

CORPORATE POLICY

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| SUBJECT: Attendance | CATEGORY: Human Resources ORIGINAL DATE: May 26, 2010 REVIEWED DATE: July 11, 2017 REVISION DATE: July 22, 2020February 28, 2024 |
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- I. **POLICY:**
To establish a uniform policy pertaining to employee attendance.

- II. **SCOPE:**
All Lake County Health Department and Community Health Center (LCHD/CHC) employees.

- III. **PROCEDURE:**
 - A. Employees are expected to maintain a good record of attendance and punctuality, and to work all hours as scheduled, while working remotely or on-site. The inappropriate use and abuse of leave time, excessive tardiness, and poor attendance interfere with operations and can present serious organizational issues.
 - 1. Good Attendance: An employee who is at their desk or assigned workspace prepared to work at the start of their shift and completing the shift, as scheduled, demonstrates good attendance.
 - 2. Poor Attendance: An employee who exhibits a pattern of tardiness or absenteeism without supervisory approval demonstrates poor attendance.
 - 3. Scheduled Absence: An absence that is scheduled and approved by management in advance, per programmatic guidelines. Scheduled absences will not count against an employee's attendance record. Examples of approved scheduled absences include personal leave, vacation leave, pre-scheduled appointments, paid holiday time, pre-approved medical leave, and approved leave of absences.
 - 4. Personal Leave: Requests for personal leave should be submitted as soon as practicable to minimize any disruption to department operations. Program supervisors may deny a personal leave request if the leave would interfere with the efficient and effective operations of the program (refer to policy 4.7, number 2). As hardships and unforeseen events occur, with supervisor approval, personal leave days may be exempt from being counted as an unscheduled absence in such unforeseen emergency situations. If an employee calls in to use personal leave days due to an unforeseen emergency, that time shall not be counted against them, unless a pattern of abuse of this privilege has been identified by the supervisor (see pattern description in section 12 below). Patterns of abuse or unexcused absences shall be managed under the provisions of the Standards of Conduct and Discipline Policies. If an employee does not show up for work and does not contact their supervisor, this is considered an unauthorized absence, and the employee will not be allowed to utilize a personal leave day.
 - 5. Unauthorized Absence: An unauthorized absence will count as two occurrences

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against the employee's attendance record. Human Resources (HR) will determine eligibility for compensation for unauthorized absences. To ensure compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), all authorization of withholdings of pay requires prior approval from HR (refer to Salary Deductions policy 4-9). An unauthorized absence results when an employee is away from the workplace and has:

- a. Failed to obtain supervisory approval of an unscheduled absence or early departure;
- b. Ignored the supervisor's request to report to work or remain at work for the remainder of their scheduled shift;
- c. Called in to report an absence on a day for which approval had been previously denied; or
- d. Not called and did not report for work (no call, no show).

Human Resources will determine eligibility for compensation for unauthorized absences. To ensure compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), all authorization of withholdings of pay requires prior approval from Human Resources (refer to Salary Deductions policy 4-9).

6. **Unscheduled Absence:** An unscheduled absence is an absence that is neither scheduled nor approved by management in advance. Time lost due to an unscheduled absence will count against an employee's attendance record as one occurrence. This includes incidents of tardiness and early departure. Examples of unscheduled absences include transportation problems, household, or family emergencies (non-Victim's Economic Safety Security Act (VESSA) related), inclement weather or personal leave requests, injuries (non-Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) related), failure to report for overtime work, and failure to start on time for overtime work. When an absence is unavoidable, an employee must give their supervisor ample notice so appropriate adjustments can be made in the program. An employee must call to report their absence at the earliest possible time, in accordance with the programmatic guidelines. Failure to follow the reporting protocol will result in further disciplinary action which may include the denial of paid leave for time absent.
7. **Consecutive Day Absence:** Consecutive days missed due to the same illness, injury or other incident will be counted as one occurrence. For example, if an employee calls in on Monday to report they are sick and then on Tuesday and Wednesday they call in sick as well for the same issue, this absence is counted as one occurrence. If an employee returns to work after an illness, but then becomes ill again (the next day or day after, etc.) it shall be counted as a separate occurrence. If an employee misses more than 3 consecutive calendar workdays due to an injury or illness, the employee must contact HR. An employee who fails to present a physician's note upon their return, if requested by HR, will be sent home until they can produce a physician's note releasing them to work, with or without restrictions. Failure to comply with the policy may result in the denial of sick leave benefits and/or disciplinary action.
8. **Job Abandonment:** When an employee is absent from the job without authorized leave or notification for a period of three consecutive scheduled workdays, this

