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**ATTENDANCE MANAGEMENT POLICY**

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I. **POLICY STATEMENT**

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| A  | The [Company] is committed to providing excellence in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(describe company mission). It is important for all employees of [the Company] to work as a team in the attainment of this mission. |
| B | Quality of service is affected by work performance including attendance of employees. It isimportant that employees report to work regularly, be punctual in reporting to work andreturning from breaks, and make every effort to maintain good health. |
| C | It is recognized that from time to time employees may be absent from work due to disabling illness or injuries. The [Company] is committed to informing employees about the intent and proper use of sick leave, to assuring that employees maintain their work commitments, and to promoting a healthy workplace which operational effectiveness is not jeopardized by frequent or unnecessary absences. |

II. **POLICY OBJECTIVES**

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| A. |  | This policy establishes methods for maximizing attendance at work, balancing fairness to the employee and maintaining work efficiency. The policy has been developed in accordance with the following goals: |
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| 1. | To contribute to excellence in service delivery by having all employees attend work regularly; |
| 2. | To ensure the implementation of measures by manager/supervisors to minimize absences within their respective areas of responsibility; |
| 3. | To approach problem attendance in a positive, and concerned manner in accordance with this policy; and |
| 4. | To provide ongoing management support, training and consultation on attendance problem issues through the Department of Human Resources. |

III.  **APPLICATION**

This policy applies to all employees, managers and supervisors.

IV. **POLICY DIRECTIVES**

A. **Review Policy**

Each employee will receive a copy of the Attendance Management Policy. The contents of the policy will be communicated to each employee by his/her manager/supervisor.

B. **Sick Leave Benefits**

Employees may be granted sick leave with full or partial pay in accordance with the various collective agreements and the Basic Conditions of Employment Act when a health condition has impaired them to the extent that they are unable to perform their duties provided that the department has been satisfied of the condition in such a manner; and at such a time, and provided that employees have the necessary sick leave.

C. **Absence Verification**

The manager/supervisor may verify absences from work as required.

D. **Deemed Resignation from Work**

An employee who is absent from work without permission for ten (10) consecutive days shall be deemed to have resigned the position effective the first day of the absence. The employee may be reinstated if they establish to the satisfaction of the employer that the absence arose from a cause beyond their control and it was not possible for the employee to notify the department of the reason for the absence. [Note: Where an employee is absent for any period and has not communicated the reasons for his/her absence, use the telegramme format to try and contact the employee using his / her last known address]

E. **Reporting Procedure**

1. When an employee, for any reason, is not able to attend work as scheduled, that employee has the responsibility to call and speak directly with his/her immediate manager/supervisor or appropriate designate. Such notification should be provided as soon as possible in accordance with department requirements. Only in extenuating circumstances, e.g. hospitalization, is it acceptable that someone other than the employee makes the contact as outlined above. The manager/supervisor or appropriate designate is responsible for returning the employee's phone call.

2. To be eligible to receive leave benefits, an employee must inform the immediate manager/supervisor or appropriate designate of the following:

a) Type of leave, such as, sickness, workplace injury, family illness;

b) Estimated date of return to work; and
c) Whether or not the employee plans to see a doctor and on return
 from his/her absence produce a valid medical certificate signed by a
 medical practitioner registered with the SAMDC.

*[Note: in terms of the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, an employee must produce a medical certificate:-*

*23. (1) An employer is not required to pay an employee in terms of section 22 if the employee has been absent from work for more than two consecutive days or on more than two occasions during an eight-week period and, on request by the employer, does not produce a medical certificate stating that the employee was unable to work for the duration of the employee's absence on account of sickness or injury.*

*(2) The medical certificate must be issued and signed by a medical practitioner or any other person who is certified to diagnose and treat patients and who is registered with a professional council established by an Act of Parliament.*

*(3) If it is not reasonably practicable for an employee who lives on the employer's premises to obtain a medical certificate, the employer may not withhold payment in terms of subsection (1) unless the employer provides reasonable assistance to the employee to obtain the certificate. ]*

3. To assist with effective leave reporting, the manager/supervisor must document the date and time of the call, expected time/date for return to work, whether or not the employee plans to see a doctor, the type of leave, and record the absence by using the applicable symbol via the leave reporting system established in the Department. A failure to follow reporting procedures will result in an absence being recorded as leave without pay. This system must create a record for each employee, allow for proper adjustments to payroll, and present a statistical record which can be used to monitor and manage attendance.

