ATTENDANCE MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES
FOR FULL TIME AND PART TIME CONTINUING CUPE, APSA AND APEX EMPLOYEES
Tool for Supervisors / Managers
Simon Fraser University

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INTRODUCTION

The objectives of these guidelines are to:

- Clarify responsibilities between the various participants in the management of employee attendance; i.e. Supervisors, Return to Work/Disability Management Coordinator / Manager (RTW/DMC; RTW/DMM), Human Resources Advisors (HR Advisors) and Labour & Employee Relations (LR/ER).
- Provide Absenteeism Management Guidelines to you as the supervisor.
- Establish coordination and communication between the various groups involved in the administration of absence management.

The goals of these guidelines are to:

- Promote regular attendance at work.
- Evaluate and understand absence problems.
- Manage non-culpable absenteeism consistently across the University.

Simon Fraser University is committed to fostering a culture of regular and consistent attendance at work and promoting health and wellness among our employees. The proper and timely management of absence from work will contribute to a healthier workplace, the proper management of sick leave costs and ensuring that resources are devoted to delivering better services.

The failure to monitor employee absenteeism leads to reduced quality of service, lost productivity and reduced morale of co-workers. The consistent management of absenteeism by you, the supervisor, is essential in order to implement and maintain a successful absence management culture at the University.

The Human Resources Advisors and the Return to Work/Disability Management Coordinator/Manager are available to assist you with early intervention and at any step of the process for employees with excessive absenteeism and with the appropriate return to work of employees on sick leave, WorkSafeBC claim, or long term disability leave.

In your role as supervisor, you are in a unique position to promote regular and sustained attendance by fostering a healthy work environment and encouraging your employees to seek help when needed. Please contact the RTW/DMO to enquire about resources available to you and your employees.

EVALUATING AND UNDERSTANDING ABSENTEEISM

The goal is to enable your employees to attend work on a regular and consistent basis. This can be achieved by identifying potential non-culpable absenteeism issues and, in appropriate cases, to encourage employees to receive proper treatment. The term "non-culpable" means that the employee's absenteeism is not blameworthy. Non-culpable
absenteeism is usually an absence due to disability, injury, illness, or another legitimate health reason. It includes:

a) Sick leave (paid or unpaid), for example:
   - Casual Illness (Equal to or less than 21 Hrs.)
   - Sick Leave (More than 21 Hrs.)
   - Long Term Disability (LTD)
   - Wage Indemnity (WI)
   - Unpaid Sick Leave.

b) WorkSafeBC absence.

c) Other absences attributable to illness or injury.

In contrast, culpable absenteeism involves employee fault or wrongdoing. Examples of culpable issues in absenteeism may include

a) Failure to report to work or follow the established call-in procedures.

b) Sick leave abuse or fraud.

c) Falsification of time keeping records.

d) Excessive lateness.

e) Pattern absenteeism (For example calling in sick regularly on Fridays or Mondays).

NOTE: These guidelines focus only on non-culpable absenteeism. Please consult with your Human Resources Advisor (HRA) in any instance of suspected culpable absenteeism.

MANAGING NON-CULPABLE ABSENTEEISM

We recognize that employees may be absent from work on occasion due to illness or injury. This is a normal part of the employee/employer relationship. However, when an employee’s absences from work exceeds twice the University’s casual or sick leave average two or more consecutive years, an absence problem may exist that may require review through these Attendance Management Guidelines. Any absence is potentially disruptive for a department and supervisors should be concerned about every instance of absence; however, excessive absence is a strong indication that a problem may exist. The way in which you as the supervisor deal with employee absences will play a critical role in effective attendance management and the prevention of absence problems from escalating.

In instances where an absenteeism concern has been identified as defined above, the supervisor will need to meet with the employee to address the absence issue. Many absence issues are resolved during the initial stage; in such cases, the supervisor continues to

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1 For APSA and Excluded employees, casual illness is equal to or less than 21.6 hours and sick leave more than 21.6 hours.

2 For a full-time continuing employee. For a part-time continuing employee pro rate according to the number of hours worked in a bi-weekly pay period based on 910 hours for CUPE and 936 hours for APSA full time employees in a rolling 7 year period. See CUPE Collective Agreement Article 35.11 or APSA Policy AD10.8.01b
encourage regular and consistent attendance at work and provides on-going monitoring and feedback. In other cases, where the employee shows no improvement and absences continue to be excessive, a series of subsequent meetings may be required in order to facilitate a solution to the absence problem.

Coaching by the supervisor may also assist an employee in getting additional support from their family physician or the Employee and Family Assistance Program. This may provide the impetus for an employee to seek medical attention and/or a work accommodation or take more precautions to protect his/her health. This also provides the employee with a better understanding of his/her obligations at work, requirements to attend on a regular and consistent basis and the possible consequences when this does not occur.

What follows is an outline of procedures designed for supervisors on how to deal with non-culpable absence issues. It is important to note that while the principles within these guidelines must be applied consistently, they must be administered with flexibility and discretion and on a case by case basis in order to allow the supervisor to deal effectively with the unique and numerous types of absence issues that may arise. For instance, after due consideration, a supervisor may decide that no further action is warranted for the time being or if already following the Guidelines, it may require repeating one or more of the steps described in the Procedures section.

NATURE OF EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIP

The employment relationship is contractual in nature. That is, in return for remuneration, the employee is expected to perform the work assigned to them. If the employee ultimately is not able to live up to his/her part of the employment relationship, the contract may be terminated. The employment relationship may end when the employee has consistently poor attendance with no reasonable prospect of reaching acceptable attendance in the foreseeable future. This expectation is applied consistently among all bargaining groups.

UNDERSTANDING THE REASONS FOR THE ABSENCES

The discussion between the supervisor and the employee should begin with an explanation that the review is meant as an opportunity for the employee to discuss reasons for his/her rate of absenteeism. The discussion should also include an explanation of the resources available to him/her and incorporate an explanation about the effect the rate of absence has on the work place and co-workers. This is also the opportunity, if the employee so chooses, to disclose in confidence a medical condition that may be the cause of the absences. The absences should be treated as non-culpable and therefore will not result in discipline. Through this discussion with the employee, the supervisor should seek to understand the reasons for the absences. It is important to explore workplace or personal factors an employee brings forward that may impede the employee from regular and consistent attendance at work.
The supervisor will work with his/her employee to develop positive outcomes and expectations regarding the future rate of absence. If the employee does disclose that he or she has a medical condition that has contributed to his/her absenteeism, he/she may be required to provide medical certification satisfactory to the University.

DUTY TO ACCOMMODATE

The duty to accommodate refers to the obligation of an employer to take measures to eliminate disadvantages to employees that result from a rule, practice or physical barrier that has, or may have, an impact on individuals or groups protected under the Canadian Human Rights Act, or on designated group under the Equity Act3.

Simon Fraser University is committed to providing an employment environment in which persons with disabilities have equitable access to opportunities. The application for medical accommodation starts by notice in writing from an employee in which the employee notifies his/her supervisor of the existence of a disability and provides satisfactory medical documentation. For more information on Duty to Accommodate and Disability Accommodation please refer to the Disability Accommodation in the Workplace Policy (GP 40) in consultation with the Director, Human Rights and Equity.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The BC Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA) and the Workers Compensation Act guarantee the safeguard of individuals’ personal information. SFU is committed to protecting the confidentiality of employees’ medical and personal information under these acts. University management must therefore comply with all requirements set by FIPPA.

If an employee chooses to keep their medical diagnosis and treatment confidential, they have the option of providing substantive medical information and/or documentation to their Return to Work Coordinator (RTWC). The RTWC advises employees when, how and for what purpose their personal or medical information may be disclosed and obtains informed written consent from the employee. Their personal and medical information records are kept confidential within the Return to Work/Disabilities Management Office and are kept separate from employee human resources files. The RTWC is authorized to disclose the physician’s feedback on the employee’s limitations, prognosis for recovery, prognosis for return to work and specific needs for work accommodation to the direct supervisor or manager, the HRA and other management representatives involved as required.

