



HEALTH AND WELLNESS / EMPLOYEE SUPPORT

Procedures

Operating procedures for the Health and Wellness/Employee Support Policy are attached as follows:

ABSENCE REPORTING

Supervisor refers to Principal/Manager and/or designate.

Employees are required to advise their immediate Supervisor or designate immediately upon any unexpected absence that prevents them from attending work. Notification must occur prior to the commencement of the work day. Employees must indicate the nature of their absence and the anticipated length of the absence. If the length of the absence is unknown, employees must contact their Supervisor or designate on a daily basis. If the employee is unable to reach their Supervisor by telephone, contact can initially be done by email but should be followed up by a telephone call. Custodial employees responsible for the opening of schools in the morning will make arrangements with the school Principal and Building Supervisor regarding the call-in protocol.

The Board reserves the right to request medical information from an employee for absences due to illness, medical appointment or disability.

- 1.0** Employees are required to provide medical documentation for absences of more than three - five consecutive working days related to illness or injury.
- 1.1** Employees are required to provide proof of medical appointment for all full days medical absences. (Appendix A).
- 1.2** Employees are required to advise their Principal or Supervisor immediately following any illness or accident that prevents them from working in order to discuss a return to work
- 1.3** For any absence over 10 consecutive days, Human Resources will require the employee to provide documentation completed on the Abilities Form (Appendix B) by the appropriate treating medical practitioner that may include the following information:
 - 1.3.1** the medically supported restrictions or limitations the employee is experiencing in relation to the essential duties of their position;
 - 1.3.2** confirmation that the employee is participating in the appropriate treatment to expedite the employee's safe and timely return to work;
 - 1.3.3** expected date employee could participate in the Return to Work Program with appropriate modifications/accommodations based on restrictions/limitations;
 - 1.3.4** expected return to work date at regular hours and duties;
 - 1.3.5** any other information required to safely return the employee to work in a timely manner;
 - 1.3.6** treating medical practitioner's name, address, phone number and fax number;

1.3.7 treating medical practitioner's signature.

1.4 Unless otherwise arranged, this documentation must be submitted by the employee or appropriate treating medical practitioner to Human Resources within ten working days of the date of the request.

2.0 For modified work arrangements and absences which exceed or are expected to exceed 10 consecutive working days, the Board may require medical confirmation of illness or injury to substantiate ongoing access to sick leave or Short Term Leave Disability Plan. This information may be obtained through internal or external resources, (e.g. Third Party Services) as deemed appropriate by the Board. Reference in this procedure to "designate" may include internal and external resources.

3.0 Sick Leave Benefit Plan:

3.1 As outlined below, an employee may access or is eligible for sick leave benefits if they become injured or ill and have an allocation of sick leave benefits.

3.2 An employee may access or is eligible for sick leave if he/she is disabled, which is defined as a state of incapacity which is due to bodily injury or sickness, preventing the employee from working for the Board for remuneration.

3.3 Sick leave benefits are not payable:

3.3.1 in cases which are compensable by Workplace Safety & Insurance Board;

3.3.2 for 12-month employees during scheduled vacation unless the illness requires hospitalization;

3.3.3 when an employee is on an authorized unpaid leave of absence;

3.3.4 when an employee has exhausted all eligible days under the sick leave benefit plan;

3.3.5 while in receipt of full Long Term Disability Benefits;

3.3.6 when appropriate medical documentation has not been received.

3.4 To be eligible for sick leave benefits, the employee must follow the Board's procedures for reporting absences related to illness or injury and for returning to work, in accordance with 4.0 of this procedure.

3.5 The Board will endeavour to accommodate the return to work and placement of temporary and/or permanently and/or partially disabled employees in accordance with the Disability Support – Early Intervention, Accommodations and Return to Work Procedure.

3.6 Access to sick leave benefits may be denied for failure to provide all appropriate medical documentation requested. Appropriate medical documentation refers to, but is not limited to, medically supported restrictions and/or limitations as they relate to the employee's ability to meet the essential duties of their position. It is the employee's responsibility to submit appropriate documentation to Human Resources as applicable.

