

ATTENDANCE SUPPORT PROGRAM PROCEDURE

Section: Human Resources

Administrative Guideline: ASSIST

Procedure: Attendance Support Program Procedure

Effective Date: June 29, 2026

OPERATING PROCEDURES

The goal of the Attendance Support Program (“ASP”) is to promote employee well-being and improve attendance through supportive, non-disciplinary measures for employees who exceed the school board’s established absence threshold. It is administrative and remedial in nature, not disciplinary. This procedure applies to all full-time and part-time permanent employees and long-term occasional employees.

When an employee’s absences exceed the established absence threshold the following procedures apply.

Should a medically supported disability be identified that requires support or accommodation at any time during the process, the school board will review and, where required, support the employee’s transition into the Disability Management program. Sporadic absences may continue to be considered within the Attendance Support Program.

1. **Definitions:**

1.1. Absenteeism:

- 1.1.1. Innocent (Non-Culpable) Absenteeism relates to absences as a result of illness or injury that arise due to circumstances beyond the employee’s control.
- 1.1.2. Culpable Absenteeism relates to those absences within the employee’s control for which the employee 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 ASP.

- 1.1.3. Absence is defined as any illness or injury, paid or unpaid, that is not being managed under the Board's Disability Management Program, WSIB RTW Plan, or LTD RTW Plan. Medical and dental appointments, as well as both full and partial day absences, will be considered in the threshold count.

Absences do not include the following:

- Vacation
- Culpable absences
- Family medical leaves as defined by the Employment Standards Act, 2000.
- 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
- Approved Workplace Safety & Insurance Board Loss of Earnings Claims
- Pre-approved leave without pay
- Emergency leaves under the Employment Standards Act not due to personal illness/injury

2. Absence Threshold

Absence Threshold – The threshold is used as a mechanism to initiate non-disciplinary and supportive intervention. It is the established number of absences used to initiate possible entry into the ASP. When an employee's absences exceed the threshold within a 12-working month

period, the Principal/Supervisor and/or Absence Management Coordinator may meet with the employee to review their level of absenteeism having regard for the personal circumstances of the employee.

- 2.1 The threshold will be reviewed annually by the Board.
- 2.2 Employees will be notified of threshold changes
- 2.3 Employees will be reminded on a yearly basis of the established threshold.
- 2.4 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.
- 2.5 Employees may choose to involve their union/association representative in the attendance support process. For Coaching Level 1 and Coaching Level 2, a union/association representative may attend any meetings related to discussing or reviewing the employee's attendance, if requested by the employee. In Coaching Level 3 and Coaching Level 4, union/association representative attendance is mandatory.
- 2.6 Employees who have exceeded the threshold are initially notified by email by the Human Resources. The Principal/Supervisor will also invite the employee to review their absences and discuss entry into the ASP.
- 2.7 The Attendance Support process includes 5 distinct components: Preliminary Level; Coaching Level 1; Coaching Level 2; Coaching Level 3; and Coaching Level 4.
 - 2.7.1 Preliminary Level – employee receives an email from Human Resources advising them of entry into the Preliminary Level. The email will contain details about the ASP, a record of absences, information on available supports/resources, and the attendance goal for the Preliminary Level review period. The employee's attendance will be reviewed for the next 90-working days.
 - 2.7.2 Coaching Level 1 – consists of a meeting that includes the employee, the employee's union/association if requested and Principal/Supervisor. The

employee may enter Level 1 if they have been unable to meet the attendance goals established for the Preliminary Level review period. The Principal/Supervisor will notify them by email of their placement in Coaching Level 1 and invite them to attend a Coaching Level 1 meeting. If no extenuating circumstances have been provided for which discretion may be applied, attendance goals will be set with the employee that will apply for the next 90 working days.

2.7.3 Coaching Level 2 – consists of a meeting that may include the employee, the employee's union/association if requested and Principal/Supervisor. The employee may enter Level 2 if they have been unable to meet the attendance goals established for the Level 1 review period. The Principal/Supervisor will notify them by email of their placement in Coaching Level 2 and invite them to attend a Coaching Level 2 meeting. If no extenuating circumstances have been provided for which discretion may be reasonably applied, attendance goals will be set with the employee that will apply for the next 90 working days.

2.7.4 Coaching Level 3 – consists of a meeting that may include the employee, the employee's union/association, Principal/Supervisor, and Absence Management Coordinator. The employee may enter Level 3 if they have been unable to meet the attendance goals established for the Level 2 review period. The Absence Management Coordinator will notify them by email of their placement in Coaching Level 3 and invite them to attend a Coaching Level 3 meeting. If no extenuating circumstances have been provided for which discretion may be reasonably applied, attendance goals will be set with the employee that will apply for the next 90 working days.

