

# Human Resources Policies and Procedures

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Policy Number: A-5  
Effective Date: July 1984  
Amended: February 2004  
Amended: August 2010

**Subject:** Attendance Management and Support Program

## **Policy Statement:**

The Corporation of Delta (the Corporation) expects employees to attend work as scheduled and to carry out the duties for which they were hired. The Corporation is committed to assisting employees in achieving and maintaining acceptable levels of work attendance.

It is the policy of the Corporation to manage employee absenteeism in a fair and consistent manner with the following objectives:

- To maximize service delivery to the citizens of Delta, and
- To assist employees in minimizing absences from work by providing, where reasonable, accommodation, assistance and rehabilitation.

To make this program effective, the Corporation is committed to:

- Promoting a safe and healthy workplace, and
- Providing guidance and training to management staff that is responsible for dealing with attendance issues.

## **Program Foundation:**

The Corporation of Delta recognizes that employee absenteeism is very expensive, involving direct costs such as the cost of replacing the employee and the loss of employee productivity. In addition, absenteeism can result in reduced service to Delta citizens, and impact employee morale as other employees assume the additional workload created due to the absence of the employee.

Employees whose attendance pattern shows that their total absences are consistently greater than the standard for the department or division (denoted as 'department') will have their attendance reviewed as defined in the Attendance Management and Support Program (the Program) procedures.

The Program is intended to assist managers and supervisors in dealing effectively with employees who have excessive absenteeism (i.e. above



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that of the employee's department average) and to assist employees to attend work regularly. Managers and supervisors will endeavor to ensure that an employee:

- Understands the workplace impact of his/her absence(s);
- Receives the appropriate support and coaching to achieve regular attendance;
- Understands the potential outcome if his/her attendance does not improve.

Overall, the Program has been developed to:

- Assist employees in achieving regular attendance; and
- Encourage managers and supervisors to display good judgment and sensitivity towards the unique characteristics and circumstances of their employees.

The Corporation's focus is on attendance improvement through awareness, intervention and assistance, applied in a fair, consistent and supportive manner with a goal to create a work environment that promotes and motivates employees to maintain regular attendance.

## Scope:

The Corporation of Delta's Program will be applied in a consistent and reasonable manner in accordance with applicable statutes, legislation and collective agreement(s). This applies to all Corporation of Delta employees.

## Definitions:

**Absence** is an incident of non-attendance at work, regardless of the cause.

**Attendance** is considered the frequency with which an employee is present at work when scheduled to be at work.

**Bona Fide** is a term which refers to actions or conduct that is honest and proper.

**Bona Fide Absences** are absence that are justified and may include Sick Leave, Long Term Disability and Workers' Compensation. The purpose of these plans is to provide payment benefits during a period of "bona fide absence" that is supported by appropriate medical documentation.



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**Culpable Absenteeism (blameworthy)** is due to the fault of or within the control of the employee (e.g. improper use of sick leave or an employee absent without authorization). Culpable absenteeism, if substantiated, will be dealt with through the use of corrective action. Culpable absenteeism is addressed under other Corporation policies and procedures through Human Resources and not in this Program.

**Doctor's Certificate** denotes a form from a physician who is a registered member in good standing with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of BC that includes:

- Date that the employee became ill or injured;
- Date(s) that the employee was seen by a doctor;
- Date(s) that the employee is unable to work;
- How the illness/injury prevents the employee from performing his/her job duties. Additional information may also be required specific to functional limitations and/or restrictions so appropriate work may be considered;
- The prognosis for recovery;
- Anticipated return to work date.

**Non-Culpable Absenteeism (innocent)** is caused by illness, injury or other causes beyond the employee's control. Non-culpable absenteeism is dealt with through a non-disciplinary and counselling approach. This Program is intended to address non-culpable absenteeism.

**Prognosis** is a prediction, made by a physician, of the expected course or outcome of an illness, injury or disability including the chances of recovery and or duration of the absence.

**Sick Leave** is considered to be time off from work, paid or unpaid, on account of an employee's temporary inability to perform work duties because of sickness or disability.

Sick leave benefits are intended to provide individuals with income replacement during a period of inability to work because of illness or injury and as such should be considered as an "insurance" when this type of benefit is needed.

**Standards** will be based on the number of occasions of absence (day, shift or part thereof) for each department and the nature of the absence and the reason for the absence. The average absenteeism will be defined in terms of the number of days or shifts for the department for one year (average days absent per year).



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An employee whose attendance pattern shows that their total absences were greater than the standard for the department or demonstrates a perceived pattern or trend will have their attendance reviewed.

## Responsibilities:

### ***Senior Management***

Senior managers are responsible to provide overall support and endorsement of the Program at all levels in the Corporation.

