

GUIDELINES ON HOW TO ADDRESS ATTENDANCE ISSUES

SUBJECT: Attendance

PURPOSE:

Indiana State University has a responsibility to provide continued and uninterrupted service for students, faculty and staff. This responsibility can only be fulfilled when each employee is present during the work hours scheduled. Regular attendance is essential to the proper function of the university as a whole.

There are three types of absences, scheduled, unscheduled and an unauthorized absence.

- a. **The definition of a scheduled absence is when an employee has requested time off according to the Departmental Guidelines.** A scheduled absence can be paid or unpaid. Examples of scheduled absences considered as approved are FMLA, jury duty, funeral leave, a doctor's appointment, worker's compensation, vacation. Approved occasions of absence are NOT occasions of absence for purpose of disciplinary action.
 - b. **The definition of an unscheduled absence is anytime an employee has not requested and been granted time off according to Departmental Guidelines.** This creates an occasion of absence. Examples are calling in sick, car trouble or any item that does not meet the definition of a scheduled absence. A day is defined as four or more scheduled hours. However, when an employee's request for leaving early becomes excessive (even after completion of the minimum of four (4) hours of their scheduled shift), these requests should be documented and considered as grounds for disciplinary action.
- Unscheduled absences may be excused or unexcused.
 - 1) An excused unscheduled absence may include times when an employee may not be able to come to work or is late that are beyond the employee's control. Examples are two hour school delays or school being cancelled where the employee needs to stay home due to lack of childcare for their children. Employees may also have inclement weather that interferes with their arriving to work on a timely basis. The supervisor should use discretion on how to deal with these types of circumstances. These would not be considered an absence for the purpose of these guidelines. Employees are expected to notify their supervisor in a timely fashion for such unscheduled absences to be considered excused.
 - 2) Unexcused unscheduled absences ARE considered as occasions of absence. Examples of unexcused unscheduled absences may include absence for personal sickness. A doctor's note is required to support consecutive absences related to the same cause. If a doctor's note is not supplied each day will be counted as an occasion. For example, if an employee is off for two (2) consecutive work days it will considered two occasions of absence, unless a doctor's note can be provided then it will be considered one (1) occasion of absence.
 - **The definition of an occasion of absence is one (1) work day.**

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- c. **The definition of an unauthorized absence is when an employee fails to report to work and fails to notify the immediate supervisor or individual identified in the departmental guidelines.** This is also referred to as a No Call No Show situation.

An unauthorized absence is not acceptable and considered to be substantially more serious than an unscheduled absence.

(Please refer to the Indiana State University Handbook, Section 560.2– Support Staff Policies, EMPLOYER EXPECTATIONS, paragraph 560.2.1) Accountability of staff is the responsibility of the Director/Manager. Recommendations for disciplinary action are outlined in the guidelines below.

GUIDELINES:

1. Each Administrative Department or Academic College must maintain written guidelines on reporting an absence. A copy of the Guidelines must be maintained in Human Resources. Guidelines must be consistent with the university attendance guidelines.
 - a. Guidelines should be just a one page document that will identify:
 - 1) Who the employee is to notify for an unscheduled absence, by what method, and how far in advance
 - 2) Who is to receive scheduled absence request, by what method, and how far in advance
 - 3) Definition of tardy according to the work schedule
2. Each area must maintain a written attendance record on each employee.
3. Excessive occasions of unexcused unscheduled absences are defined as thirteen (13) different occasions in any consecutive twelve-month (12) period. The twelve-month (12) period begins with the first occasion of absence. For example, if an employee is absent June 5, their 12-month period for that absence would end June 5 the following year.

Occasions of absences will be documented and considered as grounds for progressive disciplinary action as follows:

- a. 7 occasions in a 12-month period – documented verbal warning
 - b. 9 occasions in a 12-month period – written warning
 - c. 11 occasions in a 12-month period – final written warning
 - d. 13 occasions in a 12-month period – suspension/discharge
4. Excessive occasions of not working a full work day (minimum of 4 hours of a scheduled shift) will be calculated as an occasion of absence once an employee reaches 4 occasions in a 12-month period.

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5. An unauthorized absence occurs when an employee fails to follow the Guidelines. These are unscheduled but more significant because staff has failed to call in to provide notice on inability to come to work. An unauthorized absence shall be treated as follows:
- a. 1st unauthorized absence is a written warning
 - b. 2nd unauthorized absence is a final written warning
 - c. 3rd unauthorized absence may result in immediate termination

An unauthorized absence of three (3) consecutive days may be considered job abandonment and cause for immediate termination.

6. Punctuality is essential to the proper function of the organization as a whole. Excessive occasions of tardiness is defined as thirteen (13) different occasions in any consecutive twelve-month (12) period. The twelve-month (12) period begins with the first occasion of tardiness. For example, if an employee is tardy on June 5, their 12-month period for tardiness would end June 5 the following year.

The definition of tardiness is not being at the designated work station at the designated start time.

The definition of tardiness applies to those positions where it is identified that there is a requirement to be at their work station at a specific designated time. In some situations exempt staff may not be in positions that require a normal work schedule in order to fulfill the responsibilities of their job.

- a. 7 occasions in a 12-month period – documented verbal warning
- b. 9 occasions in a 12-month period – written warning
- c. 11 occasions in a 12-month period – final written warning
- d. 13 occasions in a 12-month period – suspension/discharge.

Leave for the employee's own serious health condition, or the serious health condition of a spouse, child, parent or sibling may be eligible for an approved FMLA leave of absence. An approved FMLA leave of absence is considered a scheduled absence and is not occasions of absence for purpose of disciplinary action. Anyone may have situations where they or a family member could have a chronic illness. When this occurs the supervisor needs to advise the employee of their rights under FMLA.