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3 From: Key definitions - Public Service Commission of Canada
MEDICAL CERTIFICATE
This request for medical information is made by the supervisor.

Satisfactory medical for the University should include the following:

- What was the employee’s first day of absence due to the current illness or injury?
- Has treatment of therapy been prescribed?
- Is the employee adherent to treatment and/or therapy?
- Is the employee able to perform full or modified duties and/or hours?
- What are the current functional limitations and restrictions?
- What is the nature of the illness or injury?
- What is the prognosis for return to work to part time or full time duties and/or hours?

The supervisor is encouraged to request assistance from his/her Human Resources Advisor or the Return to Work/Disability Management Office (RTW/DMO) to evaluate that the medical information is satisfactory to the University. Should the medical information not be satisfactory, it is the RTW/DMO’s responsibility to obtain medical clarification from the employee’s physician.

The supervisor may not communicate with the employee’s physician. All communication with the employee’s care providers are done through the RTW/DMO.

The supervisor should inform the employee that the cost of medical information is borne by the employee.

STAKEHOLDERS RESPONSIBILITIES
Successful attendance management is dependent upon the commitment of all stakeholders. As such, the responsibility for, and commitment to the SFU Attendance Management Guidelines exists at all levels of the organization. The following are some of the key responsibilities of the various stakeholders of this Guideline:

EMPLOYEE:
- To attend work on a consistent and regular basis.
- To maintain good overall health and seek medical help when needed.
- To attend to personal affairs and obligations outside of regular work hours.
- To facilitate timely notification of absences and to follow absenteeism reporting procedures in accordance with the applicable administrative policies, collective agreements, University practices and departmental/supervisor’s requirements.
- To provide satisfactory medical documentation, including Claim for Sick Leave Benefit Form (for CUPE employees) as required, to support the medical absence from work, the return to work, and any required accommodation to remain or return to work.
To maintain regular contact with his/her supervisor during absences.
To engage Human Resources and/or Union/Association support and assistance as required.

SUPERVISOR:
- To foster a healthy and positive work environment.
- To support the employee in being successful to reduce their non-culpable absenteeism.
- To treat employees fairly, consistently and in compliance with the applicable administrative policies, collective agreement, University practices and the Return to Work Program. To raise awareness about the importance of regular attendance.
- To communicate to employees at least once a year their sick leave attendance numbers and how they measure up to the University’s sick leave average.
- To maintain, monitor and be accountable for attendance levels within his/her respective areas – monitor and manage situations where employees have excessive absences in consultation with the RTW/DMO.
- To understand the requirement for reporting and managing work-related and non-work related illness and injury situations.
- To identify opportunities that allows employees to remain at work or to return to work in a safe and timely manner.
- Identify and plan modified work options in consultation with the RTW/DMO.
- To ensure the absences are recorded correctly on the timesheets.
- To ensure the appropriate documentation is being requested and completed by the employee, i.e., Claim for Sick Leave Benefit Form (for CUPE employees) and medical information satisfactory to the University.
- To maintain regular and appropriate contact with an employee during the employee’s absence from work. Please refer to APPENDIX I: Questions a supervisor can ask a sick employee.

RETURN TO WORK AND DISABILITY MANAGEMENT OFFICE (RTW/DMO)

THE MANAGER IS RESPONSIBLE FOR:
- Fostering a healthy and positive work environment.
- Providing coaching, advice and training to both, supervisors and employees on absence management at any step in the process.
- Attending initial and follow-up employee meetings.
- Creating and updating tools and guidelines.
- Creating modified hours and/or duties plans for employees gradually returning to work.
- Consulting with and keeping the appropriate HR staff informed on the cases in his/her area.

THE COORDINATOR IS RESPONSIBLE FOR:
- Fostering a healthy and positive work environment.
- Providing relevant data to both, supervisors and employees.
• Assisting in the creation and updating of tools and guidelines.
• Supporting modified hours and/or duties plans for employees gradually returning to work.
• Maintaining employee absence statistics, including sick leave aggregation and generating annual and ad hoc sick leave reports.
• Monitoring employee absences to ensure there is follow up and proactive measures being taken where appropriate.

**HUMAN RESOURCES ADVISOR (HRA)**

• Fostering a healthy and positive work environment.
• Providing coaching, advice and training to both, supervisors and employees on absence management at any step in the process.
• Providing advice and assistance to supervisors on culpable and non-culpable absenteeism.
• Attending employee interview meetings from Step 3 onwards due to discussion of progressive consequence leading to termination.
• Attending employee interview meetings when there is discussion of culpable behaviours and possibly leading to discipline.
• Consulting with and keep the RTW/DM Coordinator and/or Supervisor and LR Director informed on potential sick leave issues or other relevant information regarding employees who may also have a sick leave issue.

**LABOUR AND EMPLOYEE RELATIONS (LR)**

• Fostering a healthy and positive work environment.
• Supporting and advising supervisors, Human Resources Advisory Services (HRAS) and RTW/DMO on labour relations issues as required.

**UNIONS AND STAFF ASSOCIATIONS:**

• To support and advise the employee.
• To attend meetings with the employee as requested.
• To raise awareness about the importance of regular attendance.
• To assist with employee return to work and accommodation plans.
SICK LEAVE RECORD REVIEW

Online sick leave information is available to any supervisor of record in the Human Resources/Payroll system myInfo (https://myinfo.sfu.ca). This sick leave information is critical in helping manage absenteeism.

NOTE: The Sick Leave Reports available through myInfo are created using the information from the Departmental Time Sheets.
You must ensure that the sick leave information is accurate and up to date before proceeding with any absence management efforts.

The sick leave report contains sick leave information for each of your continuing employees who directly report to you. It contains the year the absence occurred, the employee’s ID, the employee’s name, total employee sick leave hours, a breakdown between casual illness (sick 21 hours or less\(^4\)) and sick leave (more than 21 hours), for all continuing CUPE, APSA and Excluded staff. Although temporary staff is not included in this report, they should be considered for non-culpable absence management.

For absence management purposes, some employees will be marked with an asterisk [*] in the sick leave report. This signifies that the employee has used sick leave equal to or greater than twice the University average. This is one of several important variables to determine when to engage an employee in an absence management discussion.

Supervisors of these employees should carefully consider the individual circumstances of each case and based on those considerations determine if any action should be taken.

Relevant items to consider may include departmental sick leave records, physicians’ certificates and statements, sick leave claim forms, WorkSafe BC claim forms and employee’s explanation of his/her absences. Not every such piece of information requires attention, but if there is an increase in an employee’s absence, a clearly identifiable pattern of absence or indications of chronic absences causing operational disruptions and hardship, the supervisor should consult with his/her Human Resources Advisor prior to speaking with the employee. Note: a clearly identifiable pattern of absence (e.g. regular absences on Mondays and Fridays) may be reviewed as culpable absenteeism. Sometimes, the employee may not feel comfortable sharing his/her medical history with you. If the employee expressly indicates this, or if the supervisor believes that the employee is not comfortable sharing personal medical information, the supervisor may refer that person to the Return to Work/Disability Management Office. Although the supervisor does not have the right to know the specific diagnosis, the supervisor does have the right to know the nature of the illness or injury that casual or sick leave is being claimed for including the current restrictions and limitations that preclude the employee from attending work on a regular and consistent basis.

There will be times when a review of the record indicates that a discussion with the employee is not required as there is a reasonable explanation for the rate of absenteeism, even though the employee is over the threshold. For instance, where an absence was caused by an isolated illness or injury (such as a planned treatment or surgery, or a motor vehicle accident) and there are no other problems with the attendance record.

\(^4\) Or the equivalent of 21.6 hours for APSA employees. The time sheet label is based on CUPE work load requirements.
Not all non-culpable absenteeism is the same. Key criteria in evaluating absenteeism include:

- The duration of absences (short, intermittent versus longer term).
- The frequency (i.e. the number of separate occurrences).
- The predictability (i.e. whether planned or unplanned).