4. When an employee fails to call in as prescribed by Departmental procedure, the manager/supervisor or appropriate designate shall:

a) make reasonable efforts to contact the employee to discuss the absence and obtain necessary supporting information and discuss the consequences of continued unscheduled absence; and

b) meet with the employee privately at the commencement of the next scheduled shift, or as soon as the employee is available to reinforce the reporting procedure; and where appropriate, advise employees of the availability of the employee assistance program and modified alternate work duties.

5. A failure to follow reporting procedures set out above, may result in the denial of benefits and disciplinary action.

6. In accordance with the collective agreements and departmental requirements, application for paid leave benefits for any period of illness may require medical certification. Failure to provide such medical information, where required, will result in a presumption that the employee does not have a medical reason for the absence from work.

7. Failure of employees to follow treatment plans, as prescribed by a medical practitioner and/or specialist, may result in their being ineligible for benefits. When the medical certificate indicates that the degree of impairment allows the employee to carry out some of their duties and or modified alternate work duties, and that doing so would not adversely affect the employee's health, the employee is expected to attend work; and the employee's duties will be adjusted by the employer accordingly, subject to operational requirements.

8. If a manager/supervisor has a reasonable basis for believing that an employee is attempting to claim, or has claimed, a benefit to which they are not entitled, this may result in a denial of the benefit claimed and/or may subject the employee to disciplinary action, up to, and including, termination.

F.  **Monitoring**

The [Company] views regular attendance at work as an important issue and consequently requires that an employee's attendance record must be reviewed on an ongoing basis.

G. **Attendance Review Standard**

Three incidents of absence from work in a six month period will trigger the manager/supervisor to review an employee's record and take appropriate action where necessary. If the nature or frequency of an employee's absences leads a manager/supervisor to reasonably believe that regular attendance at work is compromised, the manager should meet with the department's director of human resources to determine if a formal attendance interview is required to be held with the employee.

H. **Informal Discussion**

The manager/supervisor may meet informally with an employee at any time to discuss attendance issues.

I. **Formal Attendance Interview**

A formal interview is conducted by the manager, following consultation with the department's director of human resources, with an employee where the nature or frequency of an employee's absences leads a manager/supervisor to reasonably believe that regular attendance at work is compromised. Follow-up interviews should be scheduled as appropriate, following the first interview. The following steps should be followed when conducting the attendance interview:

(1) During the interview, employees must be given every opportunity to explain the circumstances surrounding the attendance issue and reasons for unsatisfactory attendance should be discussed;

(2) At every interview the manager/supervisor must ask the employee whether or not there is a medical reason for the employee's absence from work. If the employee indicates that there is a medical reason for the absence from work, where appropriate, the manager/supervisor is responsible for advising the employee that the employee will be provided with a letters  (Appendix A) which the employee is to give to the employee's physician;

(3) During every interview, the manager/supervisor must inform the employee of the availability of assistance through the Company’s Employee Assistance Programme; and

(4) Following every interview, a letter must be sent to the employee which summarizes the matters discussed during the interview and the matters agreed upon. Should an employee not achieve and maintain a regular and consistent attendance, this may ultimately jeopardize continued employment.

V. **POLICY GUIDELINES FOR ATTENDANCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**

As required, guidelines will be developed to assist departments with implementation and administration of the Policy and they will form attachments to the Policy.

VI. **ACCOUNTABILITY**

A. **Employees**
Employees are responsible for:

(1) Reporting to work on a regular, timely basis;

(2) Attending to personal affairs and obligations outside normal working hours, where practical;

(3) Reporting all absences according to procedure(s) as outlined in this policy and in accordance with applicable departmental policies;

(4) Applying for sick leave benefits in accordance with the provisions of applicable collective agreement and departmental policies and directives;

(5) Following recommended assistance or treatment programs to facilitate a prompt return to work, where applicable; and

(6) Advising their physician of the availability of modified alternate work duties, where applicable.

