

# KINGSTON, FRONTENAC AND LENNOX & ADDINGTON PUBLIC HEALTH

## BY-LAW, POLICY & PROCEDURE MANUAL

### PROCEDURE: PERSONNEL

APPROVED BY:

NUMBER: **IV-290**

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## ATTENDANCE MANAGEMENT SUPPORT PROGRAM

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### Definitions

Agency Average Sick Hours: is the total number paid sick hours in a semi-annual 12 month period divided by the average number of part time and full time employees in the 12 month period

Agency Average Sick Incidents: is the total number sick incidents in a semi-annual 12 month period divided by the average number of part time and full time employees in the 12 month period.

Attendance Flag: is established on an annual basis and comprise the agency's average sick hours and sick incidents, excluding sick absences owing to a workplace illness or injury, and approved Long Term Disability leave. This dual trigger of hours and incidents serves as the "flag" to indicate that an employee's sick absences are higher than expected and may indicate an attendance problem.

Culpable Absenteeism: occurs when an employee is absent from work owing to factors within the employee's control to address and correct (e.g., lateness, failure to report an absence to the employer, abuse of leave by using sick time or Attendance Management Support Program for illegitimate illness).

Disability: is a medically verifiable impairment owing to non-occupational illness or injury that is not covered by *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act*, which prevents an employee from performing his or her regular duties.

Discretionary Factors: refer to an employee's specific individual circumstances, including but not limited to, a chronic medical condition that is receiving ongoing verifiable medical treatment or other relevant extenuating circumstances.

Health Care Professional: is a physician or other qualified medical practitioner satisfactory to the Agency who is registered to practice the profession by the appropriate regulatory authority in the jurisdiction in which the care or services are rendered.

Incident: is any related episode of absence, paid or unpaid, regardless of the duration (e.g., part of the day, full day or multiple consecutive days) owing to non-culpable absenteeism, that is not as a result of a workplace illness or injury or an approved Long Term Disability leave.

Non-Culpable Absenteeism: occurs when an employee, through no fault of their own, is absent from work due to a legitimate illness or injury. Non-culpable absenteeism is managed in a non-disciplinary manner, with the intent of providing assistance to the employee to attend work regularly.

Non-Disciplinary Termination: refers to a termination of employment that occurs when the employment relationship is no longer viable and for which the employee is not at fault. (i.e., an injury or illness prevents an employee from attending work on a regular basis, there is no reasonable likelihood that the employee will be able to achieve regular attendance in the future, and the agency determines that it has fulfilled its obligations under the applicable collective agreement(s), the *Human Rights Code*, and any other applicable legislation).

## **Procedure**

### 1.0 Roles and Responsibilities

- 1.1 Employees are responsible for taking whatever steps are necessary to attend work on a regular and timely basis. Employees are responsible for reporting absences in accordance with the Collective Agreement language or Terms and Conditions of Employment for Employees without Union Affiliation, whichever is applicable, and the protocol established by the direct supervisor and providing medical evidence to support absences as requested by the Occupational Health Nurse. All absences must be recorded in HRIS in an accurate and timely manner.
- 1.2 Direct Supervisors are responsible for being a positive role model to staff in relation to attending work on a regular and timely basis, ensuring that staff are aware of the importance of consistent attendance and communicating the agency's expectations regarding attendance. This role shall include, but is not limited to:
  - maintaining absence reporting protocols,
  - approving attendance records in HRIS, accurately and in a timely manner,
  - forwarding any medical documentation received from staff to the OHN,
  - regular monitoring of attendance history and patterns in HRIS,
  - addressing attendance problems in a proactive, positive and timely manner,
  - recognizing and encouraging good attendance, and
  - providing support and assistance to staff that are not meeting the agency's attendance expectations.
- 1.3 Members of Executive Committee are responsible for ensuring that the agency has an AMSP in place to assist employees in their efforts to maintain regular attendance at work, holding managers accountable for consistently applying the AMSP, and serving as a role model for regular and timely attendance at work.
- 1.4 The Occupational Health Nurse is responsible for providing direct supervisors and employees with advice related to the AMSP (i.e., is there medical evidence to support previous absences in the employee's medical file), maintaining employee medical files, and liaising with employees and health care professionals in accordance with Policy IV-375, *Accommodation for Employees with Disabilities* and Policy IV-485, *Early and Safe Return to Work*.