*TIP: Each case is reviewed on its own merit on a case-by-case basis. You should consider the record of each employee in isolation, and determine if absence management is appropriate.*

To summarize, the question you as the supervisor must address is whether, on a review of the record, there is an ongoing problem with excessive absenteeism that needs to be addressed and managed. Please contact your HR Advisor or RTW/DM Manager for consultation.

**Managing Absenteeism Consistently**

The success of your efforts depends upon the consistent application of the absence management steps below. The following steps are designed to identify and formally address excessive absenteeism.

**PROCEDURES**

The success of your efforts depends upon the consistent application of the absence management steps below. The following Attendance Management Guidelines are summarized as follows:

**STEP 1: Attendance Management Interview Meeting #1.**

- In attendance: Supervisor and Employee. Follow up: e-mail: Appendix A.
- Continue monitoring your employee’s attendance. If there is no significant and sustained improvement in your employee’s absenteeism within the next 3-6 months after this step, then proceed to STEP 2.

**STEP 2: Attendance Management Interview Meeting #2.**

- In attendance: Supervisor, RTW/DM Coordinator and/or Manager and Employee. Follow up: Second interview letter: Appendix B.
- The employee is placed on notice of the requirement to provide medical documentation for every sick leave absence.
- Continue monitoring your employee’s attendance. If there is no significant and sustained improvement in your employee’s absenteeism within the next 3-6 months after this step, then proceed to STEP 3.
STEP 3: Attendance Management Interview Meeting #3.
- In attendance: Supervisor, HR Advisor, RTW/DM Coordinator and/or Manager, Employee and Union/Association representative. Follow up: Third interview letter. Appendix C.
- The employee is placed on notice that his/her employment with the University may be in jeopardy.
- Continue monitoring your employee’s attendance. If there is no significant and sustained improvement in your employee’s absenteeism within the next 3-6 months after this step, then proceed to STEP 4.

STEP 4: Attendance Management Interview Meeting #4 – Final Warning.
- In attendance: Supervisor, HR Advisor, RTW/DM Manager, Employee and Union/Association representative. Follow up: Fourth/interview letter – Final Warning: Appendix D
- The employee is placed on notice that his/her employment with the University will be in jeopardy.
- Continue monitoring your employee’s attendance. If there is no significant and sustained improvement in your employee’s absenteeism within the next 3-6 months after this step, then proceed to STEP 5.

STEP 5: Attendance Management Interview Meeting #5 – Final Interview.
- In attendance: Supervisor, HR Advisor, RTW/DM Manager, Employee and Union/Association representative. Follow up: Meeting with LR and HR Advisor to discuss next step.
- The employee is placed on notice that his/her employment with the University is in jeopardy.

STEP 6: Notice of Termination Meeting
- In attendance: Supervisor, HR Advisor, Employee and Union/Association representative. Termination of Employment Notice to be presented at the meeting. Appendix E

For your convenience you may use the Checklist in Appendix J to guide you step-by-step through the Attendance Management Guidelines Procedures.
STEP 1: INITIAL ATTENDANCE MANAGEMENT MEETING (INTERVIEW MEETING #1)

In attendance: Supervisor and Employee

NOTE: Before proceeding with this step please ensure that consultation has taken place between you (the supervisor) and Human Resources. The HR Advisor and the RTW Manager may have relevant information about the employee’s absence history or circumstances affecting the employee’s attendance.

It is important that both, your HR Advisor and the RTW/DM Manager are kept informed of all steps and advances made throughout this process. One way to achieve this is by copying each other in all e-mail communications when appropriate.

Review of Absences and Impact
You may invite the employee to review his/her absence record, bringing the absenteeism to the employee’s attention. An open discussion and accurate review of the employee’s absence record including all Claims for Casual Illness Forms (for CUPE employees), is the key to successful absenteeism management and promoting regular attendance. The review can be instructive since employees sometimes are not aware of the amount of sick leave they have taken during the year particularly in relation to the University’s casual and/or sick leave average threshold. They may also not be aware of the disruption caused to the department by their absences.

As part of the interview, the supervisor should inform the employee of the operational and overall impact of the employee’s absences.

NOTE: Appendix F includes sample questions that may be used for the interview. You should consult with the RTW/DM Manager when compiling a set of questions in preparation for this meeting.

This is an informal meeting and no Union, Association or Human Resources Advisors are required. However, the employee may attend with a Union or Association representative if they wish, or you may request the attendance of the RTW/DM Manager if you choose to do so.

NOTE: Because of the non-culpable nature and approach to attendance management the participation of a Human Resources Advisor at the first meeting is not required.

You as the supervisor must review attendance records including all Claims for Casual Illness Forms, medical notes, etc. prior to the meeting and ensure that these are accurate.
Prognosis and Monitoring
In consultation with the RTW/DM Coordinator or Manager, discuss with the employee the prognosis for regular attendance and respective responsibilities and commitments. Inform the employee about programs and supports in place to promote wellness at the University, including the Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) when appropriate. Inform the employee that his/her attendance will be monitored and that a significant and sustained improvement in his/her absence is expected, and that if such improvement does not occur, the employee may be required to provide medical documentation for every medical absence.

Documenting the Discussion
After the Initial Attendance Management Meeting (Interview Meeting #1), documentation in the form of an e-mail, reviewed by the RTW/DM Manager, is normally issued to the employee, with a copy to the Human Resources Advisor. *A sample letter is offered in Appendix A – E-mail.* The summary of the meeting must be tailored to include the circumstances of each employee and what was said in the discussion.

**Disclosure of a Medical Condition that Requires Accommodation**
If the employee does disclose that he or she has a medical condition that has contributed to his/her absenteeism, then the employee may apply for an accommodation in accordance with the Disability Accommodation in the Workplace Policy (GP40). The participation in the Attendance Management Guidelines will stop when the employee has successfully demonstrated that an accommodation is medically warranted.

**If there is no significant and sustained improvement in the employee’s absenteeism within the next 3-6 months after the Interview #1, then proceed to STEP #2 – Interview Meeting #2.**

**However, if there is a significant and sustained improvement in the employee’s absenteeism for a period of at least 6 months:**

a) Inform your HR Advisor or RTW/DM Manager.
b) Inform the employee of this fact and that his/her efforts are highly appreciated.
c) Continue monitoring your employee’s absenteeism.

**If there is a significant and sustained improvement in the employee’s absenteeism for a period of at least 12 months:**

a) Inform your HR Advisor or RTW/DM Manager.
b) After consultation with your HR Advisor and/or RTW/DM Manager, inform the employee that he/she is no longer being monitored/managed under the Absence Management Guidelines (a sample letter to inform the employee of this requirement change can be found in Appendix H). However you should be diligent in recording the employee’s nature of illness for aggregation purposes.
c) Inform the employee of this fact and that his/her efforts are highly appreciated.

If you notice an increase in absenteeism please inform your HR Advisor or RTW/DM Manager. Reinstatement of the Absence Management Guidelines will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

**STEP 2: FOLLOW-UP WITH THE EMPLOYEE IF NO IMPROVEMENT IN HIS/HER ABSENTEEISM (INTERVIEW MEETING #2)**  
*In attendance: Supervisor, RTW/DM Coordinator and/or Manager and Employee*

Before proceeding with this step please ensure that consultation has taken place with your HR Advisor and the RTW/DM Manager.

If the required improvement in attendance does not occur after Interview Meeting #1, a follow-up interview will be necessary. Before proceeding with Interview Meeting #2, it is important to reference the previous meetings held with the employee within the scope of these guidelines.

Appendix F includes sample questions that may be used for the interview. You should consult with the HR Advisor when compiling a set of questions in preparation for this meeting.

During the interview, inform the employee that he/she is now required to provide a satisfactory medical note or Attending Physician’s Statement for EVERY sick leave absence (paid or unpaid). (The cost for the medical documentation will be the responsibility of the employee).

After Interview Meeting #2, a letter is issued to the employee summarizing the interview and outcomes, including the requirement to provide medical documentation for every sick leave, with copies to the Union/Association, Human Resources, and the personnel file. Appendix B offers a template of this absenteeism letter. The letter must also be tailored to the personal circumstances of the employee.