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- behavior may be considered a voluntary resignation. HR shall be consulted to determine if this absence will result in a recommendation for termination. The exception would be absences required for reasons covered by FMLA, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and VESSA leave.
9. Leave Without Pay: Scheduled or unscheduled leave time taken without compensation is considered leave without pay. LCHD/CHC's Leave of Absence policy (Section 4-8) provides for leave without pay for the following reasons: short term disability after leave balances have been exhausted, temporary personal, FMLA, VESSA, or school visits. Any other leave without pay shall be granted at the discretion of the Director with concurrent approval from the Human Resource Director. An employee's lack of benefit time in a specific category, or personal choice not to take benefit time, is not considered a valid reason for use of leave without pay and would be considered a violation of this policy.
 10. Tardiness: If an employee is going to be tardy, they must notify their supervisor or designee beforehand. Employees who ~~clock in or~~ report to work any time after the start of their scheduled shift are considered tardy. Employees may use personal leave time to receive payment for a tardy unless a pattern of abuse of this privilege has been identified by the supervisor. No other accruals may be used to cover tardiness. Every three (3) incidents of tardiness will count as one occurrence on the employee's attendance record. Employees are not permitted to ~~use any other leave time to cover tardiness, or~~ make up time by working later, without the approval of their supervisor. Tardiness exceeding 1 hour will be considered an unexcused absence and count as one occurrence.
 11. Early Departure: If an employee wishes to leave work prior to the end of their scheduled shift, they are to submit the request to their immediate supervisor in advance, as soon as practicable, to minimize disruption to their program operation. Program supervisors may deny a request for the use of leave time (i.e., personal, sick, vacation, etc.) if the leave would interfere with the efficient and effective operations of the program, or if the employee is on a Coaching Plan, or has received disciplinary action for poor attendance during the three months preceding the employee's request. If unable to submit the request in advance, an early departure will count as an unscheduled absence on the employee's attendance record. Every three (3) incidents of an unscheduled early departure will count as one occurrence on the employee's attendance record.
 12. Unscheduled absences in situations where an employee starts work and then leaves prior to completing half of their scheduled shift will be considered as one (1) occurrence. However, an employee who clocks out or leaves work prior to the end of their shift, without supervisory approval, will be considered as having an early departure episode. This will count as an unauthorized absence and two (2) occurrences on the employee's attendance record. Likewise, clocking out seven (7) minutes prior to the end of the shift will not be tolerated and will be considered an unauthorized absence (see paragraph 5 above).
 13. Patterns of Absence: The following behaviors are examples that may rise to the level of abuse if they become a pattern:
 - a. Absences on the day prior to, or following scheduled days off, holidays, or pay day.

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- b. Absences when scheduled to rotate to other hours or days.
 - c. Patterns of Mondays and Fridays, or other repeated forms of absence.
 - d. Seasonal absences.
 - e. Absences when vacation request was denied.
 - f. Taking two days off to avoid bringing physician's note, then taking another 2 days off.
 - g. Using benefit time as soon as it is earned.
 - h. Forgetting to clock-in when tardy.
 - i. Forgetting to clock-out when leaving early.
 - j. Habitual or excessive use of the personal leave time exception to cover tardiness.
 - k. Any other behaviors that, after investigation, demonstrate that an employee is misusing the system.
- B. Employee Responsibilities**
- 1. Employees are responsible for attending work on their scheduled workdays, being punctual, and remaining at work for their full shift.
 - 2. Employees are responsible for scheduling medical and dental appointments outside scheduled work hours or over lunch, when practicable. If an appointment is scheduled during work hours, the employee must notify their supervisor as soon as the appointment is made by submitting a request for time off.
 - 3. Employees are responsible for making vacation, sick, personal and/or any other leave requests according to the applicable LCHD/CHC personnel policies. If there are programmatic procedures that are in place that are different than the personnel policies, then employees shall follow the programmatic procedures. Employees shall be made aware of which policy the program is enforcing.
 - 4. When absent from work, employees are responsible for giving adequate notice to their supervisor prior to the beginning of the workday to provide time for rearrangement of work schedules, the reassignment of other employees, or the hiring of temporary help.
 - 5. Employees are responsible for reporting to work during inclement weather conditions if the agency does not declare an emergency closing. All employees not able to report to work or remain at work because of inclement weather shall follow the proper guidelines to request leave time and obtain supervisory approval. Without approval, this will be counted as an unscheduled absence.
 - 6. Employees are responsible for informing their supervisor of their whereabouts during working hours (this does not include the meal break).
- C. Supervisor Responsibilities**
- 1. Supervisors are responsible for communicating and reviewing, as appropriate, all programmatic attendance guidelines and procedures with their staff. This includes informing employees of their start time, end time, leave time requests and the method for scheduling meal breaks.
 - 2. Supervisors are responsible for monitoring employee attendance consistently and equitably. They are to identify attendance records that indicate evidence of poor attendance and take appropriate action with the identified employee.

