

BOARD ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE	
<small>ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE</small> Employee Attendance Support Program	<small>ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE NUMBER</small> 504
<small>Directional Policy</small> Employee Relations - 500	

TITLE OF ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE:

Employee Attendance Support Program

DATE APPROVED: May 28, 2018

PROJECTED REVIEW DATE: 2023

DIRECTIONAL POLICY ALIGNMENT:

This Administrative Procedure aligns with the purpose of the [Employee Relations Directional Policy - 500](#) by ensuring there is a shared understanding of the Board’s expectations as it relates to regular attendance at work.

ALIGNMENT WITH MULTI-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN:

The Employee Attendance Support Program Administrative Procedure supports our Vision of achieving Excellence in Catholic Education by ensuring our structures, processes, relationships, and actions reflect our Gospel values and Catholic Social Teachings. This Administrative Procedure will ensure supports are in place for all Employees so that they can attend work on a regular basis.



Strategic Priorities 2017-2020

Vision

Achieving Excellence in Catholic Education
LEARN • LEAD • SERVE

Mission

To educate students in faith-filled, safe, inclusive Catholic learning communities by nurturing the mind, body and spirit of all.

LEARN

Achieve excellence in instruction and assessment to enable all students to become reflective, self-directed, lifelong learners.

LEAD

Foster critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication, to enable all students to realize their God-given potential.

SERVE

Inspire engagement and commitment to stewardship for creation to enable all students to become caring and responsible citizens.

ACTION REQUIRED:

1.0 Background

The Board recognizes the contributions of all Employees and their importance in realizing the Board’s Vision of Achieving Excellence in Catholic Education. All Employees will be treated with fairness, consistency, respect and compassion.

The Employee Attendance Support Program (EASP) is aimed at positively supporting Employees in achieving regular attendance. Regular attendance is a condition of employment and the EASP supports that goal. The types of supports that can be offered include but are not limited to the Employee & Family Assistance Program, workplace accommodations, and support within the workplace.

The focus of the EASP is on non-culpable absences. Non-Culpable absenteeism relates to absences as a result of illness or injury that arise due to circumstances beyond the Employee’s control. These absences are not dealt with through a progressive discipline model; instead the Employee is supported through the EASP.

The EASP is a non-disciplinary process with the goal being to assist Employees in maintaining regular attendance. Employees who exceed the Board’s established absence threshold will advance through the EASP. When an Employee advances through to the final step of the EASP, the Board will make a determination as to whether the Employee is likely to maintain regular attendance in the future. If the Board determines that the Employee is not likely to maintain regular attendance in the future, the Board may conclude that the employment relationship has been frustrated and end the relationship.

Should a disability be identified that requires support or accommodation at any time during the process, the Board will support the Employee by following [AP 507 – Disability Management](#) and/or [AP 503 – Workplace Accommodation](#).

Culpable Absenteeism relates to those absences for which Employees can be held accountable. Failure to attend work without notifying the Employer, lateness for work or leaving early and abuse of leave are examples of culpable absences. Employees with culpable absences are subject to progressive discipline, in accordance with their respective Collective Agreements or Terms and Conditions. These absences are not dealt with through the EASP.

The Board will apply the EASP in a manner consistent with the *Human Rights Code*, the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act* and other applicable legislation in place to accommodate the individual needs of Employees and assist them in the performance of their duties.

2.0 Employee Attendance Support Program - Process

The following steps outline the process by which the Board will engage in non-disciplinary discussion with those Employees whose non-culpable absenteeism (including medical appointments) usage is above the predetermined threshold, which is twenty (20) days with fifteen (15) occurrences.

At each of the four levels of the Employee Attendance Support Program the Board shall assess whether any of the absences in question were related to:

- a disability;
- a requirement for accommodation under the *Human Rights Code*; or
- extenuating circumstances (i.e. single event or a one-time sickness) which would indicate that it would not be appropriate for the Employee to enter into the EASP.