Disclosure of a Medical Condition that Requires Accommodation
If the employee does disclose that he or she has a medical condition that has contributed to his/her absenteeism, then the employee may apply for an accommodation as per SFU’s Disability Accommodation in the Workplace Policy (GP40). The participation in the Attendance Management Guidelines will stop when the employee has successfully demonstrated that an accommodation is medically warranted.
If there is no significant and sustained improvement in the employee’s absenteeism within the next 3-6 months after the Interview Meeting #2, then proceed to STEP #3 – Interview Meeting #3.

However, if there is a significant and sustained improvement in the employee’s absenteeism for a period of at least 6 months:

a) Inform your HR Advisor or RTW/DM Manager.

b) After consultation with your HR Advisor and/or RTW/DM Manager, inform the employee that he/she is no longer required to provide a medical note for every sick leave (paid and/or unpaid) (a sample letter to inform the employee of this requirement change can be found in Appendix G). However you should be diligent in recording the employee’s nature of illness for aggregation purposes.

c) Inform the employee of this fact and that his/her efforts are highly appreciated.

d) Continue monitoring your employee’s absenteeism.

If there is a significant and sustained improvement in the employee’s absenteeism for a period of at least 12 months:

a) Inform your HR Advisor or RTW/DM Manager.

b) After consultation with your HR Advisor and/or RTW/DM Manager, inform the employee that he/she is no longer being monitored/managed under the Absence Management Guidelines (a sample letter to inform the employee of this requirement change can be found in Appendix H).

c) Inform the employee of this fact and that his/her efforts are highly appreciated.

If you notice an increase in absenteeism please inform your HR Advisor or RTW/DM Manager. Reinstatement for medical note requirement for every sick leave (paid and/or unpaid) and reinstatement of the Absence Management Guidelines will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

**STEP 3: FOLLOW-UP WITH THE EMPLOYEE IF NO IMPROVEMENT IN HIS/HER ABSENTEEISM (INTERVIEW MEETING #3)**

_In attendance: Supervisor, HR Advisor, RTW/DM Coordinator and/or Manager, Employee and Union/Association representative_

*Before proceeding with this step please ensure that consultation has taken place with your HR Advisor and the RTW/DM Manager.*

*Because Interview Meetings have a progressive consequence,* the
If the required improvement in attendance does not occur after Interview Meeting #2, a follow-up interview will be necessary. Before proceeding with Interview Meeting #3, it is important to reference the previous meetings held with the employee within the scope of these guidelines, including any additional relevant information such as medical documentation, claim for casual illness forms (CUPE), etc.

Appendix F includes sample questions that may be used for the interview. You should consult with the HR Advisor when compiling a set of questions in preparation for this meeting.

After Interview Meeting #3, a letter is issued to the employee summarizing the interview and outcomes, with copies to the Union/Association, Human Resources, and the personnel file. At STEP 3 the employee is informed that if his/her attendance for non-culpable absences does not improve, his/her employment with the University may be in jeopardy. Appendix C offers a template of this absenteeism letter. The letter must also be tailored to the personal circumstances of the employee.

**NOTE: Because Interview Meetings have a progressive consequence, the participation of the Union and a Human Resources Advisor is required.**

**Disclosure of a Medical Condition that Requires Accommodation**

If the employee does disclose that he or she has a medical condition that has contributed to his/her absenteeism, then the employee may apply for an accommodation as per SFU’s Disability Accommodation in the Workplace Policy (GP40). The participation in the Attendance Management Guidelines will stop when the employee has successfully demonstrated that an accommodation is medically warranted.

If there is no significant and sustained improvement in the employee’s absenteeism within the next 3-6 months after the Interview #3, then proceed to STEP #4 – Interview #4 – Final Warning.

However, if there is a significant and sustained improvement in the employee’s absenteeism for a period of at least 6 months:

a) Inform your HR Advisor or RTW/DM Manager.

b) After consultation with your HR Advisor and/or RTW/DM Manager, inform the employee that he/she is no longer required to provide a medical note for every sick leave (paid and/or unpaid) (a sample letter to inform the employee of this requirement change
can be found in Appendix G). However you should be diligent in recording the employee’s nature of illness for aggregation purposes.

c) Inform the employee of this fact and that his/her efforts are highly appreciated.

d) Continue monitoring your employee’s absenteeism.

🌟 If there is a significant and sustained improvement in the employee’s absenteeism for a period of at least 12 months:

a) Inform your HR Advisor or RTW/DM Manager.

b) After consultation with your HR Advisor and/or RTW/DM Manager, inform the employee that he/she is no longer being monitored/managed under the Absence Management Guidelines (a sample letter to inform the employee of this requirement change can be found in Appendix H).

c) Inform the employee of this fact and that his/her efforts are highly appreciated.

If you notice an increase in absenteeism please inform your HR Advisor or RTW/DM Manager. Reinstatement for medical note requirement for every sick leave (paid and/or unpaid) and reinstatement of the Absence Management Guidelines will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

STEP 4: FOLLOW-UP WITH THE EMPLOYEE IF NO IMPROVEMENT IN HIS/HER ABSENTEEISM (INTERVIEW MEETING #4 - FINAL WARNING)

In attendance: Supervisor, HR Advisor, RTW/DM Coordinator and/or Manager, Employee and Union/Association representative

NOTE: Before proceeding with this step you must ensure that consultation has taken place with your HR Advisor and the RTW/DM Manager.

❗ It is important that the HR Advisor, RTW/DM Manager and LR Director are kept informed of this step and advances made throughout this process.

Where absence management does not result in an acceptable level of improvement in attendance, the University will assess the viability of continuing the employment relationship. The relevant questions are:

• The amount and the impact of the excessive absenteeism.
• Is there a reasonable likelihood that the employee will be able to achieve an acceptable level of attendance (i.e. the prognosis).
Typically at this stage, a final notice is warranted. The HR Advisor and the RTW/DM Manager (in consultation with the LR Director) will assist you, the supervisor, with the preparation of the interview and final notice where required. A sample letter, which serves as a final notice to the employee, is found in Appendix D. This letter must also be tailored to address the specific circumstances of the employee.

**Disclosure of a Medical Condition that Requires Accommodation**

If the employee does disclose that he or she has a medical condition that has contributed to his/her absenteeism, then the employee may apply for an accommodation as per SFU’s Disability Accommodation in the Workplace Policy (GP40). The participation in the Attendance Management Guidelines will stop when the employee has successfully demonstrated that an accommodation is medically warranted.

**NOTE:** Where the Absence Management Guidelines have been implemented and it is determined that there are abuses of the sick leave benefits, it may be appropriate to consider progressive discipline procedures. You must contact your Human Resources Advisor regarding potential employee discipline.

If after the final warning there is no significant and sustained improvement in the employee’s absenteeism within the next 3-6 months after the Interview Meeting #4, then continue to STEP 5 – Final Interview Meeting.

**However, if there is a significant and sustained improvement in the employee’s absenteeism for a period of at least 6 months:**

a) Inform your HR Advisor or RTW/DM Manager.

b) After consultation with your HR Advisor and/or RTW/DM Manager, inform the employee that he/she is no longer required to provide a medical note for every sick leave (paid and/or unpaid) (a sample letter to inform the employee of this requirement change can be found in Appendix G). However you should be diligent in recording the employee’s nature of illness for aggregation purposes.

c) Inform the employee of this fact and that his/her efforts are highly appreciated.

d) Continue monitoring your employee’s absenteeism.

