

## 18. Sick Leave

Sick leave is defined as leave for any illness or injury suffered that is not compensable under the Workers' Compensation Act. Employees are not eligible for sick leave during any form of leave of absence without pay or during vacation leave.

### (a) Absenteeism and attendance management program

The Society requires all employees to attend work regularly and on time in order to provide the highest quality and level of service to the people we support.

The responsibility for managing employee attendance is vested within each program of the Society and is a priority duty of the direct supervisor. The supervisor must have a clearly defined attitude supporting the responsible use of sick leave and to create an awareness of attendance for all employees. It is important to note that when staff are sick they should not come in, as this only imperils the health of the people we support and fellow staff members. But it is the employee's responsibility to ensure adequate notice is given.

Most employees are not aware of the costs incurred by the organization due to absenteeism. Additionally, many employees are not aware of how much time they are absent themselves. The supervisor will maintain an awareness of employee absenteeism, and make employees aware of their individual rates of absenteeism.

Employees who are unable to attend work are required to personally notify their supervisor, or the designated alternate if unable to reach their supervisor. The supervisor has a right to know the general reason for the employee's absence, but does not have a right to a detailed diagnosis of his/her illness.

Good attendance, by definition, is a matter of not having absences over a period of time. The longer that period of time is, the more significant the achievement becomes. To effectively recognize attendance, we must track that performance over time, and recognize when certain standards have been met. It is essential that the supervisor maintain on-going awareness of each employee's attendance record for the sake of both recognition and correction.

### (b) Caring for dependents

Employees who are caring for dependents who become ill shall be entitled to take any sick leave credits.

### (c) Permanent full-time employees

Sick leave pay entitlement is earned at a rate of one day per month (employee's average day), commencing after three months continuous employment in a permanent position. Sick time will be accumulated to a maximum of 640 hours. Upon termination of employment, the employee will be compensated at a rate of 50% of the balance in accumulated sick time.

- (d) **Part-time and Casual employees**  
Part-time and casual employees become eligible for sick pay after 90 days of employment. Sick pay will be paid for scheduled shifts where the employee becomes sick and is unable to work. Up to five (5) days of sick pay are payable each calendar year. Each sick day is paid based on an average day's pay, based on the average an employee worked in the past 30 days. There is no accumulation of sick days in a bank and no carry over from one year to the next year.
- (e) **Early Intervention**  
Employees who are off work due to illness for 5 consecutive days will be referred to the Early Intervention Program (DMI).
- (f) **R.R.S.P. option**  
Employees may choose to cash in accumulated sick time in excess of eighty (80) hours, at a rate of 50% of the balance in accumulated sick time, and place these funds in an R.R.S.P.
- (g) **Employee to inform Society**  
Employees shall inform their direct supervisor or designated alternate at least four (4) hours before their shift of their inability to report to work because of illness or injury and advise of the expected date of return.
- (h) **Records**  
It will be the employee's responsibility to record all sick time on the timesheet.
- (i) **Medical certificate**  
The Society may request medical confirmation of illness or injury from employees who are absent from work for more than three (3) consecutive days of work. The Society may also request a written statement from a medical practitioner of their choosing when it appears that a pattern of consistent absence is developing. If medical confirmation is requested, the Society will reimburse the cost of a doctor's note.
- (j) **WorkSafe BC claim**  
At the discretion of the Society, the employee may remain on full wages with WorkSafe claims when reimbursement is made to the Society by WorkSafe. An employee may need to deal directly with WorkSafe for claims not being reimbursed to the Society for lost wages.
- (k) **Employment Insurance claim**  
The employee may claim from EI sick leave benefits, as per current EI guidelines.
- (l) **Long Term Disability claim**  
To qualify for Long Term Disability benefits, the employee must be under the regular care and personal attendance of a physician. Applications made for Long Term Disability coverage is subject to a 17 week waiting period. Acceptance for individual claims is determined by the insurance company. The Society will assist and support

employees with any problems or difficulties which may arise from the EI or LTD claims.

- (m) Return to Work following Extended Sick Leave or Long Term Disability Claim  
Spectrum has a duty to accommodate employees who return to work following a LTD claim or extended sick leave, to the point of hardship.
- i. The employee is responsible for notifying H/R one month prior to the expected date of return to work, to discuss the return to work plan.
  - ii. Upon return from leave, the employee must provide a doctor's note indicating that he or she is fit to return and outlining any limitations or restrictions.
  - iii. Upon clearance to work, an employee shall be placed in his/her former position, or in a position of equal rank and basic pay, and will receive an appropriate orientation or re-orientation to the position. Alternatively, the employee may apply to a different position.

The employee shall be deemed to have resigned if an application for re-employment is not made one (1) month prior to the expiration of the leave, or the employee does not return to work after having applied for re-employment.

- (n) Benefits Coverage while on Sick Leave or Long Term Disability  
If an employee maintains coverage for medical, extended health, dental and group life while on sick leave, the Society agrees to pay its share of premiums provided the employee has prepaid his/her share.

Benefits coverage will be terminated after two consecutive years of absence from work.