

Attendance Support and Management Program

Why an ASMP?

- Punctuality and regular attendance are essential attributes of every employment relationship and at the core of the employment contract.
- Poor attendance is challenging to manage, impacts operations and costly to the employer.
- Attendance management programs are an effective way to promote wellness and care of employees and monitor workplace absenteeism.
- Consistent with collective agreements, reasonable and enforceable provided employer is consistent in application.

Policy Changes

- Health PEI implemented an Attendance Management program and policy in 2015.
- In 2017, the policy was upheld at a mediated arbitration between HPEI & CUPE
 - ▶ Some changes were made to the policy in advance of this and as a result of the arbitration.
 - ▶ Policy applies to all unions and excluded.
- Revised policy included:
 - ▶ More supportive language and tone
 - ▶ Adjustment to thresholds
 - ▶ Documentation requirements
 - ▶ Clarification regarding deviations
 - ▶ Excessive innocent absenteeism language

Consistency is key!

- In the arbitration decision, HPEI was directed to address the inconsistent application of the policy:
 - ▶ Attendance support discussions were inconsistent
 - ▶ Granting of deviations was inconsistent across the organization
- In order for the Attendance Management and Support program to work, managers and supervisors must be consistent
- Part of ongoing and regular performance management practices

What is our policy?

- Key components:
 - ▶ Identifies employee attendance issues
 - ▶ Dedicated time for supportive discussions
 - ▶ Help understand and manage employee absences (*discuss cause(s) or reason(s) for absences, impacts and supportive plans for improvement*)
 - ▶ Opportunity to explore supportive resources (e.g. EAP)
- Tracks absences including:
 - ▶ Paid sick
 - ▶ Unpaid sick
 - ▶ Ill during shift
 - ▶ Illness in family
 - ▶ Medical appointments

What is our policy?

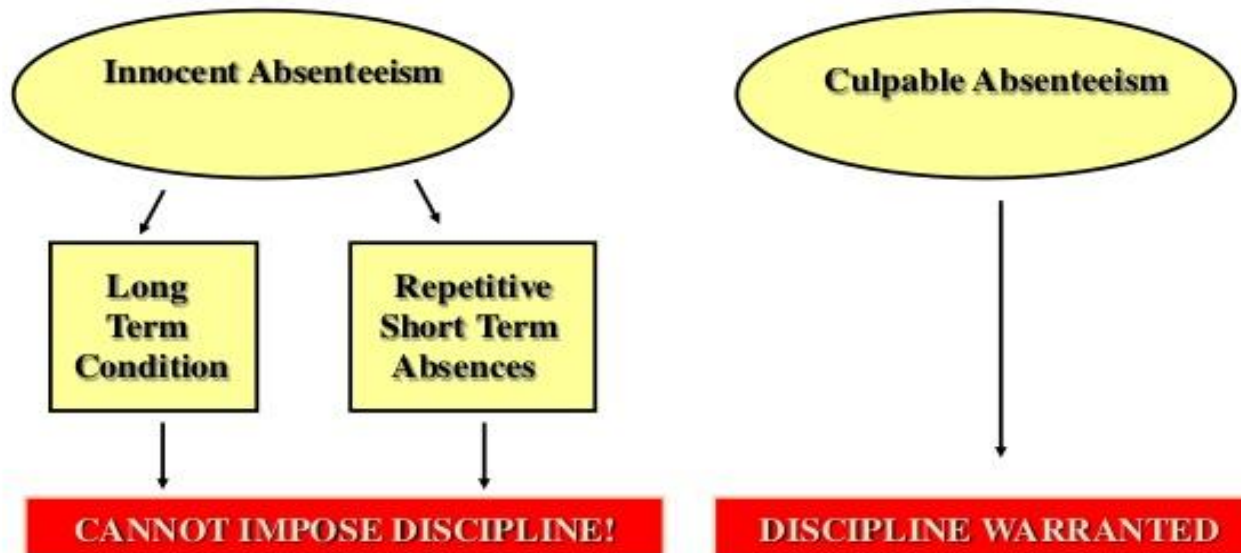
- Policy is non-disciplinary
- Policy addresses innocent absenteeism only
- Misuse of sick leave is not dealt with through this policy
 - ▶ Not part of attendance management
 - ▶ Addressed through investigation and progressive discipline if applicable