**If there is a significant and sustained improvement in the employee’s absenteeism for a period of at least 12 months:**

a) Inform your HR Advisor or RTW/DM Manager.

b) After consultation with your HR Advisor and/or RTW/DM Manager, inform the employee that he/she is no longer being monitored/managed under the Absence Management Guidelines (a sample letter to inform the employee of this requirement change can be found in Appendix H).

c) Inform the employee of this fact and that his/her efforts are highly appreciated.
If you notice an increase in absenteeism please inform your HR Advisor or RTW/DM Manager. Reinstatement for medical note requirement for every sick leave (paid and/or unpaid) and reinstatement of the Absence Management Guidelines will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

**STEP 5: FOLLOW-UP WITH THE EMPLOYEE IF NO IMPROVEMENT IN HIS/HER ABSENTEEISM – FINAL INTERVIEW MEETING**

*In attendance: Supervisor, HR Advisor, RTW/DM Coordinator and/or Manager, Employee and Union/Association representative*

**NOTE: Before proceeding with this step you must ensure that consultation has taken place with your HR Advisor and the RTW/DM Manager.**

It is important that the HR Advisor and the RTW/DM Manager are kept informed of all steps and advances made throughout this process. Appendix F includes sample questions that may be used for the interview. You should consult with the HR Advisor when compiling a set of questions in preparation for this meeting.

If there is no considerable improvement after the final warning (STEP 4), you should conduct a final investigative meeting. The purpose of this meeting is to provide the employee with a last opportunity to explain as to why they were not able to improve his/her attendance,

The HR Advisor and the RTW/DM Manager (in consultation with the LR Director) will assist you with the preparation of the final interview. Based on the outcome of this Interview, the HR Advisor and the RTW/DM Manager will advise and assist you with the next steps on how to proceed.

**Disclosure of a Medical Condition that Requires Accommodation**

If the employee does disclose that he or she has a medical condition that has contributed to his/her absenteeism, then the employee may apply for an accommodation as per SFU’s Disability Accommodation in the Workplace Policy (GP40). The participation in the Attendance Management Guidelines will stop when the employee has successfully demonstrated that an accommodation is medically warranted.
STEP 6: TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT NOTICE

*In attendance: Supervisor, HR Advisor, Employee and Union/Association representative*

**NOTE: Before proceeding with this step you must ensure that consultation has taken place with his/her HR Advisor and the RTW/DM Manager.**

The HR Advisor and the RTW/DM Manager, in consultation with the Director of LR, will assist you with your decision to determine if terminating the employment relationship is warranted. The reason for the employee’s termination will be for non-culpable absenteeism.

Immediately after the Final Interview Meeting (STEP 5), and in consultation with the LR Director, both the supervisor and the HR Advisor must assess all relevant factors and make a determination if the continuing absences have resulted in termination of the employment relationship.

The HR Advisor and the Director of LR will assist you with your decision and the action required to end the employment relationship.

If a decision is reached to terminate the employee, you are to present the notice of termination in a brief meeting with the employee stating the facts that lead to the termination. The employee is entitled to Union/Association representation and should be also encouraged to be represented at this meeting.

A sample letter, listing the relevant considerations for termination is found in Appendix D. This letter must also be tailored to the specific circumstances of the employee.

**CONCLUSION**

It is important to note that most attendance issues are resolved early in the process. While the steps described in the latter part of this section are occasionally necessary, in the majority of cases, the situation will be resolved before it is necessary to escalate the matter. Through implementation of positive actions suggested earlier in this guideline, such as counseling the employee and ensuring that the employee is aware of the resources available to assist with his/her individual situation, you, in your role as supervisor, will encourage and support the employee in achieving and maintaining good attendance.

For information about the Absence Management Guidelines you may contact the Manager, Return to Work/Disability Management, Harro Lauprecht, at local 2-6698 or via e-mail to harro_lauprecht@sfu.ca.

APPENDIX A – SAMPLE

FIRST INTERVIEW FOLLOW-UP E-MAIL - DRAFT

Subject: Casual Sick Leave Absences – [Year 1] [include additional years if applicable]

Dear [Employee’s name],

In follow-up to our meeting on [Date], we discussed my concern pertaining to your absenteeism records in [Year 1] and [Year 2] [include additional years if applicable].

As outlined in our meeting, your total casual illness hours in [Year 1] was XX.xx hours which was more than twice the university average of XX.xx hours for that year.

Your total casual illness hours for [Year 2] were XX.xx hours which was almost twice the University average of XX.xx hours for that year.

I asked you if there were any areas of concern and you responded that there were none. (customize based on employee response)

During our discussion, you made a commitment to significantly improve your absenteeism and acknowledged that you understood the impact of your absenteeism on the work of other staff in our department.

[NOTE: If an employee claims that there is NO chronic medical condition that is contributing to their ability to attend on a regular and consistent basis, the supervisor should then include the following sentence:]

During the meeting you indicated that you do not suffer from a chronic medical condition. As discussed, I will be monitoring your attendance record over the next period of time and will be expecting an immediate and sustained improvement in your attendance. If there is no improvement in your attendance, we will meet again to discuss next steps including the requirement to provide medical information every time you are unable to attend due to illness or injury.

[NOTE: If an employee claims that an ongoing or chronic medical condition IS in fact contributing to their ability to attend on a regular and consistent basis, the supervisor should consult with the RTW/DMO, and include the following sentence:]

During the meeting you disclosed that you have a chronic medical condition and therefore, your file will be brought to the attention of the Return to Work/Disability Management Office for further action with respect to your ongoing medical condition.

If you have any questions or concerns, please let me know.

Regards,
APPENDIX B - SAMPLE

SECOND INTERVIEW FOLLOW-UP LETTER - DRAFT

[Name] [Title]
[Department]

Dear [Employee's name],

Re: Second Meeting to Discuss Absenteeism

This letter confirms a second meeting held with you on [Date], to discuss your attendance record from [Date] to [Date]. Present at this interview were [Name, Title, (for each individual)]… We last met to discuss your attendance on [Date] with a follow up e-mail to you dated [Date].

A review of your attendance record reveals the following absences since our last meeting due to non-related known chronic illness or injury or disability. Specifically:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATES ABSENT SINCE YOUR LAST INTERVIEW</th>
<th>UNPAID SICK LEAVE (Hrs.)</th>
<th>PAID SICK LEAVE (Hrs.)</th>
<th>TOTAL SICK LEAVE (Hrs.)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[Date]</td>
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<td>[Date]</td>
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</table>

Total Hours

Based on the information above, you have accumulated a total of XX.x paid sick leave hours (and XX.x unpaid sick leave hours) for non-related known chronic illness or injury (disability) since our last meeting. The University average for total sick leave in [Year] was X.x hours. Over the past X months since our last meeting, your total sick leave hours for non-related known chronic illness or injury have once again exceeded the University average by approximately X.x times. This absenteeism is of concern to the University as it is detrimental to the operations of the department and is having adverse effect on your co-workers.
A review of your attendance record to-date reveals the following absenteeism due to paid and unpaid non-related known chronic illness or injury (disability) as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>UNPAID SICK LEAVE</th>
<th>PAID SICK LEAVE (Hrs.)</th>
<th>TOTAL SICK LEAVE (Hrs.)</th>
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<td>...</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Hours</td>
<td>XX.x (XX.x Days)</td>
<td>XX.x (XX.x Days)</td>
<td>XX.x (XX.x Days)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the first interview, you [acknowledged] that there was a problem with your attendance. When asked if there were any reasons for this absenteeism, you stated “[Quote]”. When asked to give a commitment to improve your attendance, you stated “[Quote]”.

Unfortunately, since our last meeting and e-mail correspondence, your attendance has not improved to an acceptable level. Therefore, a significant and sustained improvement in your attendance record is required.

As per my e-mail dated [Date], you are hereby placed on notice, that you are required to provide a medical note satisfactory to the University for every absence due to illness or injury in accordance to [CUPE’s Collective Agreement Article 35.03; OR APSA Policy AD 10.08.8.04; OR APEX Policy AD 09.09.8.04]

Satisfactory medical information does contain but is not limited to:

- What was the employee’s first day of absence due to the current illness or injury?
- Has treatment of therapy been prescribed?
- Is the employee adherent to treatment and/or therapy?
- Is the employee able to perform full or modified duties and/or hours?
- What are the current functional limitations and restrictions?
- What is the nature of the illness or injury?
- What is the prognosis for return to work to part time or full time duties and/or hours?

You have the option to provide the above information through a Physician’s Note or SFU Attending Physician’s Statement. Please note that employees are responsible for all charges for completion of medical notes or certificates.

