



Health Services
LOS ANGELES COUNTY

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

SUBJECT: ATTENDANCE

POLICY NO: 751

PURPOSE:

To provide guidance and direction to Departmental management and employees to ensure regular attendance and punctuality of employees.

POLICY:

All employees shall be present at their jobs and perform their assigned duties during their scheduled work hours, except when an approved vacation or approved leave of absence as prescribed and governed by the Los Angeles County Code, Civil Service Rules and applicable Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

Unscheduled absences and/or recurrent tardiness in reporting to work or returning from breaks or lunch period places a burden on co-workers, negatively affects employee morale, and impairs the ability of the Department to achieve its objectives and maintain proper service levels.

Employees shall inform their supervisors if they are unable to adhere to their work schedule.

Management/supervisors are responsible for ensuring their employees are informed of and adhere to the attendance standards below and for taking appropriate disciplinary or corrective action. As a guide to determining the behavior that constitutes unsatisfactory attendance, managers/supervisors should consider the following:

- The impact of absences on job productivity;
- The number of occasions an employee is absent or tardy (see standards);
- The work history of the employee; and
- Any clear pattern of absences.

STANDARDS:

The standards below are not to be construed to restrict the employee's right to his/her appropriate use of accumulated benefit time.

APPROVED BY:

REVIEW DATES:

7/25/13

EFFECTIVE DATE: June 30, 2013

SUPERSEDES: May 1, 2005



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I. ABSENCES

a. Unscheduled absences of one day or more:

An employee assigned direct patient care related responsibilities in an inpatient setting must notify management at least two (2) hours prior to his/her scheduled work hour/shift.

An employee assigned direct patient care in an outpatient setting, or non-patient care related responsibilities must notify management 30 minutes prior to the start of the employee's scheduled work hour/shift.

It is the employee's responsibility to call in. Calls will not be accepted from anyone on behalf of the employee except in those cases where the employee is incapacitated and unable to call in. In the event an employee cannot call his/her manager/supervisor (such as hospitalization, accident, physically unable, etc.), a report will be accepted from a representative. However, the employee must make personal contact with the manager/supervisor as soon as possible.

- The employee is required to state the reason and the expected date he/she will return to work. The supervisor has the responsibility to ask the employee the reason for, and the duration of, the unscheduled absence.
- The employee is expected to contact/telephone his/her immediate supervisor or his/her designee on a daily basis while out ill unless an acceptable certification has been provided to the supervisor stating that such absence will continue for an extended period.

Failure to notify management may result in the employee's timecard being coded as unapproved absence without pay (AWOP). An employee who fails to report to work for 3 consecutive days or 2 regularly scheduled shifts shall be deemed to have resigned effective the end of the last day the employee performed any of the duties of his/her position.

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- b. Excessive absenteeism is more than one (1) unscheduled absence per month. Excessive absenteeism may result in disciplinary action.
- c. If an employee needs to request any time off with less than three (3) working days written notice, the employee must submit an emergency request in writing to his/her supervisor stating what type of leave he/she is requesting and the reason for the request. Written proof or verification of the emergency may be requested by the employee's manager/supervisor for any occasion on which the employee must be absent from work for an emergency. Written proof or verification must be submitted to the manager/supervisor upon the employee's return to work. Managers/supervisors shall provide a response to the request in a timely manner.
- If the emergency is sudden and the employee has not yet reported to work, the employee is to personally call his/her manager/supervisor, or designee as specified in Section I.A above. The employee should state the nature of the emergency and the type of time he/she will be requesting to cover the absence, subject to the manager's/supervisor's approval.
 - If the emergency is sudden and the employee is on duty, he/she should speak to the manager/supervisor immediately to obtain permission to leave work and the amount and type of time to be used. The employee may not leave the work area without first reporting to his/her manager/supervisor or designee.
- d. An employee who is off three (3) or more consecutive work days may be required to present an original verifiable medical certification of illness or injury upon return to work:
- For absences of three (3) consecutive work days, the medical certification, if requested, must be provided to the employee's immediate supervisor on the first day the employee returns to work.
 - If the absence will be extended for four (4) or more days, the employee, if requested, must provide medical certification to his/her immediate supervisor by

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the fifth (5th) work day of the absence. If the absence is extended further, the employee must provide updated medical certification to his/her immediate supervisor prior to the expiration of each extension. The employee must have a current medical certification on file with his/her supervisor at all times, or the timecard will be coded as Absent Without Pay (AWOP).