Absences where the Employee is on:

- an *Employment Standards Act* leave,
- a leave of absence related to a workplace injury covered by the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act*, or
- a Long Term Disability leave of absence shall not be taken into account in determining the absence threshold.

2.1 Entry into the EASP

- 2.1.1 An Employee may enter the EASP when his/her absences are over the threshold (or prorated threshold) in a rolling twelve (12) month period.
- 2.1.2 The threshold is twenty (20) days with fifteen (15) occurrences. For example, an Employee who is absent for twenty consecutive days, would only have one occurrence, and as such would not meet the threshold. An Employee absent for twenty non-consecutive days would meet the threshold as they have 20 occurrences. The threshold is reviewed annually and may be modified at any time. The Board will advise all Employees of the revised threshold.
- 2.1.3 The Board will review Employee non-culpable absenteeism usage for the purpose of entry into, progression to the next level, or exit out of the EASP three times each year (every four (4) months).
- 2.1.4 An Employee who enters the program will remain in the program until such time that his/her attendance comes under the threshold and stays there for two (2) consecutive review periods. Should an Employee be under the threshold for two (2) consecutive review periods, they will exit the EASP.

2.2 Notification of Entry into the EASP

- 2.2.1 An Employee who enters the EASP will be notified by letter during one of the review periods outlined in 2.1.3. The Employee's direct supervisor and union representative, if applicable, will be copied on this letter.
- 2.2.2 The letter will outline the requirement to attend a meeting during the next review period outlined in 2.1.3.

2.3 Preliminary Meeting

- 2.3.1 In the review period following entry into the EASP, the Employee will meet with his/her supervisor, union representative (if applicable), and Human Resource Services.
- 2.3.2 At this meeting, the Board will share information related to the Employee's non-culpable absenteeism, explain the concerns the Board has, and offer resources and/or accommodation if appropriate. The Employee will not provide any information related to a diagnosis, however, will be provided with the opportunity to provide an explanation for the high level of non-culpable absenteeism.
- 2.3.3 At the preliminary meeting, the employee will have the ability to appeal his/her placement in the EASP. Considerations may be included if the employee has a disability, a need for accommodation, or if there are other extenuating circumstances. The Board will respond in writing to advise of the result of the employee's appeal.
- 2.3.4 Following the preliminary meeting the Employee may be placed in Level 1 of the EASP or this decision may be deferred to the next review period.
- 2.3.5 The Board will issue a letter following the meeting which confirms the date, attendees and other relevant details of the meeting.

2.4 Level 1

- 2.4.1 Following the preliminary meeting, an Employee who remains in the EASP will attend a Level 1 meeting to review the preceding rolling 12 month's (or prorated) non-culpable absenteeism. Level 1 consists of a meeting that includes the Employee,

Principal/Supervisor/Manager, Human Resources Officer, and a union representative (if applicable).

- 2.4.2 During the Level 1 meeting the discussion will focus on sharing information related to the Employee’s non-culpable absenteeism, explaining the concerns the Board has, and offering resources and/or accommodation if the Employee has a need. The Employee will not be required to provide any information related to a diagnosis, however, will be provided with the opportunity to provide an explanation for the high use of non-culpable absenteeism.
- 2.4.3 The supports that can be offered include, but are not limited to, the Employee & Family Assistance Program, workplace accommodations, and support within the workplace.
- 2.4.4 If the Employee’s attendance has improved and the Employee is now under the Board’s threshold for entry into the EASP, the Employee will remain in Level 1 of the program until he/she is under the threshold for two (2) consecutive review periods.
- 2.4.5 If the Employee’s attendance has not improved and the Employee’s average remains above the Board’s threshold for entry into the EASP, the Employee will proceed to Level 2 of the program.
- 2.4.6 The Board will issue a letter following the Level 1 meeting which confirms the date, attendees and other relevant details of the meeting.