I remain optimistic that your attendance will improve. During the meeting, you committed
to/ did not commit to... We are committed to supporting the health and wellness of our employees, and encourage you to ask for support when facing health related issues. During the meeting, we committed to.... Since these events may be complex for both you and the department, we take this opportunity to refer you to the Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP), which may be reached at (604) 689-1717 or 1-800-663-1142, as an additional resource.

It is your obligation to take all necessary steps to attend work on a regular and consistent basis.

Sincerely,

[Supervisor’s name and title]

Cc: Employee File  
[HR Advisor’s Name], Human Resources Advisor  
Harro Lauprecht, Manager, Return to Work/Disability Management  
[Union’s/Association’s Office]
APPENDIX C - SAMPLE

THIRD INTERVIEW FOLLOW-UP LETTER - DRAFT

[Name] [Title]
[Department]

Dear [Employee's name],

Re: Third Meeting to Discuss Absenteeism

This letter confirms a third meeting held with you on [Date], to discuss your attendance record from [Date] to [Date]. Present at this interview were [Name, Title, (for each individual including HR Advisor and Employee Representative)]… We last met to discuss your attendance on [Date] with a follow up letter to you dated [Date].

A review of your attendance record reveals the following absences since our last meeting due to non-related known chronic illness or injury (disability). Specifically:

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<tr>
<th>DATES ABSENT SINCE YOUR LAST INTERVIEW</th>
<th>UNPAID SICK LEAVE (Hrs.)</th>
<th>PAID SICK LEAVE (Hrs.)</th>
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<td>[Date]</td>
<td>XX.x (XX.x Days)</td>
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</table>

Based on the information above, you have accumulated a total of XX.x paid sick leave hours (and XX.x unpaid sick leave hours) for non-related known chronic illness or injury (disability) since our last meeting. The University average for total sick leave in [Year] was X.x hours. Over the past X months since our last meeting, your total sick leave hours for non-related known chronic illness or injury have once again exceeded the University average by approximately X.x
times. This absenteeism is of concern to the University as it is detrimental to the operations of the department and is having adverse effect on your co-workers.

A review of your attendance record to-date reveals the following absenteeism due to paid and unpaid non-related known chronic illness or injury (disability) as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>UNPAID SICK LEAVE (Hrs.)</th>
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</table>

In the second interview, you [acknowledged] that there was a problem with your attendance. When asked if there were any reasons for this absenteeism, you stated “[Quote]”. When asked to give a commitment to improve your attendance, you stated “[Quote]”.

Unfortunately, since our last meeting and written correspondence, your attendance has not improved to an acceptable level. Therefore, the requirement to provide a medical note satisfactory to the University for every absence due to illness or injury still stands and a significant and sustained improvement in your attendance record is required.

Unless there is a significant and sustained improvement in your attendance, your employment at the University may be in jeopardy due to non-culpable absenteeism.

I remain optimistic that your attendance will improve. During the meeting, you committed to/ did not commit to... We are committed to supporting the health and wellness of our employees, and encourage you to ask for support when facing health related issues. During the meeting, we committed to.... Since these events may be complex for both you and the department, we take this opportunity to refer you to the Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP), which may be reached at (604) 689-1717 or 1-800-663-1142, as an additional resource.

It is your obligation to take all necessary steps to attend work on a regular and consistent basis.

Sincerely,
[Supervisor’s name and title]

Cc: Employee File
[HR Advisor’s Name], Human Resources Advisor
Harro Lauprecht, Manager, Return to Work/Disability Management
[Union’s/Association’s Office]
APPENDIX D - SAMPLE

FOURTH INTERVIEW FOLLOW-UP LETTER - FINAL WARNING - DRAFT

Personal and Confidential – Hand Delivered

[Name] [Title]
[Department] [Date]

Dear [Employee’s name],

Re: Fourth Meeting to Discuss Absenteeism – Final Warning

This letter confirms a fourth meeting held with you on [Date], to discuss your attendance record from [Date] to [Date]. Present at this interview were [Name, Title, (for each individual including HR Advisor and Employee Representative)]… We last met to discuss your attendance on [Date] with a follow up letter to you dated [Date].

A review of your attendance record reveals the following absences since your last interview, due to non-related known chronic sick leave (disability) absences. Specifically:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATES ABSENT SINCE YOUR LAST INTERVIEW</th>
<th>UNPAID SICK LEAVE (Hrs.)</th>
<th>PAID SICK LEAVE (Hrs.)</th>
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<td>XX.x (XX.x Days)</td>
<td>XX.x (XX.x Days)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the information above, you have accumulated a total of XX.x paid sick leave hours (and XX.x unpaid sick leave hours) for non-related known chronic illness or injury (disability) since our last meeting. The University average for total sick leave in [Year] was X.x hours. Over the past X months since our last meeting, your total sick leave hours for non-related known
chronic illness or injury have once again exceeded the University average by approximately X.x times. This absenteeism is of concern to the University as it is detrimental to the operations of the department and is having adverse effect on your co-workers.

A review of your attendance record to-date reveals the following absenteeism due to paid and unpaid non-related known chronic illness or injury (disability) as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>UNPAID SICK LEAVE (Hrs.)</th>
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<td>XX.x (XX.x Days)</td>
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<td>XX.x (XX.x Days)</td>
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</table>

Unfortunately, since our last meeting and written correspondence, your attendance has not improved to an acceptable level. You have now had four meetings and received one e-mail and three letters with respect to the need to improve your attendance. However, your attendance continues to fall below an acceptable standard despite the fact that you have been advised repeatedly about your poor attendance.

Please note that this letter serves as a final warning of the need for you to improve your attendance. The matter is now at a critical stage, and unless there is a significant and sustained improvement in your attendance, your employment at the University will be terminated due to non-culpable absenteeism.

As you may be dealing with various factors that contribute to your failure to significantly improve and sustain your attendance, we take this opportunity to refer you to the Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP), which may be reached at (604) 689.1717 or 1-800-663-1142, as an additional resource.

Sincerely,
[Supervisor’s name and title]

Cc: Employee File
    [HR Advisor’s Name], Human Resources Advisor
    Harro Lauprecht, Manager, Return to Work/Disability Management
    [Union’s/Association’s Office]
APPENDIX E - SAMPLE

TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT NOTICE – DRAFT

[Name] [Title]
[Department]

[Date]

Dear [Employee's name],

Re: Termination of Employment Notice

The Termination of Employment Letter may include some or all of the following relevant points:

- Last meeting date and follow-up letter date
- Attendance has not improved to an acceptable level.
- Attendance continues to fall below an acceptable standard
- You have been advised repeatedly about your poor attendance.
- Your employment with this University is now considered frustrated
- You are being terminated from your current position [Position Title] and [Position Number] effective immediately.

Cc: Employee File
[HR Advisor’s Name], Human Resources Advisor
Harro Lauprecht, Manager, Return to Work/Disability Management
[Union's/Association’s Office]
1) I have called this meeting to review your attendance record since our last attendance meeting on [DATE]. I’ve continued to monitor your attendance and have serious concerns about your absences since we’ve last met. Here is a copy of your attendance record since our last attendance meeting. Do you agree with this attendance record?

2) Do you acknowledge that there is a problem with your attendance?

3) This level of absenteeism is unacceptable and creates a hardship for both your co-workers and the department. As an employee, you have an obligation to attend work on a regular and consistent basis. Do you have any reasons for this absenteeism?

4) Let me ask you more specifically, do you have any medical issues, substance abuse issues, or any family issues that keep you from coming to work on a regular and consistent basis?

5) If you have any problems in the areas just mentioned, you have a responsibility to seek assistance. Do you understand this?

Some helpful resources:
   a. Your Attending Physician or Community Walk in Clinic
   b. Employee and Family Assistance Program
   c. Adult Community Support Services Through Coastal and Fraser Health
   d. Local Mental Health Unit for Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services
   e. Your local hospital

6) Improving your attendance at work is expected. What are you going to do to commit to improving your attendance?

7) USE THIS QUESTION AT STEP 3 ONWARDS: Your attendance will continue to be monitored and we expect to see an immediate improvement. If your attendance does not significantly improve, and you fail to attend work on a regular and consistent basis, your employment with the university may be terminated. Do you understand?

