

3-11 Attendance

EFFECTIVE DATE: May 26, 2010

POLICY

Employees are expected to maintain a good record of attendance, punctuality and to work all hours as scheduled. The inappropriate use and abuse of leave time, excessive tardiness and poor attendance interferes with operations and can present serious organizational problems. Supervisors are expected to monitor employee attendance consistently and equitably. They are to identify attendance records that indicate evidence of poor attendance and take appropriate disciplinary action with the identified employee.

DEFINITIONS

Good attendance

An employee being at their desk or assigned work space, prepared to work at the start of his/her shift and completing the shift as scheduled.

Poor attendance

An employee who exhibits a pattern of being tardy or absent without supervisory approval.

Scheduled Absence

An absence scheduled and approved by management in advance per programmatic guidelines. Scheduled absences **will not** count against an employee's attendance record. Some examples of scheduled absences are: personal leave, vacation leave and pre-scheduled appointments, paid holiday time, pre-approved medical leave and approved leave of absences.

Unauthorized Absence

Failure to obtain supervisory approval of an unscheduled absence or early departure.

An unauthorized absence **will** count as two occurrences against the employee's attendance record.

Unscheduled Absence

An absence 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 also. Some examples of unscheduled absences are: transportation problems, household or family emergencies (non-VESSA related), inclement weather or personal leave requests, sudden illnesses or injuries (non-FMLA related), failure to report for overtime work, failure to start on time for overtime work). When an absence is unavoidable, an employee must give his/her supervisor ample notice so that appropriate adjustments can be made in your program. Call to report your 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 the time absent.



Consecutive Day Absences

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 that they are sick and then on both Tuesday and Wednesday they call in sick as well for the same problem, this is counted as one occurrence. Any employee who returns to work after an illness, but then becomes ill again (the next day or day after, etc.) will have it counted as a separate occurrence.

If an employee misses more than 3 consecutive calendar days from work due to an injury or illness, the employee may be required to submit a physician's note to verify that the employee was under doctor's care and that the employee is able to perform the essential functions of their job. An employee who fails to present a doctor's note upon their return will be sent home until they can produce a doctor'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 result in disciplinary action.

Job Abandonment

When an employee is absent from the job without authorized leave or notification for a period of three consecutive days, this behavior may be considered a voluntary resignation. Human Resources should be consulted to determine if this absence will result in a recommendation for termination. The exception would be absences required for reasons covered by the Family Medical Leave Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act and VESSA leave.

Leave without Pay

Leave time taken scheduled or unscheduled, without compensation taken from benefit time. The Health Department's Leave of Absence policy (Section 4-8) provides for leave without pay for the following reasons: short term disability and/or after leave balances have been exhausted, temporary personal, Family Medical Leave, VESSA or school visits. Any other leave without pay should be used at the discretion of the Service Area Director with concurrent approval from the Human Resource Director. An employee's lack of benefit time in a particular category, or personal choice not to take benefit time are not considered reasons for use of leave without pay and would be considered a violation of this policy.

Tardiness

Employees who clock in or report to work any time after the start of their shift. Every three (3) incidents of tardiness will count as one occurrence on the employee's attendance record. Employees are not permitted to use leave time to cover tardiness or make up time by working later.

Early Departure

Employees, who clock out or leave work prior to the end of their shift, without supervisory approval will be considered an early departure episode. Every three (3) incidents of early departure will count as one occurrence on the employee's attendance record. Clocking out seven (7) minutes prior to the end of the shift will not be tolerated.

Patterns of Absence

The following are examples that may constitute patterns of absences that rise to the level of abuse:

- Absences on the day prior to or following scheduled days off, holidays or pay day
- Absences when scheduled to rotate to other hours or days
- Patterns of Mondays and Fridays and/or repeated forms of absence
- Seasonal absences
- Absences when vacation request was denied
- Taking two days off to avoid bringing doctors note, then take another 2 days off
- A pattern of using benefit time as soon as it is earned
- Forgetting to clock in on days tardy
- Forgetting to clock out on days leaving early
- Any other evidence that suggest an employee is misusing the system will be investigated.

EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Each employee is responsible for attending work on his or her scheduled workdays, being punctual, and remaining at work for their full shift.
- Schedule medical and dental appointments outside scheduled work hours or over lunch, as much as possible. If an appointment is scheduled during work hours, the employee must notify his or her supervisor as soon as the appointment is made and submit a request for time off.
- Vacation, sick, personal and/or any other leave requests should be made according to the relevant LCHD/CHC personnel policies section 4. If there are programmatic procedures that are in place that are different than the personnel policies, then employees should follow that reporting structure. Employees should be made aware of which policy the program is enforcing.
- Employees are expected to give adequate notice to their supervisor when absent from work prior to the beginning of the work day, to provide time for rearrangement of work schedules, the reassignment of other employees, or the hiring of temporary help.
- Employees are expected to report to work during inclement weather conditions if the agency does not declare an emergency closing. Hourly employees not able to report to work or remain at work because of inclement weather should follow the proper guidelines to request leave time and obtain supervisory approval. Without approval however, this will be counted as an unscheduled absence.
- Employees are responsible to inform their supervisors of their whereabouts during working hours. (This does not include the meal break).



SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Supervisors are responsible for communicating and reviewing as appropriate, all programmatic attendance guidelines to their staff. This includes informing employees of their start time, end time, leave time requests and the method for scheduling meal breaks.
- Supervisors are expected to monitor 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.
- Supervisors are responsible for discussing with employees that excessive tardiness or absences will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Supervisors are responsible for documenting all meetings and issuing written notification to employees, when a pattern of excessive absenteeism is apparent.
- Supervisors are responsible for communicating how staff should notify them of their absences, delayed arrivals, early departures and what consequences will occur for not following programmatic attendance guidelines.
- Unscheduled and unauthorized absences, which include tardiness and early departures, should be monitored on a regular basis by the supervisor.

Performance Evaluation Rating

To provide for a more consistent performance evaluation ratings throughout the agency, the following chart has been developed.

NUMBER OF UNSCHEDULED OR UNAUTHORIZED ABSENCES, INCLUDING TARDINESS AND EARLY DEPARTURE	PERFORMANCE RATING
1-5 unscheduled or unauthorized absences in the prior 12- month period	Meets Expectations
6 or more unscheduled or unauthorized absences in the prior 12-month period	Needs Improvement
Ratings of Needs Improvement should be addressed in the goal section of the performance evaluation and monitored closely by the employee’s supervisor.	

The following absences should **not** be counted against the employee’s performance appraisal or be considered when issuing disciplinary action:

- (a) any time missed while the employee is on an approved leave of absence in accordance with the Family & Medical Leave Act (FMLA) (including approved intermittent leave), the Victim’s Economic Safety Security Act (VESSA), or accommodations in

- accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) or any other approved leave of absence or;
- (b) where the employee leaves work to seek medical attention immediately following a workplace injury or;
 - (c) where an employee is called to serve military obligations or jury duty

Progressive Discipline

Human Resources may alter any of the corrective actions based on the severity of the event or if there is evidence that an employee is abusing sick leave time. (i.e. Patterns of absence, canceling services or appointments on regular basis due to absences, etc.)

It is within a supervisor’s discretion to request a physician’s note from an employee to justify an absence for any length of time, if absences are considered excessive. Supervisors should disregard absences required for reasons covered by the Family and Medical Leave Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act and VESSA leave when determining whether an absence is excessive and discipline is required. Unauthorized or excessive absences or tardiness will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

RECOMMENDED CORRECTIVE ACTION	
UNSCHEDULED & UNAUTHORIZED ABSENCES	ACTION
Six (6) occurrences of unscheduled and unauthorized absences, including tardiness or early departures within the prior 6-month period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documented verbal counseling by Supervisor • Review of Attendance Monitoring policy and provide appropriate assistance/guidance
Three (3) additional occurrences of unscheduled and unauthorized 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
Three (3) additional occurrences of unscheduled and unauthorized absences, including tardiness or early departures within three (3) months from the date of the written warning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suspension without pay
> Twelve (12) occurrences of unscheduled and unauthorized absences, including tardiness or early departures within the prior 12-month period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional absences after return from suspension may result in the recommendation for termination.