### ***Managers and Supervisors***

Managers and supervisors are responsible for supporting and ensuring proper application of the Program within their work areas in compliance with the collective agreements and other relevant policies and legislation. This responsibility also includes:

- (a) Communicating attendance expectations and Program elements to all employees;
- (b) Ensuring all employees are aware that their employment with the Corporation includes a commitment to attend work on a regular basis;
- (c) Explaining that sick leave benefits should be considered as an "insurance" to be used during an inability to work because of illness or disability and are not an entitlement for unnecessary time off;
- (d) Reviewing and approving all time off and ensuring that all employees are aware of the process to report absences from work;
- (e) Ensuring all absences are reported to enable appropriate tracking and report preparation;
- (f) Maintaining contact with absent employees;
- (g) Contacting employees regarding individual attendance records and expectations;
- (h) Coaching employees where attendance is becoming problematic to positively influence attendance improvement;
- (i) In appropriate circumstances, supporting return to work opportunities for employees who are temporarily unable to perform their regular job;



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- (j) Maintaining the confidentiality of employee information and Program status;
- (k) Consulting with Human Resources as required.

## ***Employees***

Employees are responsible for being at work on a regular basis. Employees who are unable to report to work as scheduled are expected to:

- (a) Seek solutions to issues that may be causing absenteeism.
- (b) Follow established reporting procedures when an absence occurs or will occur, including reasons for non-attendance.
  - Report any absence from work prior to the commencement of their scheduled shift if possible by contacting a supervisor or authorized delegate. The employee shall advise of the reasons for their absence and their anticipated date of return to work.
  - Report to their manager and/or supervisor during the absence on a daily basis:
    - Their abilities to perform the essential elements or duties of their job;
    - A time frame for return to work, and
    - Any work limitations that may exist.

The frequency for reporting will be determined by the manager or supervisor if the reason for the absence, such as a long-term illness or disability, is conveyed.

- Any employee who does not make contact with their immediate supervisor, or delegate, by the time so designated by the manager and/or supervisor, will not receive sick leave pay without a reason acceptable to the Corporation.



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- (c) Ensure that all appropriate, requested documentation is completed and submitted in a timely manner. This includes:
  - An employee who is absent from work for illness or injury, exceeding two (2) days absence, is required to submit to their manager and/or supervisor, a Doctor's Certificate <sup>1</sup> form provided from their physician who is a registered member in good standing with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of BC
- (d) Access sick leave bank only for bona fide sick leave or for family leave absences.
  - Access to sick leave for a family illness is when an employee must provide for the needs of an immediate member of the employee's family during a sudden, serious or incapacitating illness or injury. Sick Leave to care for immediate family members is not intended for planned appointments or events where other leaves (paid or unpaid) may apply.
  - It is the expectation of the Corporation that this benefit, funded from the employee's sick leave bank be used for immediate family illness/injury needs when alternative arrangements are not available (e.g. sharing this responsibility with another family member or friends). Employees will be required to complete the Sick Leave for Family Illness form <sup>2</sup> that outlines the reason for the leave and the relationship to the family member.
  - It is the expectation of the Corporation that all medical and other health related appointments are to be taken outside of regular work hours where at all possible.
- (e) Keep their manager and/or supervisor informed about issues that may impede their ability to be at work.
- (f) Participate in return to work and duty to accommodate processes including alternative or modified work assignments.
- (g) Provide appropriate medical documentation as requested.

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<sup>1</sup> A standardized "Doctor's Certificate" form will be provided to all Managers and Supervisors and will be made available to all employees.

<sup>2</sup> A standardized "Sick Leave for Family Illness" form will be provided to all Employees who use this leave.



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## *Human Resources*

Human Resources is responsible for:

- (a) Communicating the Program to all managers, supervisors and employees;
- (b) Providing interpretation and promoting consistent application and use of the Attendance Management and Support Program and its procedures;
- (c) Interpreting the collective agreement(s) and other applicable policies and legislation.

Human Resources will also:

- (a) Maintain and analyze absence statistics and provide quarterly departmental attendance reports to managers and supervisors.
- (b) Provide education and training and individual coaching for managers and supervisors in managing employee attendance.
- (c) Determine whether attendance issues should be addressed as culpable.
- (d) Promote and support safe and early return to work opportunities for employees who are temporarily unable to perform their regular job.
- (e) Consult with managers and/or supervisors to ensure a fair and consistent approach to reasonable workplace accommodation to the point of undue hardship (in accordance with Human Rights Legislation).
- (f) Promote awareness of available support services such as the Employee and Family Assistance Program.
- (g) Maintain confidentiality of employee information and Program status.
- (h) Retain Program records and documentation.

