



Northeastern Catholic District School Board

ATTENDANCE SUPPORT

Administrative Procedure Number: APP021

POLICY STATEMENT

The Northeastern Catholic District School Board (NCDSB) is committed to creating and maintaining a healthy workplace. As a witness to God's healing activity in the world, the Board is called to act out of a deepened sense of responsibility for the health and wellness of its employees. The Board believes that both individual and organizational health are important factors affecting the ability of all employees to attend work and to contribute fully to its mission. This strategy combines both prevention and intervention to achieve the goals of personal and workplace wellness.

In order to carry out the NCDSB's mandate, regular attendance by all employees is essential. The Employee Support Program (ESP) is a comprehensive program aimed at positively supporting the health of employees and the organization. The Employee Support Program will be supported by Disability Support, Attendance Support and Wellness Programs.

The Employee Support Program is consistent with the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act*, *Employment Standards Act* and the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

REFERENCES

NCDSB Policy and Procedures:

- P-13 Employee Support Program Policy
- APP016 – Absence Reporting
- APP017 – Confidentiality of Medical Records
- APP018 – Disability Support: Early Intervention, Accommodations and Return to Work

DEFINITIONS

Absenteeism:

- i) Innocent (Non-Culpable) Absenteeism relates to absences as a result of illness or injury that arise due to circumstances beyond the employee's control. These absences are not dealt with through a progressive discipline model; instead the employee is supported through the Attendance Support Program.
- ii) Culpable Absenteeism relates to those absences for which employees can be held accountable. Failure to attend work without notifying the employer, lateness for work or leaving early and abuse of leave are examples of culpable absences. Employees with culpable absences are subject to progressive discipline, in accordance with the associated policy and procedures. These absences are not dealt with through the Attendance Support Program.

Absence Threshold:

The established number of absences which when exceeded will trigger possible entry into the Attendance Support Program. When an employee's absences exceed the threshold within a rolling 12 (calendar or working) month period, the supervisor and/or Human Resources Officer may meet with the employee to discuss his/her level of absenteeism having regard for the personal circumstances of the employee.

Prorated Threshold:

The established number of absences

Supervisor:

An employee's immediate supervisor which may include the Board of Trustees through the Chair, Director, Superintendent, Principal/Manager and/or designate.

PROCEDURES

- 1.0 The intent of the Attendance Support Procedure is to provide non-disciplinary and supportive assistance to employees who exceed the school board's established absence threshold.
- 2.0 When an employee's absences exceed the established absence threshold the provisions of this procedures apply in accordance with the Attendance Management Program Guide.
- 3.0 Should a disability be identified that requires support or accommodation at any time during the process, the school board will support the employee's transition into the Disability Support Program.
- 4.0 The Absence threshold shall be reviewed every two years by the Board. The Employee Health & Wellness Advisory Committee will have the opportunity to provide input on threshold changes. Employees should be notified of threshold changes. The threshold is used as a mechanism to trigger non-disciplinary and supportive intervention.
- 5.0 When an employee's absences have exceeded the threshold, the attendance support process will be initiated.
- 6.0 Entry into any level of the multi-level process is applied consistently to all employees using discretion. The goals that are set within any level are specific and unique to each employee's circumstances.
- 7.0 The employee may include his/her representative in the attendance management process. The representative may attend any meetings that occur to discuss or review the employee's attendance.
- 8.0 The attendance management process includes 5 distinct components: Preliminary Meeting; Coaching Level 1; Coaching Level 2; Coaching Level 3; and a Level 4 Meeting.

- 8.1 The Preliminary Meeting includes the employee, the supervisor and/or the Human Resources Officer to initiate discussion related to the employee's absence level, gain an understanding of the issue(s) that may be preventing the employee from regularly attending work, offer support and guidance, as well as set attendance goals for the next 90 working days if necessary.
- 8.2 Coaching Level 1 – consists of a meeting that includes the employee, the supervisor and/or the Human Resources Officer. The employee may enter into Level 1 as he/she has been unable to meet the attendance goals established in the Preliminary Meeting OR has exceeded the threshold within the 12 month period following the preliminary meeting. Attendance goals may be set with the employee that will apply for the next 90 working days.
- 8.3 Coaching Level 2 – consists of a meeting that includes the employee, the supervisor and/or the Human Resources Officer. The employee may enter into Level 2 as he/she has been unable to meet the attendance goals established in Level 1 OR has exceeded the threshold within the 12 month period following the level 1 coaching. Attendance goals may be set with the employee that will apply for the next 90 working days.
- 8.4 Coaching Level 3 – consists of a meeting that includes the employee, the supervisor and/or the Human Resources Officer. The employee may enter into Level 3, as he/she has been unable to meet the attendance goals established in Level 2 OR has exceeded the threshold within the 12 month period following the level 2 coaching. Attendance goals may be set with the employee that will apply for the next 90 working days.
- 8.5 The employee will be advised that failure to meet the attendance goals set in Coaching Level 3 may result in termination of employment.
- 8.6 Level 4-consists of a meeting that includes the employee, the supervisor and or the Manager of HR or designate, and/or the Superintendent. The employee may enter into Level 4, as he/she has been unable to meet the attendance goals established in Level 3 OR has exceeded the threshold within the 12 month period following the level 3 coaching the threshold is exceeded during the 12 month review period. Where the employee progresses to Level 4 and the Board determines that:
 - (a) it has fulfilled its obligations under the applicable collective agreement and/or policies and procedures, the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, Ontario Human Rights Code and any other applicable legislation; and,
 - (b) the employee's absenteeism is excessive and there is no reasonable likelihood that the employee will be able to attend work regularly in the foreseeable future;
 - (c) the employee may be advised that his/her employment is being terminated on a non-disciplinary basis.

