

## Attendance

Unscheduled absences and tardiness waste resources and impact morale as supervisors scramble to reschedule assignments and co-workers adjust to handle the extra workload. This HR Tip is meant to provide guidance on addressing attendance.

You have the right to expect employees to come to work and the obligation to manage the University's resources wisely. An employee's sick leave bank is a benefit to be used for illness or to share with a seriously ill fellow employee. It is not intended to be used just because it's there.

Attendance and punctuality are aspects of performance and should be included as part of performance management. Poor performance in these areas should be addressed with progressive discipline. It is most effective to begin coaching at the first sign of unsatisfactory behavior to make sure the employee is aware of your expectations and the impact on the department. Waiting until the situation has grown out of control is certainly less effective, and disciplinary action taken may be considered unreasonable: why wasn't it addressed sooner?

If an employee's attendance is unsatisfactory but his/her performance is outstanding, the attendance piece cannot be ignored. The benefit to the department is inconsistent at best, and there may be a problem that deserves further attention. Talk to and avail the employee of the University's resources, including the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), Disability Programs and Resource Center (DPRC), and the Human Resources leave programs and remember to document your conversation. Absent participation in a program, attendance must be addressed as a performance issue.

If an employee has used all his/her sick leave, the unions' (CSUEU, SETC and APC) Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs) provide that the use of vacation leave *may* be authorized by the President/Appropriate Administrator. However, this should be done on an exception basis only. It is not recommended unless you are aware that the employee has a legitimate reason for his/her absences. Excessive, indiscriminate absences should be docked when sick leave is exhausted.

The unions' CBAs also state that an employee may be required to provide a doctor's note after 5 or more consecutive days of missed work. In addition, they state that if there is reasonable cause to believe there has been an abuse of sick leave, a doctor's note may be required for an absence of ANY length. Please note that prior to enforcing this, you must provide the employee with notification that you will be doing so.

Early coaching has the best chance of success, resulting in productive employees and saving time and energy. If you are past this stage or if you are still experiencing attendance problems, please contact one of us to help you follow the progressive disciplinary process.

*To insure compliance and avoid grievances, we strongly suggest that you contact Labor Relations: Bryan Kauffman, ext. 53672, Diane Rosenfield, ext. 54371, or Stephen Blecha, ext. 86863 for guidance regarding any situations about which you have questions.*