3.7 In order to maintain access to sick leave benefits, Human Resources may request the employee to attend an Independent Medical Assessment (IME) and/or have completed a Functional Abilities Evaluation to determine the employee's restrictions and/or limitations related to the employee's position, This will assist in providing return to work and/or accommodation options. In requesting the IME, the following protocol will apply:

- 3.7.1 If Human Resources requires medical information to determine whether an employee is able to return to work or should properly remain off of work and in receipt of sick leave benefits, Human Resources shall so advise the employee and request that such information be provided;
- 3.7.2 The employee is required to provide the requested medical documentation to Human Resources in response to the request;
- 3.7.3 Human Resources will review the documentation provided by the employee. If Human Resources is not satisfied with the adequacy of the medical information provided, Human Resources will clearly identify to the employee why the information is not adequate;
- 3.7.4 The employee will be given an opportunity to provide Human Resources with further medical information;
- 3.7.5 Human Resources will review any further documentation provided by the employee. If the entirety of the medical documentation provided does not reasonably permit Human Resources to determine whether the employee should return to work or remain off of work, the employee may be requested to submit to an IME;
- 3.7.6 If the employee fails to attend the IME or does not, prior to the IME, provide Human Resources with further medical information to reasonably permit Human Resources to determine whether the employee should return to work or remain off of work, the employee's wages and/or benefits may be discontinued.

4.0 Responsibilities of the Employee:

- 4.1 Personally report an absence, unless the employee is incapacitated and unable to do so. Failure to report absences at the first opportunity in accordance with these procedures may result in denial of pay and/or benefits.
- 4.2 Indicate, in general terms, the reason for the absence, i.e. due to accident, illness, contractual, etc.
- 4.3 To call in directly to their Principal or Supervisor and if not immediately available, the Principal or Supervisor will return the call. Unless otherwise arranged with the Principal or Supervisor, the employee is to call in on each day of absence.
- 4.4 Assume responsibility for the costs associated with the initial documentation from the appropriate treating medical practitioner in relation to the absence. Costs associated with subsequent request(s) for medical documentation by the Human Resources Officer, or designate, will be borne by the Board.
- 4.5 To be eligible for sick leave benefits, employees may be required to provide satisfactory medical documentation by the appropriate treating medical practitioner, in accordance with this Procedure.
- 4.6 Maintain regular contact with their Principal or Supervisor during his/her absence when he /she is unable to perform the essential duties of their position due to disability.
- 4.7 Participate in appropriate treatment, as determined by the treating medical practitioner(s), to

ensure a safe and timely return to work.

- 4.8** Participate in the development of his/her Return to Work Plan, including taking the proposed Return to Work Plan (including accommodations and/or modifications) to the appropriate treating medical practitioner(s) for approval, if necessary.

5.0 Responsibilities of the Principal/Vice-Principal or Immediate Supervisor:

- 5.1** Communicate the Attendance Support Procedures and Guidelines to the employee.
- 5.2** Ensure the daily maintenance of accurate, up-to-date records regarding employees' absences as designated by Human Resources.
- 5.3** Monitor individual employee absenteeism records as designated by Human Resources.
- 5.4** Receive call-ins or return employees' calls should a message be received from employees, and determine the reason for absence. Example: When do you expect to return to work? Have you seen a Doctor? Is there any way I can help to accommodate your return to work?
- 5.5** Ensure employee confidentiality in relation to absences and medical information.
- 5.6** Contact Human Resources for assistance when restrictions and/or limitations have been identified.
- 5.7** Forward all medical documentation (if received) directly to Human Resources in a secure and confidential manner. Do not keep any copies of medical documentation at the school location.

- 6.0** Advise employees of their obligation to provide satisfactory written proof of disability, as required, confirming disability and ensuring continued payment of sick leave benefits. Principals and Supervisors shall not require an employee to sign a release to authorize collection of medical information.

- 6.1** Participate in the development of the employee's Return to Work Plan, including providing accommodations and/or modifications to the employee's duties and/or hours, based on recommendations from Human Resources.

7.0 Responsibilities of Human Resources:

- 7.1** Request proof of continuing disability from the employee in the case of absences exceeding 5 consecutive working days, at appropriate intervals, in order to maintain the sick leave benefit or determine if participation in a Return to Work Program is appropriate.
- 7.2** Receive all medical documentation required and provide support to the employee during their time of disability.
- 7.3** Assist the Principal or Supervisor by maintaining contact with employees disabled for more than 5 consecutive working days, verifying that the employee is under the active care of the appropriate medical practitioner and following an appropriate treatment plan, and advise the Principal or Supervisor of the expected return to work date, when known.

- 7.4 Develop an appropriate Return to Work Plan (including appropriate accommodation and/or modification recommendations) based on the employee's restrictions and/or limitations.

8.0 Responsibilities of Superintendent(s)

- 8.1 It is the responsibility of the appropriate Superintendent to administer this Procedure and Program Guidelines.
- 8.2 The appropriate Superintendent shall review this Procedure and Program Guidelines on a regular basis or as required by legislative change.