8) Is there anything you would like to add?
APPENDIX G - SAMPLE

ENDING REQUIREMENT FOR MEDICAL DOCUMENTATION FOR EVERY SICK LEAVE—DRAFT

[Name] [Title]
[Department]
[Date]

Dear [Employee's name],

Re: Ending Requirement for Medical Documentation for Every Sick Leave

Further to our discussion on [DATE], it is my pleasure to inform you that there has been significant and sustained improvement in your attendance since [DATE]. From this date you have only accumulated X.x hours of paid [and/or X hours of unpaid] sick leave.

[If the employee has not exhausted his/her eligible paid sick leave for one particular nature of illness:]

As a result, this is to inform you that the requirement to provide medical documentation for every paid [and/or unpaid] sick leave has been lifted.

[If the employee has exhausted his/her eligible paid sick leave for one particular nature of illness:]

However, since you have exhausted your eligible paid sick leave for one particular nature of illness, the requirement to provide a medical note for every paid sick leave will remain in place for sick leave aggregation purposes.

I will continue to monitor your attendance record and will be expecting this sustained improvement in your attendance to continue. If your attendance was to deteriorate again, we will meet to discuss next steps.

If you have any questions or concerns, please let me know.

Sincerely,

[Supervisor's name and title]

Cc: Employee File
[HR Advisor’s Name], Human Resources Advisor
Harro Lauprecht, Manager, Return to Work/Disability Management
[Union’s/Association’s Office]
APPENDIX H - SAMPLE

ENDING PARTICIPATION IN THE ATTENDANCE MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES – DRAFT

[Name] [Title]
[Department]

Dear [Employee’s name],

Re: Ending Participation in the Attendance Management Guidelines

Further to our discussion on [DATE], it is my pleasure to inform you that your attendance has improved to a significant and sustained level since [DATE]. From this date you have only accumulated X hours of paid [and/or X hours of unpaid] sick leave.

As a result, this is to inform you that your participation in the Attendance Management Guidelines has been suspended.

I will continue to monitor your attendance record and will be expecting this sustained improvement in your attendance to continue. If your attendance were to deteriorate again, we will meet to discuss next steps.

If you have any questions or concerns, please let me know.

Sincerely,

[Supervisor’s name and title]

Cc:   Employee File
[HR Advisor’s Name], Human Resources Advisor
Harro Lauprecht, Manager, Return to Work/Disability Management
[Union’s/Association’s Office]
APPENDIX I

QUESTIONS A SUPERVISOR CAN ASK AN EMPLOYEE WHILE ON SICK LEAVE

The most important relationship in a successful work environment is that between the supervisor and his or her employee. Research has shown that regular contact between supervisors and employees is a key component of helping employees recover more quickly from illness or injury.

When talking to an employee about staying at work or returning to work, the supervisor must not ask the employee for their diagnosis or the details of his or her treatments or medical tests.

A supervisor is, however, entitled to know the following information:

a. Whether the employee’s medical condition affects his or her ability to attend and perform the duties of his or her job.
b. The prognosis for recovery to the point he or she can attend regularly and perform the full duties of his or her job.
c. Whether the employee is capable of doing modified or alternate duties.

Supervisors and/or managers may choose to include the following questions in their oral or written conversations with injured and/or ill employees while they are on sick leave:

1. How are you feeling?
2. Is there anything we can do for you?
3. Have you seen your physician yet?
4. What did the physician say about your ability to work?
5. Did the physician give you a return to work date?
6. What are you able to do?
7. Do you know that we have modified duties that may help? For example: ______ [insert modified duties here]
8. When is your next physician's appointment?
9. Can you review the modified duties available with your physician and see if the physician thinks they would be helpful in your recovery? I will send them in writing. Do you have an email address I can send them to? Or can I can fax them to you at your physician's office or mail them to you?
10. Please call me if your medical status changes

Both parties should document the date and time of telephone conversations and/or emails.
### Appendix J

**Absence Management Guidelines Checklist**

Employee Name:  
Supervisor:  
RTW/DM Manager/Coordinator:  
HR Advisor:  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Absenteeism Problems</th>
<th>Does the employee fit the following criteria?</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The AMGs may be initiated either by you, the Supervisor, or the Return to Work / Disability Management Office (RTW/DMO).</td>
<td>The Employee is off sick more than 2x SFU’s casual sick leave average for two or more consecutive years.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>STEP #1: Initial Attendance Management Meeting (Interview Meeting #1)</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In attendance: Supervisor and Employee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yes</strong></td>
<td><strong>No</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you have accurate and up-to-date sick leave information?</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you consulted on the AMG process with your Human Resources (HR) Advisor and/or RTW/DMO?</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you met with the Employee? (STEP 1 – Interview Meeting #1)</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did you send an e-mail to the Employee summarizing the conversation during STEP 1 - Interview Meeting #1?</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did you place the Employee on notice that if attendance problems continue that the employee will be required to provide a medical note/APS every time they are off on</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
sick leave?  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A) Did the Employee’s sick leave record significantly improve within the next 3 months?</th>
<th>☐</th>
<th>☐</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YES - If a significant improvement was attained during the next 3 months, monitoring under the AMG will continue – go to section B) below.</td>
<td>Attendance monitoring will continue regularly and at a minimum of every 3 months by the RTW/DM office.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO - If no significant improvement was noticed within the next 3 months after the meeting proceed to STEP # 2 – Interview Meeting # 2</td>
<td>The Supervisor is ultimately responsible for the ongoing monitoring and management of their employee’s absenteeism.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B) Did the Employee’s sick leave record improvement continue for the next 6 months?</th>
<th>☐</th>
<th>☐</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YES - If a significant improvement was attained during the next 6 months, monitoring under the AMG will continue – go to section B) below.</td>
<td>Attendance monitoring will continue regularly and at a minimum of every 3 months by the RTW/DMO.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO - If no significant improvement was noticed within the next 6 months after the meeting proceed to STEP # 2 – Interview Meeting # 2</td>
<td>The Supervisor is ultimately responsible for the ongoing monitoring and management of their employee’s absenteeism.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C) Did the Employee’s sick leave record continue for the next 12 months?</th>
<th>☐</th>
<th>☐</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YES - If a significant improvement continued during the next 12 months, the requirement to continue managing the employee’s absences under the AMG may be lifted</td>
<td>Attendance monitoring will continue regularly and at a minimum of every 3 months by the RTW/DM office.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO - If no significant improvement was noticed within the next 12 months after the meeting proceed to STEP # 2 – Interview Meeting # 2</td>
<td>The Supervisor is ultimately responsible for the ongoing monitoring and management of their employee’s absenteeism.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**STEP 2: Follow-up with the Employee if no improvement in his/her absenteeism (Interview Meeting # 2)**  
In attendance: Supervisor, RTW/DM Coordinator or Manager and Employee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Did you consult with RTW/DM Manager before moving on to STEP 2?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you have accurate and up-to-date sick leave information?</td>
<td>This information will be compiled and be made available by the RTW/DM Coordinator</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you, in consultation with the HRA, prepared the Interview Questions for Interview Meeting # 2?</td>
<td>Before the meeting the Supervisor will prepare a series of questions. The questions must be based on the information provided in the previous AMG interview meeting.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you, the HR Advisor and the RTW/DM Manager met with the employee? (STEP 2 – Meeting #2)</td>
<td>The Supervisor sets up the meeting and meets with the employee to discuss the Employee’s sick leave records review the e-mail from Meeting # 1 and explore ways that their absenteeism can be improved.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did you inform the Employee that the requirement to provide a medical note/APS every time they are off on sick leave is now in place?</td>
<td>This requirement will stand as long as absenteeism does not improve within the next six months.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you sent the Interview # 2 letter to the employee summarizing the conversation during STEP 2 - Interview Meeting #2?</td>
<td>After the meeting, the Supervisor in consultation with the RTW/DM Manager will draft the Interview Follow-up Letter. It should accurately and objectively reflect the answers provided by the employee during the interview meeting including an action plan to reduce absenteeism. The RTW/DM Manager can provide a sample of the letter to the Supervisor. The HR Advisor and Director of LR should be consulted for input/review.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D) Did the Employee’s sick leave record significantly improve within the next 3 months?</td>
<td>Attendance monitoring will be done regularly and at a minimum of every 3 months by the RTW/DM office. The Supervisor is ultimately responsible for the ongoing monitoring and management of their employee’s absenteeism.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E) Did the Employee’s sick leave record significantly improve within the next 6 months?</td>
<td>Attendance monitoring will be done regularly and at a minimum of every 3 months by the RTW/DM office. The Supervisor is ultimately responsible for the ongoing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
for every sick leave (paid and/or unpaid) may be lifted – go to section F) below.