- 9.0 When attendance goals have been met within a coaching level, the employee enters into a review period of up to 12 working months where their absences are monitored by the Human Resources Officer.
- 10.0 Employees who do not exceed the threshold in the review period will exit from the Attendance Support Program.
- 11.0 The Board reserves the right to consider the termination of an employee for non-culpable absenteeism.
- 12.0 Employee Responsibilities Include:
- 12.1 Maintaining regular attendance.
 - 12.2 Participating actively in all levels of the attendance management process.
 - 12.3 Cooperating in setting personal attendance goals.
 - 12.4 Contacting their union representative if the employee wishes them to be involved.
 - 12.5 Providing any appropriate documentation, during any level of the process in accordance with the related provisions of the Absence Reporting Procedure.
- 13.0 Supervisor Responsibilities Include:
- 13.1 Communicating attendance expectations to all employees through an annual review of the Attendance Management Program.
 - 13.2 Reviewing absence reports for staff.
 - 13.3 Addressing all absenteeism issues using discretion and seek support from Human Resources.
 - 13.4 Conducting the preliminary meeting with all employees whose absences exceed the threshold.
 - 13.5 Supporting employees and act as a resource.
 - 13.6 Advising employees of available resources (i.e. EAP).
 - 13.7 Participating in all meetings as outlined in the Attendance Management Guide and provides input into the development of individualized attendance goals for each employee involved in the process.
 - 13.8 Providing a written outcome of the preliminary meeting to the employee;

13.9 Supporting and assisting the Human Resources Officer at any level in the attendance management process;;

13.10 Providing positive reinforcement to employees who reach their attendance goals.

14.0 Human Resources Officer Responsibilities Include:

14.1 Identifying absenteeism trends or patterns, such as the following:

14.1.1 frequent absences of short duration;

14.1.2 absences of more than five consecutive days to identify possible entry into the Disability Support Program;

14.1.3 absences due to doctor appointments or scheduled treatment;

14.1.4 absences due to workplace injury and/or illness;

14.1.5 unauthorized absences;

14.1.6 a pattern of repeated days of absence taken in proximity to weekends;

14.1.7 absenteeism in excess of the threshold;

14.1.8 absences in excess of standard recovery time, in accordance with Canadian Medical Association, for an employee's illness or injury as identified by the Human Resources Officer, or designate.

14.2 Supporting supervisors in addressing absenteeism issues.

14.3 Serving as a resource to employees and supervisors.

14.4 Assisting to identify employees who exceed the threshold level of absences.

14.5 Advising employees of resources available to them.

14.6 Facilitating the meetings in Coaching Levels 1 to 3.

14.7 Providing assistance on the development of individualized goals at the conclusion of each meeting, taking into account all circumstances identified during each meeting.

14.8 Providing a written outcome of each coaching level meeting with copies to the employee, the supervisor and the employee representative, if applicable.

14.9 Measuring the average number of absences per employee group on an annual basis and communicating results to the Manager of Human Resources.

15.0 Manager of HR/Superintendent(s) Responsibilities Include:

- 15.1 Providing support and act as a resource to all aspects of the attendance management process.
- 15.2 In conjunction with Human Resources and supervisors, review the cases of employees who have not met attendance goals following the completion of all three coaching levels to determine ongoing employability.
- 15.3 Communicating results of the Attendance Support Program as required on an annual basis.

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Date:

May 2020



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Appendix A
Additional Information Relating to Types of Absence

Absences considered under the definition of this Procedure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal illness/injury unrelated to work (paid and unpaid) if the absences are <6 consecutive days and the employee is not involved in the school board's Disability Support Program. • Medical/Dental appointments (where applicable)
Absences not considered under the definition of this Procedure	<p>MAY NOT INCLUDE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vacation • Culpable absences • Family medical leaves as defined by the Employment Standards Act • Pre-approved prolonged leaves of absence • Bereavement leave • Jury or subpoena leave • Pregnancy/parental leave • Union business leave • Examinations and convocations • Quarantine • Observance of recognized religious holy days • Inclement weather day • Suspensions • Approved Long Term Disability claims • WSIB absences • Paid or unpaid personal leaves • Emergency leaves under the Employment Standards Act not due to personal illness/injury