ATTENDANCE SUPPORT

INTENDED PURPOSE:

District School Board Ontario North East is committed to creating a supportive and healthy environment for its employees. Individual and organizational health are important factors that affect the ability of employees to attend work on a regular basis. Attendance Support is an early intervention program designed to assist employees who are struggling to maintain regular attendance at work.

Should a disability be identified, that requires support or accommodation at any time during the process, District School Board Ontario North East will support the employee's transition into the Disability Support Program.

The intent of the Attendance Support process is to provide non-disciplinary and supportive assistance to employees who exceed the established absence threshold. When an employee's absences exceed the established absence threshold, the following procedures apply.

The Employee Family Assistance Program (EFAP) is District School Board Ontario North East's free and confidential employee support program for permanent staff. Services include professional support and resources that are intended to assist employees and/or their families with a wide range of personal issues and challenges.

1.0 Absenteeism:

- 1.1 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.
- 1.2 The Board reserves the right to consider the termination of an employee for continuous, non-culpable absenteeism, greater than 24 months.
- 1.3 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 District School Board Ontario North East's Progressive Discipline Procedures. These absences are not dealt with through the Attendance Support Program.

2.0 Absence Threshold:

- 2.1 The Absence Threshold is the established number of absences that trigger possible entry into the Attendance Support Program. When an employee's absences exceed the threshold, Human Resources and/or the Principal/Supervisor/Manager may meet with the employee to discuss his/her level of absenteeism having regard for the personal circumstances of the employee
- 2.2 The threshold should be reviewed every two years by the Board. Employees shall be notified of threshold changes. The threshold is used as a mechanism to trigger non-disciplinary and supportive intervention.
- 2.3 When an employee's absences exceed the threshold, the Attendance Support process will be initiated.
- 2.4 The process is consistently applied to all employees using discretion. The goals that are set within any level are specific and unique to each employee's circumstances.
- 2.5 The employee may include his/her representative in the Attendance Support process. The representative may attend any meetings that occur to discuss or review the employee's attendance.
- 2.6 The Attendance Support Process may include a Preliminary Meeting and an ongoing Attendance Coaching Process if necessary.
- 2.7 Attendance will continue to be reviewed on a rolling 12-month calendar to gauge improvement and identify ongoing barriers.

3.0 Employee Responsibilities:

- 3.1 Maintain regular attendance.
- 3.2 Participate actively in all levels of the Attendance Support Process.
- 3.3 Cooperate in setting personal attendance goals.
- 3.4 Contact their union representative if the employee wishes them to be involved.
- 3.4.1 Provide any appropriate documentation, during any level of the process, to support that absences are medically related, in accordance with the Absence Reporting Procedure.

4.0 Principal/Supervisor Responsibilities:

- 4.1 Communicate attendance expectations to all employees through an annual review of the Attendance Support Program.
- 4.2 Assist Human Resources in identifying absenteeism trends or patterns, such as the following:
 - 4.2.1 frequent absences of short duration;
 - 4.2.2 absences of more than ten days;
 - 4.2.3 absences due to doctor appointments or scheduled treatment;
 - 4.2.4 absences due to workplace injury and/or illness;

- 4.2.5 unauthorized absences;
- 4.2.6 a pattern of repeated days of absence taken in proximity to weekends;
- 4.2.7 absenteeism in excess of the threshold identified above;
- 4.2.8 absences in excess of standard recovery time, in accordance with Canadian Medical Association, for an employee's illness or injury as identified by Human Resources.

4.3 Address all absenteeism issues and seek support from Human Resources.

DISABILITY SUPPORT – EARLY INTERVENTION, ACCOMMODATIONS AND RETURN TO WORK

1.0 Background:

The Board's Disability Support Program is an integrated partnership among employees, supervisors/administrators, Unions, and health care providers that supports employees with a safe and timely transition from illness/injury for successful return to work which benefits students. This program fosters a widespread understanding that the way to reduce the incidence and duration of an employee's absences is through early intervention and support. The intent of this procedure is to comply with the Human Rights Code, our duty to accommodate to undue hardship, and to ensure all employees comply with their roles and responsibilities.

2.0 Purpose of the Program:

- 2.1 The Disability Support Program provides employees with a safe and timely transition from illness/injury that allow them to remain at work or return to work.
- 2.2 When appropriate, the program assists employees by providing rehabilitation support, accommodations or modifications to remain at work, gradually return to work and/or modified work prior to commencement of regular full-time, part-time or occasional work.
- 2.3 When a permanent disability exists, the Board will endeavor to modify both the work and the workplace to accommodate the needs of the permanently disabled employee, based on medically-supported restrictions/limitations, provided that it does not cause undue hardship to the Board.