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1.5 Human Resources Officer is responsible for calculating and communicating the attendance flag for the AMSP based on the semi-annual 12 month HRIS sick records, generating semi-annual reports for supervisors that identify employees with an attendance flag, tracking and reporting on employees that are in the AMSP (including stage in program), and providing direct supervisors with advice relating to the interpretation of sick leave language in the collective agreements and sick coding in HRIS.

## 2.0 Program Entry

2.1 Attendance reports shall be run on a semi-annual basis by Human Resources. The reports shall identify all employees that have an attendance flag. The OHN will review the reports and identify the absences that are associated with a documented chronic condition or other supporting medical documentation.

2.2 The direct supervisor shall review the attendance history for all employees with an attendance flag, taking into consideration all discretionary factors.

2.3 If sick absences are not attributed to an ongoing chronic condition, disability, workplace illness or injury, or any other acceptable discretionary factor, then the supervisor shall identify the employee as being in the AMSP and inform the HR Officer to document in HRIS.

2.4 The supervisor shall contact the employee directly to set up a meeting to discuss his or her entry into the AMSP. Documentation of entry into the AMSP shall be included in the first initial attendance interview memorandum.

## 3.0 Program Counselling

In addition to the initial interview, there are four stages in the counselling process which are designed to raise awareness about an employee's attendance problem and to encourage improvement. The movement through the stages is dependent on the specifics of each individual's attendance history and health circumstances. If it is identified in any of the meetings that absences are owing to an ongoing chronic medical condition, or any other acceptable discretionary factor, a referral shall be made by the supervisor to the OHN for further support.

### 3.1 Initial Interview

3.1.1 The supervisor shall conduct an informal meeting with the employee to raise awareness of the attendance problem, to describe the impact that absenteeism is having on the team and service delivery, to offer support or resources to help improve attendance, to review the agency's AMSP, and to develop a plan to improve attendance over the following six months.

3.1.2. The supervisor shall complete a memorandum to document the meeting to confirm that the employee is in the AMSP.

3.2 Counselling Stage 1

- 3.2.1. The supervisor shall review attendance on an on-going basis for all employees in the AMSP through HRIS and at a minimum semi-annually upon receipt of the attendance report from Human Resources. If there has not been consistent improvement in attendance since the initial interview, then the employee will move to counselling stage 1.
- 3.2.2. The supervisor shall conduct a formal meeting with the employee to review attendance history, to emphasize attendance expectations, to offer support or resources to help to improve attendance, to indicate that attendance will continue to be monitored, and to review and to revise the plan to improve attendance over the following six months.
- 3.2.3. The supervisor shall complete a letter to document the concerns discussed during the stage 1 counselling meeting.

3.3 Counselling Stage 2

- 3.3.1 The supervisor shall review attendance on an on-going basis for all employees in the AMSP through HRIS and at a minimum semi-annually upon receipt of the attendance report from Human Resources. If there has not been consistent improvement in attendance since the counselling stage 1 meeting, the employee will typically move to counselling stage 2.
- 3.3.2 The supervisor shall conduct a formal meeting with the employee to review attendance history, to re-emphasize attendance expectations, to offer additional support or resources to help to improve attendance, to encourage the employee to seek a medical assessment, to indicate that attendance is a concern and that it will continue to be monitored, and to review and to revise the plan to improve attendance over the following six months.
- 3.3.3 The supervisor shall complete a letter to document the concerns discussed during the stage 2 counselling meeting.

