate supports. These discussions will be a reflection of what step of the program the employee is in and/or whether they have been held at a particular step due to improvement in attendance.
- Employees will continue to report absences appropriately, and the above procedures will be repeated for all subsequent reporting periods up until the employee is removed from the ASP for either maintaining regular and consistent basis, commencing Long Term Disability benefits, or termination of employment.

## REFERENCES

### Legislative Acts/References

Canadian Human Rights Act (R.S., 1985, c H-6)

## RELATED DOCUMENTS

### Policies

IWK 1006.0 Attending Physician's Report and Sick Leave Benefit

IWK 1007.0 Modified Work and Accommodation for Employees

### Forms

Manager Form: Medical Fitness Assessment Form

Physician Form: Medical Fitness Assessment Form

### Brochures

Managers Guide to Attendance Support Policy (Mangers Portal only)

Employee Guide to Attendance Support Policy

## Appendices

Appendix A - Definitions

*This is a CONTROLLED document for internal use only. Any documents appearing in paper form are not controlled and should be checked against the electronic file version prior to use.*

OP3PO150710

## Appendix A

**DEFINITIONS**

**Absence** Is an absence from work due to legitimate illness or injury.

Exclusions:

- WCB related absence
- Scheduled vacation
- Authorized leave for union business
- Bereavement
- Court leave
- Authorized leave with or without pay (pregnancy leave, parental leave, adoption leave, education leave, military leave, political office leave, as defined in the collective agreements)

**Sick Hours** Are hours of absence from work due to general illness.

Exclusions:

- Leave for family illness
- Emergency, medical and dental appointment time
- Worker's Compensation benefits
- Long term disability

**Program Trigger** Sick hours that are the equivalent percentage to one and a half times (1.5) the IWK Health Centre (IWK) sick time average for most recent previous six-month period.

**Culpable Absence** Absenteeism considered to be within the employee's control. Some examples of culpable absences include, but are not limited to, tardiness, leaving early without permission, being absent without authorization, invalid or unsupported use of sick time.

**Non-culpable Absence** Absenteeism caused by a legitimate illness beyond the employee's control and is supported by medical documentation. It is addressed with the goal to improve attendance so the workplace can operationally function and provide services.

**Case Management** Disability case management is a collaborative process for assessing, planning, implementing, coordinating, monitoring, and evaluating the options and services available to meet an individual's health needs through communication and accessible resources to promote quality, cost-effective outcomes

*This is a CONTROLLED document for internal use only. Any documents appearing in paper form are not controlled and should be checked against the electronic file version prior to use.*

### District Health Authority/IWK Policies Being Replaced

(Please List)

#### Version History

(To Be Completed by the Policy Office)

<b>Major Revisions (e.g. Standard 4 year review)</b>	<b>Minor Revisions (e.g. spelling correction, wording changes, etc.)</b>
<b>March 2016</b>	

*This is a CONTROLLED document for internal use only. Any documents appearing in paper form are not controlled and should be checked against the electronic file version prior to use.*