3.0 Temporary Disability:

3.1 Restrictions and Limitations:

An employee who becomes ill or is injured and it appears that an absence from work will result, is responsible for providing medical restrictions/limitations identified by the appropriate treating medical practitioner or specialist for assessment by Human Resources. The restrictions and limitations shall be shared with the Principal/Vice-Principal or Immediate Supervisor and, at the discretion of the employee, the union representative. Reference in this procedure to "designate" may include internal and external resources.

4.0 Permanent Partial Disability:

- 4.1 An employee who becomes permanently disabled from an illness or injury, such that they are unable to meet the demands of their former position, may be provided with appropriate accommodations or modifications and/or suitable work based on their physical, mental and

vocational capabilities.

4.2 The conditions for providing such work may be:

- The employee provides current medical restrictions and limitations from the appropriate treating medical practitioner and/or by submitting a Functional Abilities Evaluation (F.A.E.);
- The employee participates in a vocational assessment approved by the employer as needed;
- The Board will promote the retraining of injured employees as circumstances warrant;
- Employees who have a permanent partial disability may be given preference for suitable job postings, subject to mutual agreement by the employer and the relevant union(s);
- Employees are accommodated on the basis of availability of positions, ability to perform the essential duties of the job, and terms and conditions as outlined by the relevant collective agreement, individual contract and/or relevant legislation.

5.0 **Responsibilities:**

5.1 **Human Resources**

5.1.1 On initial contact, informs the employee that should they desire, they may have a union representative attend any meetings;

5.1.2 Will contact the employee directly in one of two ways:

- phone to discuss the Board's Disability Support Program; and/or
- send a letter to the employee outlining the Board's Disability Support Program;

5.1.3 Work with employees to assess restrictions and/or limitations;

5.1.4 Co-ordinate the return to work of all disabled employees with the employee, the appropriate treating medical practitioner, Principal/Vice-Principal or Immediate Supervisor, and the union representative at the employee's discretion;

5.1.5 Notify the appropriate union(s) of an employee's participation in the Disability Support Program;

5.1.6 Assess the employee's work capabilities in conjunction with medically-supported restrictions and/or limitations provided by the appropriate treating medical practitioner(s);

5.1.7 Inform the employee's Principal/Vice-Principal or Immediate Supervisor of the work restrictions/limitations and initiates the development of the Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan;

5.1.8 Coordinate and facilitate a workplace assessment, when necessary with the Principal/Vice-Principal or Immediate Supervisor and as required with the Health and Safety Officer or designate to ensure compatibility of work restrictions and the duties to be performed within the work environment:

- co-ordinates the modification of the work or workplace, as needed, in conjunction with medically-supported restrictions/limitations;

- reviews proper body mechanics with the employee and provides instruction, as required;
- assesses the need for change in location and/or assignment;
- in some cases the service of an outside agency may be required;

- 5.1.9** Co-ordinate the development of a Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan with the employee, his/her Principal/Vice-Principal or Immediate Supervisor, the appropriate treating medical practitioner(s), the employee's union representative, Workplace Safety and Insurance Board, LTD Insurance Carrier, designate and Superintendents, as appropriate;
- 5.1.10** Shall distribute a copy of the Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan to the above parties and the employee;
- 5.1.11** Maintain regular contact with the employee and his/her Principal/Vice-Principal or Immediate Supervisor for the duration of the Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan;
- 5.1.12** Maintain an ongoing assessment of the Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan;
- 5.1.13** Arrange regular follow-up during the Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan to modify the Plan, as required.

5.2 The Principal/Vice-Principal or Immediate Supervisor may:

- 5.2.1** Be designated by Human Resources to contact the employee and discuss
- 5.2.2** The disability support program and, in the case of a minor workplace related injury be asked to develop the employee's Remain at Work or Return to Work Plan;
- 5.2.3** Participate in the development of the employee's Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan;
- 5.2.4** Modify the work or workplace, as outlined in the Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan;
- 5.2.5** Assign work or duties according to the employee's Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan;
- 5.2.6** Closely monitor the progress of the employee through the Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan and immediately reports any problems or concerns to Human Resources.

