



# RED RIVER COLLEGE

## ABSENTEEISM MANAGEMENT

### MANAGER'S ADMINISTRATION GUIDE



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## **INTRODUCTION**

This guide is a tool for managers to assist in the management of staff performance in relation to Absenteeism. It has been based upon best practice, as determined through an extensive review of current literature, together with successful Absenteeism management programs operating in similar organizations across Canada. It has been refined through internal consultation with key stakeholders, including managers, MGEU representatives and return-to-work specialists. This guide has been developed to be consistent with the collective agreement, provincial legislation and internal policies and procedures. It aims to improve Absenteeism through open communication, dialogue and support between managers and their staff.

This Guide has four sections:

1. An overview of the value of absenteeism management and why it is an important management function.
2. An outline of everyday management tools and approaches that can be effectively utilized by managers to set expectations, manage absenteeism and recognize and encourage commendable attendance for their entire staff group.
3. A detailed program template to construct individualized Absenteeism management programs for staff that are experiencing high rates of absence in comparison to their colleagues.
4. Appendices and template letters.

Managing Absenteeism can be a complex and challenging management function. Managers are encouraged to contact Human Resource Services for assistance with any questions or concerns. In addition, ongoing training sessions on Absenteeism Management forms will be offered through HR.

## **THE VALUE OF ABSENTEEISM MANAGEMENT**

RRC is committed to providing excellence in post-secondary education. Dedicated staff who fulfill their employment requirements through regular Absenteeism are essential to the realization of this commitment.

Absenteeism management is the managerial process of creating a workplace culture that encourages regular attendance. It sets reasonable expectations for absenteeism, manages absenteeism and holds both managers and staff accountable to meet absenteeism expectations.

A fundamental of any employment relationship is that staff attends work as scheduled. The obligation to attend work means that an employee is expected to be at work regularly, to be punctual, and to report in a condition fit to perform his/her duties. Given the realities faced by all staff, perfect attendance is not a reasonable expectation. However, it is reasonable to expect staff to keep their absences at a rate equal to or below a relevant comparator staff group.

It is a fact that organizations which actively and effectively manage the absenteeism of their staff will experience much lower levels of staff absence than those comparable organizations that do not. The rate of absence within a workplace has much more to do with its workplace culture than it does the nature of the employer's business.

Absenteeism management has two parts:

- 1) **General Absenteeism Management:** Strategies and efforts focused toward an entire staff group which encourage and support regular attendance – these strategies and efforts generally reflect good management practices that can be used for all staff, regardless of school, department or area; and
- 2) **Individualized Absenteeism Management (IAM):** Strategies and efforts focused on building a program specific to an individual staff person to assist that staff person in his/her efforts to improve absenteeism.

The costs of failing to manage absenteeism effectively are multiple and varied in nature. A few such costs include but are not limited to:

- Difficulty in returning long-term sick staff to work
- Decreased productivity
- Financial loss (increased recruitment, staff replacement costs, training costs, etc.)
- Decrease in morale of co-workers, which can be a further cause for increased absence
- Missed deadlines and delays
- Lower levels of service
- Diminished reputation (individual, department, school and College as a whole)
- Overtime costs

## **GENERAL ABSENTEEISM MANAGEMENT**

In addition to the avoidance of costs of absence as noted above, managing absenteeism is important for a number of reasons:

- Regular attendance promotes higher staff morale, fair workload allocation, efficiency and a quality-service environment;
- Timely and effective supportive efforts focused on removing barriers to regular attendance not only improve absenteeism but are frequently linked to improved health, wellness and quality of work life for staff; and,
- Absences cause co-workers to have extra duties placed upon them and/or may cause them a delayed ability to complete their own work because they are dependent on the absent employee for information and/or the performance of a task.

