

Subject: **Attendance Control**

Applies to: All Staff

I. Policy: The University expects employees to be at work as scheduled and to avoid unscheduled absences whenever possible. In an effort to provide advice to supervisors regarding absenteeism and to balance the staff member's paid leave protection against the University's right to a reasonable standard of attendance, the following guidelines are provided.

II. Guidelines:

A. Supervisor's Responsibility:

1. Climate: Establish a favorable climate for good attendance. The key to the development of a favorable climate is in staff members' understanding of why good attendance is important, that is, the ways in which absenteeism interferes with workflow and unfairly imposes on others. Generally, the supervisor who successfully conveys to each staff member that his/her work is important and appreciated contributes to motivating good attendance.
2. Records: Establish a system for recording attendance to maintain awareness of attendance patterns. A simple chart, available from Human Resources, can be used to record attendance/absences for each employee. The data should be maintained consistently and accurately. This will enable the supervisor to work with the staff member as soon as problematic attendance is identified. NOTE: The attendance chart should be shared only with the employee whose attendance is problematic.
3. Standards: Because the needs of each unit may vary, there is no set formula for establishing standards of attendance. The total number of days absent is not as significant as the frequency of incidents. However, unscheduled absences averaging one shift per month should be considered excessive, except when the average is increased by a lengthy absence associated with a verified extended disability.
4. Communications: Standards for attendance and the system for recording attendance should be defined and communicated on a continuing basis to all staff members in the department. When frequency of unscheduled absences becomes problematic, the issue should be addressed promptly with the employee, and appropriate action taken. (See Policy #154 -- Corrective Discipline, Policy #357 -- Leaves of Absence, and Policy #358 Family Medical Leave <FMLA>). Follow-ups should be built into the system to show serious intent. In interviewing job applicants, the supervisor should stress University interest in, and the importance of, good attendance.

5. Health Problems: If a staff members' general health is causing frequent or regular absences, employees should be directed to work closely with their physician to try to correct their absenteeism. If an employee has physical limitations, these must be in writing from a physician. The existence of an illness or injury may support continued use of sick leave, a leave under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), a leave without pay to provide time for rehabilitation if sick leave benefits are exhausted, or eligibility for long-term disability. However if employees continue to be unavailable for work due to frequent and/or extended absences which are not eligible for Family Medical Leave, their employment may be terminated.

Supervisors should call the Office of Human Resources at the Medical Center or at the River Campus for guidance.

See also Policies:

#154	Corrective Discipline
#339	Sick Leave Plan for Short-Term Disability
#357	Leave of Absence
#358	Family Medical Leave