B. **Managers/supervisors**
Managers/supervisors (within departments) are responsible for:

(1) Educating staff on the importance of regular attendance;

(2) Providing a safe and healthy workplace;

(3) Maintaining accurate attendance records for their staff working with their respective human resource units. This includes reporting unscheduled absences such as sick leave, family responsibility leave, and injury on duty leave to the respective human resource units on a regular basis;

(4) Analyzing attendance reports, assessing attendance problems, and monitoring sick leave patterns and usage by their employees;

(5) Consistently administering departmental and government-wide policies that relate to attendance management;

(6) Facilitating early return to work by employees through modified or alternate work duties, where appropriate.

(7) Addressing attendance problems in a timely manner;

(8) Sharing with other manager/supervisors innovative ways to deal with attendance problems;

(9) Acknowledging attendance improvement;

(10) Informing new employees as to attendance expectations and attendance management policy during orientation;

(11) Being positive role models with respect to attendance at work;

(12) Informing employees about the Employee Assistance Programme.

C. **Human Resource Divisions**
The human resource divisions in departments are expected to:

(1) Enter data relating to attendance management on the Human Resource Management System on a monthly basis;

(2) Provide manager/supervisors in departments with quarterly departmental attendance statistics, including departmental averages, for their review and assessment;

(3) Ensure consistent and effective administration of leave benefits;

(4) Provide advice and assistance to the managers/supervisors concerning the implementation of the attendance management policy;

(5) Provide management support and consultation on attendance problem issues;

(6) Provide assistance with the implementation of modified alternate work duties where appropriate;

(7) Provide training to managers/supervisors on attendance management procedures; and

(8) Maintain confidential employee medical files containing properly completed medical documentation.

D. **Department of Human Resources**
The Department of Human Resources will:

(1) Provide corporate attendance reports to departmental human resource units on a quarterly basis;

(2) Promote consistent and effective administration of leave benefits;

(3) Provide guidance to departments concerning the implementation of the attendance management policy;

(4) Provide management support and consultation on attendance issues;

(5) Provide advice and assistance regarding the design and implementation of modified alternate work duties, where appropriate;

(6) Develop and update related policies and programs;

(7) Provide information concerning Employee Assistance Programs and policy guidelines and operational support; and

(8) Maintain confidential employee medical files containing properly completed medical documentation.

E. **Senior Management**
Senior Management is expected to:

(1) Ensure that manager/supervisors implement the Attendance Management Policy and that training is provided, establish goals and objectives within the Department and actively support the Attendance Management Policy;

(2) Facilitate internal departmental audits of the Attendance Management Policy; and

(3) Ensure manager/supervisors are held responsible for implementation of the Attendance Management Policy.

VII. **MONITORING**

Departments are responsible for complying with the terms of this policy. The Department of Human Resources may periodically conduct audits of departmental attendance management practices to ascertain compliance by departments with this policy.

VIII. **REFERENCES**

A. Basic Conditions of Employment Act

B. Company Sick Leave Policy

C. Employee Assistance Programme

D. Telegrammes

E. Managing Employee Incapacity

F. Company Retirement Fund (provisions regarding employee disability)

IX. **APPENDICES**

Appendix A: Employee Package for Physician

Appendix B: Extract from Basic Conditions of Employment Act

**APPENDIX A**

**COVERING LETTER FROM** **SUPERVISOR TO EMPLOYEE**

**DATE:**

**TO: *Employee Name***

**RE: ATTENDANCE**

During the attendance interview you advised that you had a medical condition that has prevented you from reporting for work on a regular and consistent basis.

In order that we may assist you in obtaining more regular attendance, please take the enclosed confidential letter to your physician. Please have your physician provide a response to the Human Resources Director, Department of Human Resources, who can then advise our department as to what might be reasonable occupational demands and expectations. All medical information will remain confidential. Management in our department will be provided only with information on fitness for work.