## **Principles and Guidelines**

The key elements of managing absenteeism are based on the following principles and objectives:

- Staff are committed to their jobs and the students/clients they serve
- Staff have a contractual obligation to attend work and are to use sick leave only for its identified purpose
- Staffing levels are based on the presence of staff as scheduled – students and co-workers are affected by staff absence
- Active management of absenteeism and communication of expectations to staff is an important management function
- Management of absence may reveal variables that can be modified to improve absenteeism, staff wellness, productivity and the quality of College services
- Effective management of absence improves the level of attendance
- Absence from work results in substantial financial, operational and quality costs
- Staff leaving RRC due to an inability to improve absenteeism is a loss to the College but at times necessary
- The focus of managing absenteeism is upon removing barriers to regular attendance and rewarding regular attendance
- Managing absenteeism is not a disciplinary process
- Each employee brings unique circumstances to the workplace and absenteeism shall be looked upon individually and evaluated based upon its own circumstances
- Efforts to manage absenteeism will only be successful if all parties fully engage and cooperate in the process
- Dealing with excess absence is an expectation for management personnel. Failing to address excess absenteeism is not a positive message to staff, especially to those staff who work hard at maintaining regular attendance

## Why Are Staff Absent?

A variety of reasons keep staff away from work. Illness and injury for some, while others are absent due to family needs. People experience many demands upon their time which result in choices having to be made as to what takes priority. Employees who are not engaged in their work are more likely to place a higher priority on non-work related commitments than engaged employees. A perception may exist that whether or not one attends work is a matter of discretion when there is perceived benefit and/or minimal disadvantage to not attending. In the absence of any consequences, a disengaged employee will, at times, use his or her discretion to absent herself from work in favour of other interests.

## Managerial Tools

Effective managers practice the following to encourage and motivate all their staff to attend work regularly:

Management Practice	Description	Available Resources to Managers
Communicate Expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>If no standard is communicated, staff will set their own standards</li><li>Develop and maintain dialogue with all staff, on an individual basis, to enable open discussion permitting issues to be addressed quickly and to enable offers of meaningful assistance (i.e., practice relationship-centered leadership)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>HR, Staff Learning and Development Services. Examples of available workshops within the ENABLE Leadership Program are:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Performance Management</li><li>- Progressive Discipline</li><li>- Absenteeism Management</li></ul></li><li>EFAP workshops</li><li>Human Resource Services</li><li>Occupational and Environmental Safety &amp; Health Department</li><li>Regular conversations or individual or team meetings with staff</li><li>Resources in Manual Appendix:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- "How to Begin a Difficult Conversation"</li><li>- "Tips for Meeting With Employees Regarding Absenteeism"</li><li>- Absenteeism Policy</li><li>- Template Letters for IAM</li><li>- IAM Checklist</li></ul></li></ul>
Motivate Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Ask questions. Get to know your employees and value their uniqueness. Help them to find meaning in the work they do every day. Find out what it is that is truly the cause of a person's inability to come to work and develop a plan with that individual to try and remove that barrier.</li><li>Make work meaningful – ensure that your staff understand how their individual efforts tie into the larger whole</li><li>Reward &amp; Recognition – acknowledging staff for their efforts and dedication through kind words; sincere encouragement is priceless</li></ul>	
Consistency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Consistently enforce expectations</li><li>Communication is only effective if acted upon and applied consistently</li></ul>	

## ***ROLES, RIGHTS, RESPONSIBILITIES***

Any successful approach to Absenteeism management requires an understanding of, and respect for, the roles, rights and responsibilities of employees, employers, human resources, and unions.

### **Employees**

- Fulfilling their contractual obligation to attend work regularly
- Attending work for all scheduled hours unless unable to for legitimate reasons
- Improving and maintaining personal health and adjusting lifestyle, where necessary, to enable regular attendance
- Making reasonable efforts to attend to personal affairs and obligations (including medical appointments, if possible) outside of regular hours
- Reporting all occurrences and/or absences from work in accordance with the employer's absence reporting procedure
- Reporting work-related injuries and/or illness, immediately as they occur, directly to their manager and completing required WCB forms.
- Providing appropriate and sufficient medical documentation
- Fully participating in early and safe return-to-work initiatives and workplace accommodations.
- Fully participating in efforts to identify and implement strategies to improve absenteeism
- Maintaining regular communication with the manager and/or designate during absences and providing information on the expected duration of absence and possible return-to-work date. NOTE: Employees may be required to provide medical clearance stating restrictions, if any, prior to being permitted to return to work

### **Employer/Manager**

- Managing absenteeism of staff reporting to them and communicating expectations
- Informing employees about absenteeism expectations and addressing all employee questions and concerns or directing them to the appropriate department (e.g. Occupational Health and Safety, Human Resources)
- Implementing appropriate steps under an IAM as required
- Maintaining regular contact with, and providing support to, an employee who is absent from work
- Ensuring that the provisions of the Collective Agreement are followed
- Respecting legislation related to employment (e.g. Human Rights Code)
- Maintaining the confidentiality of employee information