The employee will be informed that if they are unable to meet their established attendance goal during the Level 3 review period, they may progress to Coaching Level 4 where their employment status will be reviewed. This review may include termination on a non-disciplinary basis.

2.7.5 Coaching Level 4 – consists of a meeting that may include the employee, the employee's union/association, Principal/Supervisor, Absence Management Coordinator, Manager of Human Resources and/or Superintendent of Business or designate. The employee may enter Level 4 if they have been unable to meet

the attendance goals established for the Level 3 review period. The Absence Management Coordinator will notify them by email of their placement in Coaching Level 4 and invite them to attend a Coaching Level 4 meeting. 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/or 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's employment status will be reviewed, up to and including termination on a non-disciplinary basis.

2.8 When attendance goals have been met within the Preliminary or Coaching Level review periods, the employee will enter the 12-working month monitoring period where their absences are monitored by the Absence Management Coordinator.

- 2.8.1 Employees who exceed the threshold in the 12-working month monitoring period will remain in the Attendance Support Program. The employee may be invited to attend a meeting at next Level of the program.
- 2.8.2 Employees who do not exceed the threshold in the 12-working month monitoring period will exit the Attendance Support Program.
- 2.8.3 If the employee's absences exceed the board's established threshold after exiting the ASP, the employee will enter the program at the Preliminary Level.

3. Employee Responsibilities Include:

3.1. Maintain regular attendance

3.2. Enter all absences in a timely manner following the board's established absence reporting process

- 3.3. Participate actively in all levels of the Attendance Support process
- 3.4. Cooperate in setting personal attendance goals
- 3.5. Contact their union/association representative if the employee wishes they be involved in Coaching Level 1 and Coaching Level 2 meetings.
- 3.6. Provide appropriate documentation during any level of the process as required

4. Principal/Supervisor Responsibilities May Include:

- 4.1. Communicate attendance expectations to all employees through a regular review of the Attendance Support Program
- 4.2. Review and validate absence reports for staff
- 4.3. Identify absenteeism trends or patterns
- 4.4. Address all absenteeism issues using discretion and seek support from Human Resources as needed
- 4.5. Support employees and act as a resource
- 4.6. Advise employees of available resources (i.e., EAP)
- 4.7. Facilitate supportive meetings as outlined in the Attendance Support Procedure and provide input into the development of individualized attendance goals for each employee involved in the process
- 4.8. Provide a written outcome of Coaching Level 1 and Coaching Level 2 meetings with copies to the employee, Absence Management Coordinator, and employee representative, if applicable

4.9. Support and assist the Absence Management Coordinator at any level in the Attendance Support process

4.10. Provide positive reinforcement to employees who reach their attendance goals

5. Human Resources Responsibilities May Include:

5.1. Support Principals/Supervisors in addressing absenteeism issues.

5.2. Serve as a resource to employees and Principals/Supervisors.

5.3. Identify employees who exceed the threshold level of absences.

5.4. Advise employees of resources available to them.

5.5. Participate in supportive meetings as required.

5.6. Provide assistance on the development of individualized goals, taking into account all circumstances identified during each meeting.

5.7. Provide a written outcome of Coaching Level 3 and Coaching Level 4 meetings with copies to the employee, Principal/Supervisor, Superintendent and employee representative, if applicable.

5.8. Ensure a review/audit of the Attendance Support Program occurs at a minimum of every five years or as part of the board's regular policy/procedure review cycle, whichever is the shorter period.

6. Superintendent(s) Responsibilities May Include:

6.1. In conjunction with Human Resources, Principals and Supervisors, review the employment status of employees who have not met attendance goals in Coaching Level 3. Participate in the Coaching Level 4 meeting, and other meetings, when required.

- 6.2. Provide support and act as a resource to all aspects of the Attendance Support process
- 6.3. Hold leaders accountable to facilitating timely meetings with employees in need of support

7. Union/Association Representative Responsibilities May Include:

- 7.1 Cooperate and help identify potential underlying issues affecting attendance and engage in problem-solving to explore reasonable accommodations or solutions where applicable.
- 7.2 Provide employees with clear and accurate information regarding the AS process.
- 7.3 Attend AS meetings when requested by employees in Coaching Level 1 and Coaching Level 2.
- 7.4 Ensure that any discussions or meetings involving the employee's attendance are conducted in a respectful and confidential manner.