2.5 Level 2

- 2.5.1 Following the Level 1 Meeting, an Employee who remains in the EASP will attend a Level 2 meeting to review the preceding rolling 12 month’s (or prorated) non-culpable absenteeism usage. Level 2 consists of a meeting that includes the Employee, Principal/Supervisor/Manager, Human Resources Officer, and a union representative (if applicable).
- 2.5.2 During the Level 2 meeting the discussion will focus on sharing information related to the Employee’s non-culpable absenteeism, explaining the concerns the Board has, and offering resources and/or accommodation if the Employee has a need. The Employee will not be asked to provide any information related to a diagnosis, however, will be provided with the opportunity to provide an explanation for the high use of non-culpable absenteeism.
- 2.5.3 The supports that can be offered include but are not limited to the Employee & Family Assistance Program, workplace accommodations, and support within the workplace.

- 2.5.4 If the Employee’s attendance has improved and the Employee is now under the Board’s threshold for entry into the EASP, the Employee will remain in Level 2 of the program until he/she is under the threshold for two consecutive review periods.
- 2.5.5 If the Employee’s attendance has not improved and the Employee’s average remains above the Board’s threshold for entry into the EASP, the Employee will proceed to Level 3 of the program.

2.6 Level 3

- 2.6.1 Following the Level 2 Meeting, an Employee who remains in the EASP will attend a Level 3 meeting to review the preceding rolling 12 month’s (or prorated) non-culpable absenteeism usage. Level 3 consists of a meeting that includes the Employee, Principal/Supervisor/Manager, Manager of Human Resource Services, and a union representative (if applicable).
- 2.6.2 During the Level 3 meeting the discussion will focus on sharing information related to the Employee’s non-culpable absenteeism, explaining the concerns the Board has, and offering resources and/or accommodation if the Employee has a need. The Employee will not be asked to provide any information related to a diagnosis, however, will be provided with the opportunity to provide an explanation for the high use of non-culpable absenteeism.
- 2.6.3 The supports that can be offered include but are not limited to the Employee & Family Assistance Program, workplace accommodations, and support within the workplace.
- 2.6.4 If the Employee’s attendance has improved and the Employee is now under the Board’s threshold for entry into the EASP, the Employee will remain in Level 3 of the program and will remain there until he/she is under the threshold for two consecutive review periods.
- 2.6.5 If the Employee’s attendance has not improved after this and the Employee’s average remains above the Board’s threshold for entry into the EASP, the Employee will proceed to Level 4 of the program.

2.7 Level 4

- 2.7.1 Following the Level 3 Meeting, an Employee who remains in the EASP will attend a Level 4 meeting review the preceding rolling 12 month’s (or prorated) non-culpable absenteeism usage. Level 4 consists of a meeting that includes the Employee, Superintendent,

Manager of Human Resource Services, and a union representative (if applicable).

- 2.7.2 During the Level 4 meeting the discussion will focus on sharing information related to the Employee’s non-culpable absenteeism, explaining the concerns the Board has, and offering resources and/or accommodation if the Employee has a need. The Employee will not be asked to provide any information related to a diagnosis, however, will be provided with the opportunity to provide an explanation for the high use of non-culpable absenteeism.
- 2.7.3 The supports that can be offered include but are not limited to the Employee & Family Assistance Program, workplace accommodations, and support within the workplace.
- 2.7.4 If the Employee’s attendance has improved and the Employee is now under the Board’s threshold for entry into the EASP, the Employee will remain in Level 4 of the program and will remain there until he/she is under the threshold for two consecutive review periods.
- 2.7.5 If the Employee’s attendance has not improved and the Employee’s average remains above the Board’s threshold for entry into the EASP, the Board will commence a review of the viability of continuing the employment relationship.