### **Human Resources**

- Providing Managers and Employees with clear guidelines related to employee absenteeism
- Providing training and advice to Managers, as required, on General Absenteeism Management and IAM
- Providing appropriate reporting mechanisms for staff, management and the College
- Providing advice and support to managers and staff in the management of absenteeism
- Ensuring that IAM programs are administered consistently and equitably
- Ensuring appropriate consultation with Unions

## **Unions**

- Educating and supporting members in relation to regular attendance
- Identifying strategies to assist individual members in their efforts to improve absenteeism

## ***RECOGNIZING AND ENCOURAGING EMPLOYEES***

Success in managing absenteeism requires that a manager ensure that staff know that their efforts and attendance are valued and that absences do cause a loss. Awareness can be achieved through various actions, including:

- Recognizing employee's contributions
- Acknowledging improved absenteeism
- Recognizing exemplary performance
- Demonstrating concern for staff well-being and following up when absences have occurred
- Assisting staff who are having difficulties with absenteeism (EFAP, dialogue, problem solving, IAM, etc.)

Managing absenteeism through recognition and encouragement needs to be applied consistently across staff. It is equally as important to recognize and focus on staff who have exceptional attendance as it is to focus on those who need assistance to improve absenteeism levels.

A critical opportunity to communicate expectations in relation to absenteeism presents itself during an employee's orientation and onboarding process, which includes familiarization with procedures for reporting absences.

## ***SETTING THE COMPARATOR RATE***

The Comparator Rate is the average rate of absenteeism against which an individual's rate of absence is compared. Nationally, the average rate of absence for 2011 in Canada was 9.3 days, of which 7.6 were personal sick days and 1.6 were family-related sick leave.

Within Red River College, the comparator rate has been set based upon payroll records from a twelve month consecutive period. Absences for full-time staff employed for the full twelve-month period were considered.

Absences due to sickness, exclusive of family-related illness, were counted in hours. A total of 1523 full-time staff were considered. The total hourly average of sickness per full-time employee was 51.18 over a twelve-month period. For employees that work a 7.25 hour day\* (5.12% of employees work an 8 hour work day), this equates to approximately 7.06 days of sick leave per year.

A further analysis was done to assess whether there were substantial differences in sick leave rates between different staff groups. For example, categories such as instructors, administrative staff, support staff, etc. were examined. This review identified no meaningful difference in sick leave rates between these groups.

As the College formally implements this initiative, and as individuals with high rates of absence participate in individual absenteeism management programs, it is hoped that the comparator rate of absence will decline over time. On this basis, the comparator rate will likely change as the College continues to work toward its goal of exceeding the national average.

## **ABSENTEEISM MANAGEMENT DEFINITIONS**

When managing absenteeism, it is important to understand the meanings of the following terminology:

### **Absence**

Any time an employee, who is scheduled or otherwise expected to be at work, is not at work.

### **Absenteeism**

Frequent or habitual absence from work.

### **Attendance**

Attending at work, on time and remaining at work when scheduled including returning from breaks on time.

### **Culpable Absenteeism**

Culpable absenteeism is an absence from work where the employee is at fault. Culpable absenteeism includes:

- Lateness/leaving work early including break times without approval or suitable justification
- Absence without approval or suitable justification

Culpable absence is dealt with through a disciplinary response. It does not form part of the Absenteeism Management process nor does it form part of IAM.

### **Excess Absenteeism**

Excess absenteeism is identified as absences which are above the norm for the employee comparator group. The comparator group is determined by the employer and may be the average of the division, school, department, employee group, etc. On occasion, an individual staff person's absenteeism record will reach a level of concern that necessitates direct, individual interaction with that staff person. There is no magic number of absences that triggers this concern but the average level of absenteeism within the employee's comparator group is usually a good indicator.

### **Non-culpable Absenteeism**

Non-culpable, also called "Innocent Absenteeism", is an absence for which the employee is not at fault and may result from factors outside the direct control of the employee. Such absences are never dealt with through a disciplinary response nor do they ever form part of the progressive discipline process or the disciplinary record. Rather, efforts to reduce these absences are dealt with through Absenteeism Management and/or an IAM.

