



## BOARD ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

**Disability  
Management**

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE  
NUMBER

**507**

*Directional Policy*

**Employee Relations - 500**

### TITLE OF ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE:

Disability Management

**DATE APPROVED:** January 30, 2018

**PROJECTED REVIEW DATE:** 2023

**DIRECTIONAL POLICY ALIGNMENT:** Employee Relations

### ALIGNMENT WITH MULTI-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN:



## 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**

All employees will be treated with fairness, consistency, respect and compassion. The Board's Disability Management Administrative Procedure is an integrated partnership among employees, supervisors/administrators, union representatives, and health care providers that support employees who cannot remain at work or return to work. The Procedure provides direction for the management of long-term absences from work. A long-term absence is defined as an absence of five (5) consecutive days or greater.

Employees have a responsibility to take an active role in their own medical care to maintain their health and well-being and minimize absences from work.

The Board will make every reasonable effort to keep employees in the workplace and to return employees to work safely and quickly. This will be accomplished through communicating before, during, and after an employee's absence and offering suitable modified work (see pending AP – 503 Workplace Accommodation).

Participation in the Disability Management Administrative Procedure is a requirement for all employees of the Board.

**2.0 Purpose of the Program**

The Disability Management Administrative Procedure is in place to provide employees support when they are unable to attend work due to personal illness or injury. The Board will endeavour to support and keep employees at work through the accommodation process (see pending AP – 503 Workplace Accommodation). When accommodation is not possible, the Procedure provides eligible employees with access to sick leave and short term leave disability plan (STLDP) while they recover.

Relevant Collective Agreements and Terms and Conditions of Employment also provide information related to sick leave/STLDP, accommodation and return to work.

The process of disability management begins when an employee becomes disabled, injured or ill. At this point the employee may or may not be required to be absent from work. The program will endeavor to minimize an employee's absence from work through providing support to employees where needed, ensuring employees are receiving appropriate care and treatment, and providing accommodations.

Situations not eligible for sick leave/STLDP, such as the illness of a family member or certain medical procedures may qualify for other types of leave.

### **3.0 Confidential Medical Information**

In order to qualify for sick leave payments a nature of illness statement, and relevant functional abilities information is within the employer's required documentation.

Inquiry as to function and further assessment, as well as contact with Human Resource Services or the Wellness Coordinator or designate is not considered private medical information.

It is not appropriate for any employer to ask for confidential medical information, nor is it required that the employee reveal or discuss confidential information / details of their treatment plan. However, some medical issues (e.g. the effects of medications, medical conditions) can impact an employee's fitness to perform various tasks, their safety, the safety of students, or others. The employee, Wellness Coordinator or designate and/or the Supervisor, need to be aware of this issue and manage it responsibly to avoid placing the employee, or others in the workplace, at risk.

The completed medical documentation will be sent directly to the Board's Wellness Coordinator or designate within the agreed upon time frame. The medical documentation can be provided via e-mail or fax machine.

Failure to provide the required medical documentation within the agreed to time frame may result in a suspension or denial of sick leave benefits pursuant to relevant Collective Agreements or Term and Conditions of Employment.

### **4.0 Planned Absences from Work**

On occasion an employee may know in advance of an absence from work and/or may know approximately how long he/she may be absent from work. In a case such as this, the following steps will take place.

When an employee is expected to be absent from work for five (5) consecutive days or greater and he/she is aware of said absence (i.e. a pre-planned procedure/surgery), he/she will immediately call his/her supervisor and call the Board's Wellness Coordinator or designate to advise him/her of the anticipated first date of absence and advise his/her supervisor.

The Wellness Coordinator or designate will provide the employee with direction on what medical documentation (as per Collective Agreements if applicable) is required to support the ongoing absence from work. The employee and the Wellness Coordinator or designate will agree to a reasonable time frame for the employee to provide the medical documentation.

If a medical procedure is planned, the Wellness Coordinator or designate may require the requisite medical documentation be provided before the medical procedure or after the medical procedure, depending on the nature of the procedure.

The employee shall have the required medical documentation completed by his/her doctor/ most appropriate medical practitioner (this may be an alternate designated practitioner including Nurse Practitioner, Physiotherapist and/or treating specialist) as agreed to by the Wellness Coordinator or designate. The employee will also provide his/her doctor with a standard letter which outlines the Board's ability and willingness to accommodate.

### **5.0 Ongoing Absences from Work**

When an employee is off work on a day-to-day basis, he/she must report his/her absence as outlined in Administrative Procedure 506 – Reporting Absences from Work.

If an absence extends to five (5) consecutive days or greater, the employee must notify the Board's Wellness Coordinator or designate and supervisor via telephone to advise them of his/her ongoing absence from work. The Wellness Coordinator or designate will provide the employee with direction on what medical documentation is required to support the ongoing absence from work. An employee will have ten (10) days from the first date of absence to provide the medical documentation. If this is not possible, alternate arrangements may be made.

The employee shall have the required medical documentation completed by his/her doctor/ most appropriate medical practitioner ( this may be an alternate designated practitioner including Nurse Practitioner, Physiotherapist and/or treating specialist) as agreed to by the Wellness Coordinator or designate. The employee will also provide his/her doctor with a standard letter which outlines the Board's ability and willingness to accommodate.

When an employee is off work five (5) consecutive days or greater, reasonable follow up requests and reasonable periodic updates, may be required. Regular and ongoing communication with the Board's Wellness Coordinator or designate is required. The Wellness Coordinator or designate determines the frequency of communication with the employee and obtains further clarification, as needed.

