

Purpose: It is the policy of the Board to manage employee absenteeism in a fair and consistent manner to preserve excellent service delivery to the public.

We hope to assist employees in minimizing absences from work by making every reasonable effort to provide a healthy workplace, assistance, accommodation and rehabilitation.

1. Definitions:

1.1. *Attendance Review*: Three areas of absenteeism reviewed to identify problematic absenteeism:

- Number of days absent,
- Number of sick days off as compared to the peer group's average, and/or
- Patterns of absences: A pattern of intermittent and/or frequent absences.

1.2. *Reporting absences*: All staff members have a responsibility to notify their supervisor, or if their supervisor is not available, an administrative staff member at the Library, as soon as they are aware they will be absent. Contact must be made in person, by phone for example, and not by email or the leaving of notes. On a weekend the staff member should contact Administration using the weekend cell phone number.

1.3. *Approved Absences*: Absence from work to which an employee is entitled by law or the terms of the Collective Agreement or which may be granted subject to administrative approval. Such approved absences include those detailed in Articles 15 (Leaves), 16 (Bereavement Leave), 18 (Sick Leave) and 19 (Long-Term Disability) of the Collective Agreement.

1.4. *Innocent or Non-Culpable Absenteeism*: Absence from work due to transient illness, or non-occupational injury, including absences that may be a result of a disability other than a compensable illness or injury. These absences are subject to Attendance Review.

1.5. *Blameworthy or Culpable Absenteeism*: Absence from work due to factors within the employee's control. Culpable absenteeism includes failure to notify, absences without leave and abuse of leave. Culpable or blameworthy absenteeism problems may be grounds for discipline, up to and including termination.

2. Application: The Library will use data from the Human Resources Department of the City of Medicine Hat to determine average numbers of occasions of absence (day/shift or part thereof) for each employee and for the group biannually. These will be the initial standards used for attendance review. Employees' biweekly pay statements provide employees with a summary of their own absences.

Employees whose attendance pattern reveals that their total absences were greater than average for the Library may have their attendance reviewed.

3. Procedure: It is the responsibility of all management staff to ensure the consistent application of the Employee Attendance Policy. In conducting an attendance review, the manager (in the case of the Chief Librarian, the Board) should first determine whether the absences are defined as "Innocent or Non-Culpable", or "Blameworthy or Culpable", or "Approved" and the applicability of disciplinary and non-disciplinary measures.

- 3.1. When an employee fails to comply with the Library's established procedures, an administrative staff member (or in the case of the Chief Librarian, the Board) will meet with the employee to discuss absences. When the administrative staff member determines there was a satisfactory reason for the failure to comply, the behaviour is deemed non-culpable. When the administrative staff member determines that the reasons are unsatisfactory, the behaviour is deemed culpable and the administrative staff member will deal with the situation as a disciplinary matter.
- 3.2. If a non-culpable absenteeism concern is identified, the employee and administrative staff will meet to review absences and identify work related, health or personal opportunities to improve attendance. Employees may self-refer to the Employee Assistance Program and/or consult with the City of Medicine Hat's Occupational Health Nurse. The administrative staff member will provide the employee with a letter confirming the discussion took place, the expectations for improvement and the action items that were agreed upon, as well as a follow up date to meet and review the employee's progress.
- 3.3. If, at the follow up meeting, improvements have not been made and/or action items not completed, the administrative staff member will clearly indicate to the staff member that improvements are expected, a schedule for improvements will be set, and a follow up date to meet and review progress is scheduled. The administrative staff member will again provide the employee with a letter confirming the discussion took place, any expectations for improvements, and the date of a final attendance review.
- 3.4. When a final attendance review has been completed and absences have been found to be unjustified or not approved under Article 18 (Sick Leave), then Article 30 (Discipline, Suspension and Dismissal) provisions may be pursued.