## **Pattern Absenteeism**

Pattern absences are absences which may appear to be non-culpable when viewed in isolation. However, upon review of overall absenteeism, a pattern of absenteeism appears that suggests possible culpability.

For example:

- Is the employee often absent every third Thursday of the month?
- Are there sick calls before or after a scheduled day or stretch of days off (e.g. weekends, scheduled days off, vacations)?
- Are there sick calls after requesting time off?
- Are there sick calls after being counseled or disciplined?
- Are there sick calls after uttering intention (i.e. if ... then I am going to call in sick)?

## **IF ABSENCES ARE INNOCENT, HOW CAN ABSENTEEISM BE IMPROVED?**

Absenteeism that is managed improves for many different reasons. A concentrated effort on the issues preventing regular attendance, by both the staff person and the manager, frequently identifies opportunities for positive changes in either the work environment or the home environment. This increases the likelihood of improved absenteeism.

For absenteeism management, the individual needs to believe that actions can be taken to improve performance, that his or her employment relationship will benefit from these actions, and that the benefit is worthwhile. Benefits do not need to be financial. Recognition, security in employment, praise, sense of pride or accomplishment and improved health/well-being are all possible benefits.

## **INDIVIDUAL ABSENTEEISM MANAGEMENT (IAM)**

IAM is the acronym for Individual Absenteeism Management. IAM has been developed by the College to assist Managers in their efforts to work with individual staff to address concerns relating to absenteeism.

Many different reasons keep employees from regular attendance. Individualized Absenteeism Management programs are necessary to have the best chance of successfully improving the level of absenteeism.

The following pages form a template for the manager to construct an effective individual absenteeism management program (IAM). An IAM consists of a number of supportive meetings in which a manager meets with an employee to improve awareness of current absenteeism in comparison to the norm/comparator group and to develop a plan on how to improve absenteeism. The regular monitoring and reassessment of the plan in relation to actual absenteeism at defined intervals, is also implemented. Absenteeism programs take time, effort and a sizable commitment, by both the manager and the staff person, to be successful. However, effective utilization of such programs has been demonstrated to have dramatic positive results.

Individual Absenteeism Management (IAM) is focused entirely on problem solving and accountability. There is no discipline involved at any step. However, the importance of meeting the expectations of this program are no less important as the viability of a staff person's on-going employment is at stake.

IAM is used to address absenteeism concerns with an individual staff member where his/her absenteeism is at a concerning level in relation to the comparator group. To assess whether an individual staff person's absenteeism level merits participation in IAM, the following steps should be taken:

1. What is the level of absenteeism for the individual employee in the last 12-month period (Note: if the employee is part-time, you must pro-rate to an equivalent of a full-time employee).
2. Are there any absences due to an ailment or injury that is unlikely to re-occur; if so, remove those absences from the individual employee's absence rate.
3. Are there any absences due to a WCB injury/illness and/or are the absences are part of an improved return to work accommodation plan; if so, remove these absences from the individual employee's absence rate.
4. After completing Steps 1-3, compare the individual employee's absence rate to the applicable comparator group rate.
5. If the rate of absence for the individual employee is higher than the comparator group, participation in an IAM may be appropriate.
6. If the rate of absence for the individual employee is lower than the comparator group, participation in an IAM is not appropriate. General Absenteeism Management efforts with this individual can be utilized and should be sufficient.
7. If any of the absences are culpable, these absences should be dealt with through a disciplinary process and not with absenteeism management.

## **ADDRESSING ABSENTEEISM ISSUES**

Where absenteeism is a legitimate concern after reviewing a staff person's absenteeism record, the manager will need to meet with the staff person to discuss the issue. Many absenteeism issues can be addressed and resolved through these initial discussions (paying attention to the issue) and can be maintained through on-going encouragement and monitoring. In other cases, no improvement is demonstrated. These situations require further meetings and active management in order to effectively attempt to improve absenteeism. This is when an Individual Absenteeism Management (IAM) Program may be appropriate. The steps of an IAM are outlined in summary form below with detailed templates on the following pages.

### **SUMMARY OF IAM STEP**

#### **Pre-Step**

When absenteeism concerns arise, a supervisor should discuss them with the employee as they arise. If the absenteeism concerns continue, the supervisor consults with HR to assess whether the application of an individualized absenteeism management program (IAM) is appropriate. If it is determined between the supervisor and Human Resources that an IAM is appropriate, the supervisor will schedule a meeting with the employee – See Step #1 below.