5.3 The Employee:

- 5.3.1** Engages in medical rehabilitation and/or treatment that can be expected to facilitate a timely return to work;
- 5.3.2** Participates in development of their Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan and recovery goals;
- 5.3.3** Maintains regular contact, as identified in the Disability Support Program, with Human

Resources, to provide updates on status, changes in condition, and review progress through their Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan;

5.3.4 Must provide appropriate documentation as required by the Absence Reporting Procedure.

6.0 Development of Individualized Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan:

6.1 Remain at Work or Return to Work:

6.1.1 Identification of likely candidates for the Disability Support Program shall be made initially by Human Resources, based on information received from the appropriate treating medical practitioner and, when appropriate, representatives of the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board and Long Term Disability (LTD) Insurance;

6.1.2 A Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan, in general, may include, but is not restricted to, some or all of the following:

- volunteer work
- reduced work hours
- modification of duties
- workplace modifications
- removal of physical barriers;

6.1.3 Reassignment to another available position if the employee has the necessary skills and abilities to perform the essential duties of that position;

6.1.4 The employee may be provided with a letter to be given to the appropriate treating medical practitioner that outlines the Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan and which indicates that accommodations and/or modified work are available. The outline may also include information regarding the employee's job description and physical and/or cognitive demands analysis. A release of medical information consent form will also be provided.

6.1.5 Modified work is first provided within the employee's own school or service area, wherever possible.

6.1.6 While participating in the Disability Support Program, the employee's status will be monitored by Human Resources, Principal/Vice-Principal or Immediate Supervisor, in consultation with the appropriate treating medical practitioner(s).

6.1.7 Ongoing reviews of the employee's Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan will be conducted with any necessary adjustments made to support the employee's success. The frequency of these reviews is established prior to the placement of an employee in the Plan.

6.1.8 The Board will endeavor to modify both the work and the workplace to accommodate the needs of permanently disabled employees, provided that it does not cause undue hardship to the Board.

6.1.9 All documentation will be maintained by Human Resources filed

separately from the personnel file and will not be further released without the employee's written permission.

- 6.1.10** Human Resources will review the documentation and then contact the employee to discuss the employee's participation in an individualized Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan.
- 6.1.11** Human Resources, and the employee will develop a Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan based on the supported limitations or restrictions. The initial meeting may include the employee's supervisor and/or union representative. A written Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan may also be shared with the employee's appropriate treating medical practitioner and/or Immediate Supervisor and/or union representative.
- 6.1.12** Any necessary changes to the work environment will take place prior to the employee's commencement of Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan. It is understood that subsequent modifications may be necessary as the plan progresses.
- 6.1.13** Should the employee not be able to participate in a Return to Work Plan, the employee and Human Resources, will maintain regular contact. Ongoing, updated documentation will be obtained to determine when participation in the Return to Work Plan will be feasible.
- 6.1.14** The employee may be required to participate in a Functional Abilities Evaluation and/or Independent Medical Evaluation, conducted by a third party, to determine limitations and/or restrictions and to assist in the development of an individualized Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan.
- 6.1.15** The Individualized Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan may include the following information:
- essential job duties/tasks
 - specific physical requirements
 - restrictions and limitations
 - work schedule
 - follow-up work assessment date(s) by Human Resources
 - a gradual resumption of duties assigned under the Disability Support Program
 - a gradual increase in hours worked
 - expected date of completion of plan
 - signatures of employee, Human Resources, Principal/Vice-Principal or Immediate Supervisor
 - next meeting date
 - conditions for withdrawal of the individual from the Program
- 6.1.16** Regular follow-up meetings may occur during the Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan to ensure that the employee's needs are being met and to make any necessary changes to the modifications or accommodations should there be a change in the employee's restrictions or limitation.
- 6.1.17** The employee continues to participate in their Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan until they have reached Maximum Medical Recovery and are working at full capacity within any restrictions or limitations, including those that may be permanent in nature.

Appendices

Appendix A: Proof of Medical Appointment

Appendix B: Functional Abilities Form [LEAVE/ABSENCE/MEDICAL FORMS \(dsb1.ca\)](https://www.dsb1.ca/LEAVE/ABSENCE/MEDICAL_FORMS)

References

Confidentiality of Medical Records Policy 1.2.25



District School Board
Ontario North East

Appendix A

MEDICAL APPOINTMENT NOTICE

To be completed for any medical appointment requiring
a full day of absence or longer.

Employee Name: _____

Date of Appointment: _____

Time of Appointment: _____

Location of Appointment: _____
(Please specify name of city or town)

*Please submit completed forms to your Principal/Supervisor.



District School Board
Ontario North East

Appendix B

FUNCTIONAL ABILITIES FORM

[LEAVE/ABSENCE/MEDICAL FORMS \(dsb1.ca\)](http://dsb1.ca)