It is your responsibility to ensure that this report is completed and mailed to the Human Resources Director, Department of Human Resources within 14 days, and a failure to do so will result in a presumption that there is not a medical reason for your absence from work.

Sincerely

Manager

cc:

**ATTENDANCE LETTER TO DOCTOR** **TO BE USED WHEN EMPLOYEE STATES** **THERE IS A MEDICAL REASON FOR ABSENCES**

**DATE**:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Dear Dr.** |  |  |

**RE: *Employee's Name***

***Employee's Name***, an employee of ***Company’s Name*** was recently interviewed to review ***his/her*** work attendance. During this interview, ***Employee's Name*** indicated that there was a medical condition which contributed to their use of sick leave.

In order that I may advise the ***Department's Name*** accurately as to what might be reasonable expectations for this employee's attendance, I require further information. To this end, would you please provide answers to the following questions. The medical information you provide will remain confidential. Management will be provided only with information regarding the employee's fitness for work.

1.  Does the employee have a medical condition that would prevent ***him/her*** from attending work on a regular and consistent basis? [ ]Yes [ ]No

If yes, what is the diagnosis?

2.  Please provide the dates on which this employee consulted you for this condition in the past year.

3.  What is the current treatment plan and what specialists, if any, have been involved in this employee's care?

4. Is any improvement in this condition expected?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

5. If yes, when do you anticipate this employee being able to attend work on a regular and consistent basis?

6. Is there anything that the employer can do to assist this employee in their medical rehabilitation/attendance? (Employee Assistance Program, modified alternate work duties [please specify], etc.)

Please provide your confidential report in the enclosed envelope. Costs associated with completion of this form may be submitted along with the confidential report to the above address. The employee has been given 14 days from the date of this letter in which to see you and have a response provided to my office.

Thank you in advance for your timely attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Director: Human Resources

**cc: Employee's Name**

**APPENDIX B: SICK LEAVE
(BASIC CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT ACT)**

22. (1) In this Chapter, "sick leave cycle" means the period of 36 months'
 employment with the same employer immediately following-

(a) an *employee's* commencement of employment; or
(b) the completion of that *employee's* prior sick leave cycle.

(2) During every sick leave cycle, an *employee* is entitled to an amount of paid sick leave equal to the number of days the *employee* would normally work during a period of six *weeks*.

(3) Despite subsection (2), during the first six months of employment, an *employee* is entitled to one day's paid sick leave for every 26 days worked.

(4) During an *employee's* first sick leave cycle, an employer may reduce the *employee's* entitlement to sick leave in terms of subsection (2) by the number of days' sick leave taken in terms of subsection (3).

(5) Subject to section 23, an employer must pay an *employee* for a day's sick leave----

(a) the *wage* the *employee* would ordinarily have received for work on that day; and

(b) on the *employee's* usual pay day.

(6) An *agreement* may reduce the pay to which an *employee* is entitled in respect of any day's absence in terms of this section if-

(a) the number of days of paid sick leave is increased at least commensurately with any reduction in the daily amount of sick pay; and

(b) the *employee*'s entitlement to pay-

(i) for any day's sick leave is at least 75 per cent of the *wage* payable to the *employee* for the ordinary hours the *employee* would have worked on that day; and

(ii) for sick leave over the sick leave cycle is at least equivalent to the *employee's* entitlement in terms of subsection (2).

**Proof of incapacity**

23. (1) An employer is not required to pay an *employee* in terms of section 22 if the
 *employee* has been absent from work for more than two consecutive days or
 on more than two occasions during an eight-*week* period and, on request by
 the employer, does not produce a medical certificate stating that the
 *employee* was unable to work for the duration of the *employee*'s absence on
 account of sickness or injury.

(2) The medical certificate must be issued and signed by a *medical practitioner* or any other person who is certified to diagnose and treat patients and who is registered with a professional council established by an Act of Parliament.

(3) If it is not reasonably practicable for an *employee* who lives on the employer's premises to obtain a medical certificate, the employer may not withhold payment in terms of subsection (1) unless the employer provides reasonable assistance to the *employee* to obtain the certificate