After receipt of the initial medical documentation, the Board may require reasonable follow-up in the form of new medical documentation, pursuant to the relevant Collective Agreement or Terms and Conditions of Employment. The frequency of when the Board will require updated medical documentation is based on a number of factors which include but are not limited to:

- nature of illness;
- pre-planned absence (i.e. surgery);

- length of absence;
- current functional abilities, limitations and restrictions.

The Board, when seeking reasonable updates on medical documentation, may require the medical documentation be submitted from the medical practitioner most relevant to the nature of illness.

The supervisor will help to monitor the progress of any employee returning to regular or modified duties following an injury or illness and will routinely follow-up with the worker to ensure that the worker is complying with any restrictions and or limitations that have been assigned.

As a decision guide, communication will be more frequent when:

- it helps keep the employee connected to the workplace in a positive way;
- the duration of the absence is unclear;
- support is required which the Board can provide or arrange (eg. Employee & Family Assistance Program or outside community health services and programs);
- discussion is required concerning the employee's return to work, including modified work or workplace accommodation;
- a significant treatment milestone is approaching.

## **6.0 Return to Work**

When an employee is ready to return to work following a long-term absence, with or without accommodation, a return to work meeting may occur. Relevant stakeholders, including but not limited to, the employee, the supervisor, the union representative (if applicable), and other Board staff may request a return to work meeting and may be required to attend.

The purpose of this meeting will be to ensure all parties understand the employee's needs, address all workplace barriers, and share relevant information.

Should accommodation be required to facilitate a return to work, accommodation procedures will be followed (see pending AP – 503 Workplace Accommodation).

## **7.0 Long-Term Disability**

Should an employee not be able to return to work and have access to a long-term disability benefit, the Board's Wellness Coordinator or designate will advise the employee of when he/she should apply and provide relevant information.

**RESPONSIBILITIES:****The Board of Trustees is responsible for:**

- Ensuring alignment with the Employee Relations Directional Policy.
- Reviewing the Disability Management Administrative Procedure as part of its regular policy and procedures review cycle.

**The Director of Education is responsible for:**

- Designating resources for ensuring the implementation of and compliance with this Administrative Procedure.

**Superintendents are responsible for:**

- Ensuring principals are consistent with the application of this Administrative Procedure
- Ensuring that any employee for whom they have supervisory responsibility are aware of the requirements under this Administrative Procedure and that employees follow the requirement for reporting absences from work.

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

- Ensuring staff who they supervise are aware of the requirements under this Administrative Procedure and that employees follow the requirement for reporting absences from work.
- Informing the Wellness Coordinator or designate by phone and/or e-mail of employees who are absent for five (5) consecutive days or greater.
- Maintaining regular contact and offering support to employees while they are absent from work to help ensure safe and timely return to work occurs.
- Approving leave requests and verifying absences in SmartFind Express in a timely fashion.
- Monitoring the progress of any employee returning to regular or modified duties following an injury or illness and routinely following-up with the worker and Wellness Coordinator to ensure that the worker is complying with any restrictions and or limitations that have been identified and that accommodations are in place.
- Arranging supply coverage if required as per the Accommodation or Return to Work Plan and submitting appropriate notification to Human Resource Services.

**Staff are responsible for:**

- Co-operating in his or her timely and safe return to work.
- Calling his/her supervisor and the Wellness Coordinator or designate to advise of his/her absence from work for absence of five (5) consecutive days or greater.

- Obtaining medical attention, and ensuring the timely completion and return of the medical certificate by their treating physician and/or forwarding the medical certificate to the Wellness Coordinator or designate. To expedite the process, employees may access The Loop to obtain a copy of the relevant medical certificate and return to the Wellness Coordinator or designate.
- Ensuring they are familiar with the appropriate software programs so leaves can be reported and requested (i.e. SmartFind Express, the Hub).
- Attempting to have regular attendance at work, by taking an active and responsible role in their own rehabilitation, in attending scheduled therapy and follow-up medical appointments - with consideration to the hours of work and ability to schedule outside of work hours when possible per AP 506 - Reporting Absences.
- Working safely within limitations and restrictions.
- Maintaining reasonable communication with the Wellness Coordinator or designate.

**The Wellness Coordinator or designate are responsible for:**

- Contacting the worker as soon as possible after the injury occurs/ illness is reported and maintaining reasonable communication throughout the period of the worker's recovery.
- Collecting and assessing information on abilities and limitations & restrictions in an effort to engage the employee in the return-to-work process.
- Evaluating and identifying any workplace barriers and providing strategies to resolve workplace barriers.
- Attempting to provide suitable employment that is available and consistent with the worker's functional abilities.
- Communicating with the Board, union and supervisor such information as the Board may request concerning the worker's return to work.
- Coordinating with the appropriate Human Resources Officer so that vacancies can be filled where required.

**PROGRESS INDICATORS:**

Reporting of Absences, Tracking of Sick Leave/Short Term Leave Disability Plan, Long Term Disability.

**DEFINITIONS:**

**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.

**Disability Management File** - An individual's file which contains confidential medical documentation related to an employee's disability. This file is kept separate from their personnel file and is secured within the Disability Management office.

**LTO- Long term Occasional** - Long term supply assignment - in reference to assignment of a worker CUPE- 12 days or longer supply Teaching assignments 12 days or longer

**Long-Term Absence** – Any absence which is 5 consecutive days or greater.

**Medical Certificate** – The designated template for employees to provide medical information related to their absence greater than five (5) consecutive days.

**REFERENCES:**

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

Cover Letter for Accommodated work availability

[Non-Teaching Employees Medical Certificate](#)

[OECTA/ OTBU Medical Certificate](#)

[AP 506 - Reporting Absences](#)

AP 503 – Workplace Accommodation (pending)