3.4 Counselling Stage 3

- 3.4.1 The supervisor shall review attendance on an on-going basis for all employees in the AMSP through HRIS and at a minimum semi-annually upon receipt of the attendance report from Human Resources. If there has not been consistent improvement in attendance since the counselling stage 2 meeting, the employee will typically move to counselling stage 3.
- 3.4.2 The supervisor shall conduct a formal meeting with the employee to review attendance history, to re-emphasize attendance expectations, to recommend that the employee seek additional resources, to indicate that attendance is a serious concern

and that it will continue to be monitored, and to review and to revise the plan to improve attendance over the following six months.

3.4.3 The supervisor shall complete a letter to document the concerns discussed during the stage 3 counselling meeting.

### 3.5 Counselling Stage 4

3.5.1 The supervisor shall review attendance on an on-going basis for all employees in the AMSP through HRIS and at a minimum semi-annually upon receipt of the attendance report from Human Resources. If there has not been consistent improvement in attendance since the counselling stage 3 meeting, the employee will typically move to counselling stage 4.

3.5.2 The supervisor shall conduct two meetings with the employee at this stage. The first meeting shall be a preliminary meeting to advise the employee of the seriousness of the attendance concerns, to review attendance history, to re-emphasize attendance expectations, and to inform the employee that she or he is required to undergo a medical assessment to determine his or her ability to attend work on a regular basis. At this stage, the employee will be informed that she or he will also be required to attend a follow-up meeting, once the medical documentation has been received. The employee shall be informed that, if medical documentation is not provided or if it indicates that regular consistent attendance cannot be expected and there is no disability identified, termination will be considered.

3.5.3 The supervisor shall complete a letter to document the concerns discussed during the stage 4 counselling meeting.

3.5.4 The second meeting shall be a follow-up meeting to advise the employee of the action to be taken based on the information provided, and to advise the employee that he or she has reached the final stage of the counselling process, and that if attendance expectations are not met and sustained, termination shall be considered.

3.5.5 The supervisor shall complete a letter to document the concerns discussed during the stage 4 counselling follow-up meeting.

3.5.6 A union and HR representative shall be in attendance at both of the stage 4 counselling meetings.

### 4.0 Program Exit

4.1 Employees in the AMSP program that have improved their attendance record for the previous six month period shall receive an attendance improvement letter from their supervisor and will stay in a monitoring state within the program. The supervisor shall forward the letter to the HR Officer to update in HRIS.

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- 4.2 Employees in the AMSP program that sustain one year of satisfactory attendance (i.e., no attendance flag) shall receive a one year sustained improvement congratulatory letter and a formal notification that they are no longer in the program. The supervisor shall forward the letter to the HR Officer to update in HRIS.
  - 4.3 Employees in the AMSP that had improved their attendance but suffered a relapse shall receive an attendance relapse letter.
  - 4.4 Employees with perfect attendance for a one year period shall receive an attendance congratulatory letter.
  - 4.5 Employees in the AMSP that receive a letter from the OHN acknowledging that a chronic medical condition will no longer be a factor in the AMSP, will have his or her file reviewed by the OHN on an annual basis.
  - 4.6 Employees in stage 4 of the AMSP program that continue to have excessive sick absences, have demonstrated over time that they will not be able to attend work on a regular basis, and all reasonable accommodations have been considered may be released through non-disciplinary termination. This action shall not be taken without consultation with the Manager, Human Resources and reviewed by the Director, Corporate Services and Medical Officer of Health.
- 5.0 Program Administration
- 5.1 The agency's attendance expectations shall be posted on the Staff Website on an annual basis and communicated to all staff via an electronic newsletter.
  - 5.2 Attendance template letters shall be accessible to supervisors in the management committee folder.
  - 5.3 The Manager, Human Resources shall submit an AMSP report to Executive Committee on an annual basis.

**ORIGINAL DATE:**

1 January 1989

**REVISIONS:**

6 May 1991

14 March 1994

11 January 2000