NO - If no significant improvement was noticed within the next 6 months after the meeting please proceed with STEP 3 – Interview Meeting #3

F) Did the Employee’s sick leave record significantly improve within the next 12 months?

YES - If a significant improvement continued during the next 12 months, the requirement to continue managing the employee’s absences under the AMG may be lifted

NO - If no significant improvement was noticed within the next 12 months after the meeting please proceed with STEP # 3 – Interview # 3 – Final Warning

STEP 3: Follow-up with the Employee if no improvement in his/her absenteeism

(Interview Meeting # 3)

In attendance: Supervisor, HRA, RTW/DM Coordinator or Manager, Employee and Union/Association representative.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Did you consult with RTW/DM Manager before moving on to STEP 3 – Interview Meeting #3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Do you have accurate and up-to-date sick leave information?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Have you, in consultation with the HRA, prepared the Interview Questions for Interview Meeting #3?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Have you offered the employee to bring Union/Association Representation to the Interview?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Have you, the HR Advisor and the RTWDM Coordinator or Manager met with the employee? (Interview Meeting # 3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did you inform the Employee that the requirement to provide a medical note/APS every time they are off on sick leave still stands?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did the HR Advisor inform the employee that their job may be in jeopardy if the non-culpable absenteeism is persistent?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you sent the Interview Meeting #3 letter to the employee summarizing the conversation during STEP 3 - Interview Meeting # 3?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G) Did the Employee’s sick leave record significantly improve within the next 3 months?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YES - If a significant improvement was attained during the next 3 months, monitoring under the AMG will continue – go to section H) below.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO - If no significant improvement was noticed within the next 3 months after the interview please proceed to STEP 4– Interview Meeting # 4 – Final Warning</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H) Did the Employee’s sick leave record improvement continue for the next 6 months?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YES - If a significant improvement was sustained during the next 6 months, the requirement to provide a medical note for every sick leave (paid and/or unpaid) may be lifted – go to section I) below.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO - If no significant improvement was noticed within the next 6 months after the interview please proceed to STEP # 4 – Interview # 4 – Final Warning Preceding Termination</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I) Did the Employee’s sick leave record improvement continue for the next 12 months?</td>
<td>☐</td>
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</table>
months?

YES - If a significant improvement was sustained during the next 12 months, the requirement to continue managing the employee’s absences under the AMG may be lifted

NO - If no significant improvement was noticed within the next 12 months after the interview please proceed to STEP 4 – Interview Meeting # 4

every 3 months by the RTW/DM office.

*The Supervisor is ultimately responsible for the ongoing monitoring and management of their employee’s absenteeism.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Yes</strong></th>
<th><strong>No</strong></th>
<th><strong>Comments</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Did you consult with RTW/DM Manager before moving on to STEP 4 – Interview Meeting #4?</td>
<td></td>
<td>RTW/DM Manager, the HR Advisor and Labour Relations Director must be in agreement before the Supervisor proceeds with STEP 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you have accurate and up-to-date sick leave information?</td>
<td></td>
<td>This information will be compiled and be made available by the RTW/DM Coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you, in consultation with the HRA, prepared the Interview Questions for Interview Meeting #4?</td>
<td></td>
<td>Before the meeting the Supervisor will prepare a series of questions. The questions must be based on the information provided in the previous AMG interview meeting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you offered the employee to bring Union/Association Representation to the interview meeting?</td>
<td></td>
<td>Union/Association Representation should be offered to the employee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you, the HR Advisor and the RTWDM Coordinator or Manager met with the employee? (Interview Meeting #4)</td>
<td></td>
<td>The Supervisor sets up the meeting and meets with the Employee to discuss the Employee’s sick leave records review the e-mail from Meeting #1 and the letter from Meeting #2 and Meeting #3 to explore ways that their absenteeism can be improved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did you inform the Employee that the requirement to provide a medical note/APS every time they are off on sick leave still stands?</td>
<td></td>
<td>This requirement will stand as long as absenteeism does not improve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did the HR Advisor inform the employee that their job is in jeopardy if the non-culpable absenteeism is persistent?</td>
<td></td>
<td>The HR Advisor should explain to the Employee the definition of non-culpable absenteeism and frustration of employment contract</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you sent the Interview Meeting #4 letter to the employee summarizing the conversation during STEP 4 - Interview Meeting # 4?</td>
<td>After the meeting, the Supervisor in consultation with the RTW/DM Manager will draft the Interview Follow-up Letter. It should accurately reflect the answers provided by the employee during the interview meeting including an action plan to reduce absenteeism. The RTW/DM Manager can provide a sample of the letter to the Supervisor. The HR Advisor and Director of LR should be consulted for input/review.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H) Did the Employee’s sick leave record significantly improve within the next 3 months?</td>
<td>Attendance monitoring will be done regularly and at a minimum of every 3 months by the RTW/DM office. The Supervisor is ultimately responsible for the ongoing monitoring and management of their employee’s absenteeism.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I) Did the Employee’s sick leave record improvement continue for the next 6 months?</td>
<td>Attendance monitoring will be done regularly and at a minimum of every 3 months by the RTW/DM office. The Supervisor is ultimately responsible for the ongoing monitoring and management of their employee’s absenteeism.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J) Did the Employee’s sick leave record improvement continue for the next 12 months?</td>
<td>Attendance monitoring will be done regularly and at a minimum of every 3 months by the RTW/DM office. The Supervisor is ultimately responsible for the ongoing monitoring and management of their employee’s absenteeism.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
noticed within the next 12 months after the interview please proceed to STEP 5 – Interview Meeting # 5 – Final Interview Meeting

**STEP # 5: Follow-up with the Employee if no improvement in his/her absenteeism – Final Interview Meeting**
In attendance: Supervisor, HRA, RTW/DM Coordinator or Manager, Employee and Union/Association representative.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>RTW/DM Manager, the HR Advisor and the Director of LR must be in agreement before the Supervisor proceeds with STEP 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>This information will be compiled and be made available by the RTW/DM Coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Before the meeting the Supervisor will prepare a series of questions. The questions must be based on the information provided in the previous AMG interview meetings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Union/Association Representation should be offered to the employee especially if the HR Advisor has been requested to attend the meeting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The Supervisor sets up the meeting and meets with the Employee to discuss the Employee’s sick leave records review the e-mail from Meeting # 1 and the letters from Meeting # 2, # 3 and # 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>As soon as possible after Step # 5 meeting, you, in consultation with the HR Advisor and the Director of LR, will determine if the conditions for frustration of employment contract have been met.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**YES – The Supervisor, in consultation with the HR Advisor, will draft the Termination of Employment for Non Culpable Absenteeism letter and present this letter at STEP #6 Termination of Employment Notice Meeting.**

**NO – The continuation of the AMG will be reviewed.**
| **STEP 6: Termination of employment notice**  
In attendance: Supervisor, HR Advisor, Employee, Union/Association representative | Yes | No | Comments |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have you offered the employee to bring Union/Association Representation to the meeting?</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>Union/Association Representative must be present.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you, the HR Advisor met with the employee? (Termination)</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>During the Termination Meeting, you will explain to the employee the reasons for the termination and present the termination letter and package to the employee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you filled out the separation notice form?</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>The Supervisor must fill out a separation notice form and forward it to HR as soon as possible</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>