Absences Defined

- Innocent absenteeism (non-culpable):
 - ▶ Absences for reasons beyond their control;
 - ▶ Non-culpable which means that it is blameless;
 - ▶ e.g. Illness or injury related absences
 - ▶ It cannot be remedied or treated by disciplinary measures.
- Excessive innocent absenteeism
 - ▶ Prolonged periods of non-culpable absences with no reasonable prognosis of improvement, may result in administrative termination for “frustration” of contract.
- Culpable Absenteeism
 - ▶ Absences that are within an employee’s ability to control
 - ▶ “Blameworthy” absenteeism
 - ▶ e.g. Arriving late for work, falsifying sick leave
 - ▶ Not addressed through this policy

FORMS OF ABSENTEEISM



How to apply the policy

- Attendance Support Discussion thresholds:
 - ▶ #1 - 67.5 hrs (*verbal meeting with supervisor only – recorded in PS*)
 - ▶ #2 - 101.25 hrs (*documented meeting with supervisor only*)
 - ▶ #3 - 135 hrs (*documented meeting with supervisor and manager/director with option for union representation*)
- Attendance support discussions occur in order and cannot be skipped (i.e. start at 1 even if past that threshold)
- If a threshold is missed, you must wait another 33.75 hours and at least one month before having the next discussion.

How to apply the policy

- Deviations
 - ▶ Absences that are not to be included in the accumulation of hours towards a threshold from an Attendance Support Discussion.
- The employer has discretion in deviating certain absences where a medical note substantiates an absence related to:
 - ▶ A single, significant health-related event that impacts a large number of absences and is unlikely to occur again (for example being put off work because of a major injury, or a surgical procedure).
 - ▶ A series of short absences that result in a significant accumulation of hours absent and that are directly related to an underlying and chronic condition that would be considered a disability under human rights legislation.
- Any potential deviations must be discussed with HR prior to deviating.

Duty to Accommodate

- Legal obligation from Human Rights legislation and collective agreements
- Through the ASMP, an employee may disclose the need for an accommodation based on a protected ground (e.g. disability) or a manager/supervisor may become aware through an employee's ongoing illness or medical conditions, family status-related absences (such as illness, medical conditions, care responsibilities)
- If information is disclosed or an supervisor/manager inquires further as to a possible need for accommodation, the accommodation process may be triggered.
- Supervisors/managers must be aware of the duty to accommodate at all times.

Proven Results

- In 2015, the implementation of the ASMP resulted in:
 - ▶ Reduction of Sick Hours by over 38,000 hours
 - ▶ Total savings of over \$809,000 (10.3% reduction)
 - ▶ Additional savings in overtime and staff replacement costs



Best Practices

- Commitment to the program across the organization is key.
- Focus on the well-being of employees – both physical and emotional.
- Ensure EAP is offered to the employee
- Balance consistent and uniform application with consideration of individual circumstances.
- Don't try to deviate to avoid a conversation.
- Incorporate attendance management into the workplace culture – emphasize the impacts of excessive absenteeism on productivity, staffing and the work unit generally.

Employee Assistance Program



*Confidential
Professional • Voluntary*



- For Health PEI employees and their immediate families
- Offices in Charlottetown, Summerside, O'Leary and Montague
- Toll-free: 1-800-239-3826
- eap@gov.pe.ca

Next Steps

- Attendance management is a key priority for ELT
- Each manager/supervisor must be receiving their monthly report & completing their attendance management
 - ▶ If you need assistance in setting it up your report and preparing for discussions, please contact HR
- Quarterly compliance reports will be distributed to managers and supervisors
- Unions will be advised that the attendance management program is still in effect