- e. Acceptable medical certification is an original, signed and dated document from a licensed physician provided on letterhead stationery of the physician or health care facility providing the care. The certification must include the following:
- The date the employee was seen by the physician.
 - Date(s) the illness or injury prevented the employee from performing his/her duties.
 - Earliest date the employee can return to work with or without restrictions.
 - If there are work restrictions, the certification must include the nature of the restrictions and their duration.
- f. An employee who fails to report an absence with the specified time period, call within the specified time period, or provide medical certification, as required, will be considered to be unapproved Absent Without Pay (AWOP) for the period of the unreported absence.
- g. An employee who demonstrates a clear pattern of absenteeism (such as absenteeism in conjunction with regular days off (RDOs), weekends, holidays, or vacation time off) may be placed on medical certification.
- h. An employee on part-pay sick leave must remain on such leave until it is exhausted and may not elect any other type of leave benefits unless authorized by the facility/program head.

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II. TARDINESS

- a. It is the employee's responsibility to arrive and be ready for work at the start of his/her scheduled work hour/shift. The time piece to be used to determine the start and end time of the work shift will be determined by the manager/supervisor.
 - b. More than two (2) tardies per pay period (1st-15th, 16th-31st) will be considered excessive tardiness and may subject the employee to disciplinary action which may include a warning, reprimand, suspension, or discharge. Supervisors will instruct their employees on how to report their absence or tardy.
 - An employee assigned direct patient care responsibilities in an inpatient setting must report tardies to management at least two (2) hours prior to the start of his/her scheduled work shift, or as soon as practical.
 - An employee assigned direct patient care in an outpatient setting, or non-patient care related responsibilities must report tardies to management 30 minutes prior to the employee's scheduled work hour/shift, or as soon as practical.
 - c. The timecard for tardies shall be coded as Absent Without pay (AWOP). Timecards shall not be coded as AWOP time increments less than fifteen (15) minutes. Tardies less than fifteen (15) minutes may be used for disciplinary purposes.
 - d. An employee who arrives late cannot make up the lost time by working past his or her regularly scheduled quitting time.
 - e. An employee is entitled to one (1) fifteen minute rest period (break) around the midpoint of each half of the work day and one (1) thirty minute lunch period. Employees are expected to remain on grounds during their rest periods/breaks to provide immediate response to unexpected situations.
 - f. Employees are expected to return, on time, as scheduled, from rest periods/breaks and lunch period and to contact management immediately if they are going to be late.
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- g. Employees must obtain approval from management to extend or advance his/her normal break/lunch period. Rest periods/breaks and the lunch period cannot be used to cover a tardy or shorten the workday. Rest periods/breaks cannot be combined to lengthen the lunch period unless as noted below:

Occasionally, based on the needs of the department and current workloads, exceptions such as combining lunch and breaks (noting that the breaks are paid breaks) may be an acceptable practice. A manager/supervisor who requests a waiver (to combine breaks) must demonstrate that all reasonable efforts were taken to notify and encourage employees of their right to take breaks during an appropriate break schedule. The waiver would be for the needs of the entire department, unit or area and not on an individual basis.

If a manager/supervisor determines that a request for a waiver is appropriate, he/she must submit a memo through the appropriate chain-of-command to DHS Human Resources, Employee Relations Division establishing justification for the request. The Employee Relations Division will review the request for appropriateness, and if determined to be justified, make a recommendation for approval to the Chief, Audit and Compliance.

- h. Unjustified absences from the workstation for periods of time exceeding 15 minutes may result in the employee's timecard being coded unapproved Absence Without Pay (AWOP).
- i. Signing/clocking in/out (if applicable to the division) for another employee is strictly prohibited and may result in disciplinary action.

AUTHORITY: Los Angeles County Code
Civil Service Rules
Applicable MOU

CROSS REFERENCES: DHS Policies:
750 "Work Hours and Work Week"
755 "Vacation Scheduling"
756.5 "Use of Sick Leave Benefits"

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