



**DURHAM CATHOLIC
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**
Learning and Living in Faith

POLICY – PO321

Employee Attendance Support

Area: People & Culture
Source: Chief Human Resources Officer

Approved: September 28, 2009
Revised: February 10, 2014 (Interim); November 10, 2014; May 10, 2021; January 26, 2026

1. Introduction

The Durham Catholic District School Board (the “Board”) is committed to fostering a healthy, inclusive, and productive work environment where employees are supported in maintaining regular attendance. Recognizing that employees may face challenges that impact their ability to attend work regularly, the Board has established an Employee Attendance Support Program (EASP). This program is designed to provide timely, supportive, and non-disciplinary assistance to employees experiencing attendance difficulties, while ensuring fairness, transparency, and respect for individual circumstances.

2. Definitions

Culpable Absence (*PPM 171 – Attendance Support Programs*) – absences that occur because of factors within the employee’s control, such as using sick leave for reasons other than intended, or failure to attend work without notifying the employer.

Non-Culpable Absence (*PPM 171 – Attendance Support Programs*) – absences that are due to factors where the employee has little or no control, such as using sick leave for personal injury or illness absences and medical appointments unrelated to work.

3. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish a consistent, supportive, and non-disciplinary process for promoting regular employee attendance across the Board considering individual circumstances. Regular employee attendance is essential to creating healthy communities that contribute to safe, stable learning and working environments that ultimately support student achievement along with student and staff well-being. This

policy aims to assist employees in overcoming barriers to attendance through early intervention, wellness supports, and collaborative problem-solving. The policy reflects the Board's commitment to fostering a healthy and inclusive workplace, ensuring fairness and equity in the treatment of absences, and aligning with the expectations set out in Policy/Program Memorandum 171: Attendance Support Programs issued by the Ontario Ministry of Education.

4. Application / Scope

This policy applies to all permanent and long-term temporary employees of the Board.

5. Principles

5.1 The Board acknowledges:

- 5.1.1 regular employee attendance is essential to the delivery of high-quality education and the effective functioning of schools and departments;
- 5.1.2 that employees may face legitimate personal, medical, or family-related challenges that impact their ability to attend work consistently;
- 5.1.3 its responsibility to provide a supportive, respectful, and inclusive workplace that promotes employee wellness and engagement;
- 5.1.4 early intervention, open communication, and access to wellness resources are key to helping employees overcome attendance-related barriers;
- 5.1.5 that attendance support must be applied fairly and consistently, while also ensuring compliance with applicable collective agreements and applicable employment legislation, including the *Ontario Human Rights Code*;
- 5.1.6 a non-disciplinary, coaching-based approach to attendance support fosters trust, collaboration, and long-term improvement; and
- 5.1.7 the importance of aligning attendance support practices with provincial directives, including Policy/Program Memorandum 171, and with best practices in abilities management and employee wellness strategies.

6. Requirements

- 6.1 The Employee Attendance Support Program (EASP) will operate in accordance with PPM 171, the Ontario Human Rights Code, relevant board policies, and collective agreements. The program will be applied consistently across all employee groups, with consideration for individual circumstances.
- 6.2 All personal and medical information shared through the program will be treated confidentially and in accordance with applicable privacy legislation and the Board Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Policy (PO201).

- 6.3 The EASP will address culpable absenteeism through a consistent, standardized and non-disciplinary approach by facilitating discussions to support regular attendance and manage non-culpable absenteeism where it occurs.
- 6.4 The EASP will educate employees on the importance of regular attendance at work and the impact of irregular attendance on their work, their colleagues and student achievement.
- 6.5 Supervisory staff will receive training on the EASP to understand their roles and responsibilities and to ensure consistent application. Program outcomes will be monitored regularly.

7. Sources

- 7.1 [Policy/Program Memorandum 171: Attendance Support Programs](#)
- 7.2 [Ontario Human Rights Code](#)
- 7.3 [Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#)
- 7.4 [Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act](#)

8. Related Policies and Administrative Procedures

- 8.1 [Employee Attendance Support Administrative Procedure \(AP321-1\)](#)
- 8.2 [Disability Management Policy \(PO312\)](#)
- 8.3 [Disability Management Administrative Procedure \(AP312-1\)](#)