2.8 Employment Viability Review

Where the Employee progresses beyond Level 4 and the Board determines that it has fulfilled its obligations under the applicable Collective Agreement, terms and conditions and/or policies and procedures, the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act*, the *Human Rights Code* and any other applicable legislation and the Employee’s non-culpable absenteeism has exceeded the threshold through Level 4 and there is no reasonable likelihood that the Employee will be able to attend work regularly in the foreseeable future the Employee may be advised that his/her employment is being terminated on a non-disciplinary basis.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

The Board of Trustees is responsible for:

- Ensuring alignment with the Employee Relations Directional Policy.
- Reviewing the Employment Attendance Support Program Administrative Procedure as part of its regular policy and procedures review cycle.

The Director of Education is responsible for:

- Ensuring the implementation of and compliance with this Administrative Procedure, including the designation of required resources.

Superintendents are responsible for:

- Providing support and acting as a resource to all aspects of the attendance support process.
- Following the completion of the first three levels, attend the level 4 meeting.
- Assisting in determining the viability of ongoing employability in conjunction with Human Resources representatives, Principals, and Supervisors and Managers.

Principals, Vice-Principals, Managers and Supervisors are responsible for:

- Communicating attendance expectations to all Employees through an annual review of the Employee Attendance Support Program.
- Reviewing absence reports for staff.
- Identifying absenteeism trends or patterns which may lead to an absence being considered culpable.
- Addressing all absenteeism issues using discretion and seek support from Human Resource Services.
- Supporting Employees and act as a resource and advising Employees of available resources (i.e. EFAP).
- Participating in all meetings as outlined in the Employee Attendance Support Program

Human Resource Services staff are responsible for:

- Supporting Principals/Supervisors/Managers in addressing absenteeism issues.
- Identifying Employees who exceed the threshold level of absences.
- Advising Employees of resources available to them;
- Facilitating attendance support meetings.
- Providing a written outcome of each level meeting with copies to the Employee, Principal/Supervisor/Manager and Employee's union representative, if applicable.

Staff are responsible for:

- Maintaining regular and on time attendance.
- Giving the notice of absence required by Board procedures.
- Participating actively in all levels of the attendance support process.
- Contacting his/her union representative if the Employee wishes them to be involved.

PROGRESS INDICATORS:

PVNCCDSB Employees will achieve and maintain regular attendance with an absenteeism rate which does not exceed the Board's established absence threshold.

DEFINITIONS:

Accommodation - Any modification to the work or the workplace, including but not limited to: reduced hours, reduced productivity requirements, and/or the provision of assistive devices, that results in work becoming available that is consistent with the Employee's functional abilities and that respects the *Ontario Human Rights Code*.

Disability - As per the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, a disability is defined as any of the following:

- Any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness, including, but not limited to, diabetes, mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical coordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device.
- A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability.
- A learning disability or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language.
- A mental disorder.
- An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

Duty to Accommodate - The obligation of an Employer to take steps to eliminate the disadvantage caused by systemic, attitudinal, or physical barriers that unfairly exclude individuals or groups protected under the *Ontario Human Rights Code*.

Undue Hardship - The point at which an Employer is not legally required to accommodate an Employee's particular needs, as the action would impose significant strain or risk to the operation of the business. The *Ontario Human Rights Commission* prescribes at least three considerations in assessing whether an accommodation could cause undue hardship: cost, outside source of funding, and health and safety considerations.

Culpable Absence - Blameworthy, or culpable, absenteeism occurs when an Employee fails to attend work without a reasonable explanation. For example, an Employee who

sleeps through his/her alarm clock, or takes a sick day when he/she is not sick, is engaged in culpable absenteeism.

Non-Culpable Absence - absenteeism that is not within the Employee's control. Illness and injury are the most common examples of this kind of absenteeism.

REFERENCES:

[PVNC Catholic District School Board Vision and Strategic Priorities 2017-2020](#)

[Employee Relations Directional Policy - 500](#)

[AP 503 – Workplace Accommodation](#)

[AP 506 - Reporting Absences](#)

[AP 507 – Disability Management](#)

[Employment Standards Act](#)

[Ontario Human Rights Code](#)

[Workplace Safety and Insurance Act](#)