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3. Supervisors are responsible for discussing with employees that excessive tardiness or absence will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Supervisors are responsible for documenting all such meetings and issuing written notification to employees when a pattern of excessive absenteeism is apparent.
 4. Supervisors are responsible for communicating the way staff must notify them of their absence, delayed arrival, early departure and the consequences for not following programmatic attendance guidelines.
 5. Unscheduled and unauthorized absences, including tardiness and early departure, shall be monitored on a regular basis by the supervisor.
- D. Progressive Discipline
1. HR, in partnership with Leadership, may accelerate any of the corrective actions when patterns of attendance abuse are identified, when attendance issues are accompanied by other disciplinary issues, or when customer/client/patient services or appointments are cancelled on a regular basis due to absences.
 2. It is within a supervisor's discretion to request a physician's note from an employee to justify an absence of any length if the employee has exhibited a pattern of excessive absence. Supervisors shall disregard absence required for reasons covered by FMLA, ADA, and VESSA leave when determining whether an absence is excessive, and discipline is required. Unauthorized or excessive absence or tardiness will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

| UNSCHEDULED / UNAUTHORIZED ABSENCE | RECOMMENDED CORRECTIVE ACTION |
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| Six (6) occurrences of unscheduled absence, including tardiness or early departure within the prior 6-month period. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documented verbal counseling by Supervisor • Review of Attendance Monitoring policy with appropriate assistance and guidance provided |
| Three (3) additional occurrences of unscheduled absences, including tardiness or early departures within three (3) months from the date of the verbal counseling. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documented written warning by Supervisor • Coaching session with appropriate assistance and guidance provided |
| One (1) unauthorized absence within a 12-month period. | |
| Three (3) additional occurrences of unscheduled absence, including tardiness or early departure within three (3) months from the date of the written warning. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suspension without pay |
| One (1) additional unauthorized absence within 12-months from the date of the written warning. | |

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| <p>>Twelve (12) occurrences of unscheduled and unauthorized absence, including tardiness or early departure within the prior 12-month period.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional absence after return from suspension may result in the recommendation for termination |
| <p>One (1) additional unauthorized absence within 12-months from the return date of suspension.</p> | |

IV. REFERENCES:
None

V. AUTHORS/REVIEWERS:
Designated Review Team, Corporate Policy and Procedure Committee, Executive Team, and Lake County Board of Health Personnel Committee.

VI. APPROVALS:
Lake County Board of Health President

Signature: _____ Date: _____

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- d. Seasonal absences.
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4. Supervisors are responsible for communicating the way staff must notify them of their absence, delayed arrival, early departure and the consequences for not following programmatic attendance guidelines.
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| UNSCHEDULED / UNAUTHORIZED ABSENCE | RECOMMENDED CORRECTIVE ACTION |
|---|--|
| Six (6) occurrences of unscheduled absence, including tardiness or early departure within the prior 6-month period. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documented verbal counseling by Supervisor • Review of Attendance Monitoring policy with appropriate assistance and guidance provided |
| Three (3) additional occurrences of unscheduled absences, including tardiness or early departures within three (3) months from the date of the verbal counseling. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documented written warning by Supervisor • Coaching session with appropriate assistance and guidance provided |
| One (1) unauthorized absence within a 12-month period. | |
| Three (3) additional occurrences of unscheduled absence, including tardiness or early departure within three (3) months from the date of the written warning. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suspension without pay |
| One (1) additional unauthorized absence within 12-months from the date of the written warning. | |
| >Twelve (12) occurrences of unscheduled and unauthorized absence, including tardiness or early departure within the prior 12-month | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional absence after return from suspension may result in the |

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| One (1) additional unauthorized absence within 12-months from the return date of suspension. | |

IV. REFERENCES:

None

V. AUTHORS/REVIEWERS:

Designated Review Team, Corporate Policy and Procedure Committee, Executive Team, and Lake County Board of Health Personnel Committee.

VI. APPROVALS:

Lake County Board of Health President

Signature: _____ Date: _____