#### **Step #1: Formal Attention to Absenteeism (see pages 16-19)**

Formal attention to absenteeism is initiated when an employee's absenteeism has not improved after the initial informal discussion (Pre-Step) and continues to exceed the comparator group average.

#### **Step #2 Additional Formal Attention to Absenteeism (see pages 20-23)**

This step is initiated when an employee's absenteeism continues to exceed the comparator group average and the employee's absenteeism has not improved following the first formal discussion. The manager will meet with the employee and advise that he/she has not improved absenteeism to the satisfaction of the employer. Strategies previously discussed to improve absenteeism should be reviewed and possibly revised to provide further support.

#### **Step #3 Formal Attention to Absenteeism - Notice of Possible Termination (see pages 24-27)**

This step is initiated when an employee's absenteeism continues to exceed the comparator group average and the employee's absenteeism has not improved as outlined in the previous documented discussions. It is of key importance at this meeting that the employee be advised that if satisfactory improvement is not achieved, an assessment will be made which may determine whether employment will continue or whether it will be terminated due to his/her inability to attend work on a regular basis.

## **Step #4 Termination of Employment (Non-Disciplinary Termination) - see page 28)**

The objective of the Absenteeism Management process is to encourage and assist employees in achieving regular and consistent attendance at work and to provide support to employees in achieving that goal. However, in cases of prolonged excessive absenteeism from work, it may become evident that the employment relationship must end.

Termination of employment for non-culpable absenteeism requires the employer to clearly demonstrate through documented objective evidence that:

1. The employee has a history of excessive absenteeism and was aware of the absenteeism and of the need to improve to a reasonable level. In addition, the consequences of failing to meet those expectations have been clearly communicated and documented to the employee; and
2. There is no reasonable basis to conclude that the employee's absenteeism record will improve in the future. This may be supported by medical evidence or evidence of failed efforts to improve.

The onus of demonstrating the above rests with the **employer**. The employer must show that termination is justified and the employment relationship is no longer viable and has been undermined and fundamentally breached.

Termination must be subject to the duty to accommodate a recognized disability to the point of undue hardship, which is explained further in this guide.

### **SOME KEY POINTS**

- The timelines set out in the IAM Template Program are guidelines only and need to be adjusted for individual circumstances as warranted.
- Individualized plans are of key importance.
- Individual circumstances must be taken into account when assessing whether or not to proceed to the next step in the process. Proceeding to the next step is not automatic.
- The manager must maintain accurate documentation. This includes a written summary of all meetings with employees, whether informal or formal, together with the supporting scheduling and payroll records. Ensure that copies for the employee's file are provided to Human Resource Services as necessary.
- Where an employee's absence record can be attributed to a medical condition this may constitute a disability under the Manitoba Human Rights Code. As a result, reasonable accommodation may be required. Where a medical condition exists, consult with Human Resource Services.

## **SUGGESTIONS FOR ABSENTEEISM INTERVIEWS**

Managers need to be well-prepared in order to encourage a successful meeting. In order to be well-prepared, the manager should:

- think about what is intended to be accomplished (outcomes such as raising employee awareness of employer concerns, help to understand the cause of the absences, identifying solutions)
- review the employee's file and past absenteeism record, identify similar problems in the past, reasons for same, and any action taken to resolve the problems
- develop an appropriate approach and a number of alternatives
- seek advice from senior managers or human resources staff on key points to address during the interview
- allow enough time for discussion
- organize all the facts and information well in advance of the interview
- discuss the absenteeism concern, not other issues
- plan for taking notes at the interview process

In any meeting with an employee to address an absenteeism issue, the interview tone and setting are extremely important to the success of the meeting. It is important that the manager conducts the meeting in a respectful manner and in a tone that shows genuine concern. A tactful presentation of the issue and a request for improvement will encourage a positive employee response and help to establish a cooperative relationship. Keep in mind that the purpose of these meetings is to raise the employee's awareness of the absenteeism problem, inform him/her that the department is concerned, identify solutions and encourage improvement.

Some tools to assist Managers to prepare for absenteeism meetings are located in the Appendices to this Guide.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Present at Meeting: \_\_\_\_\_  
Comparator Rate: \_\_\_\_\_

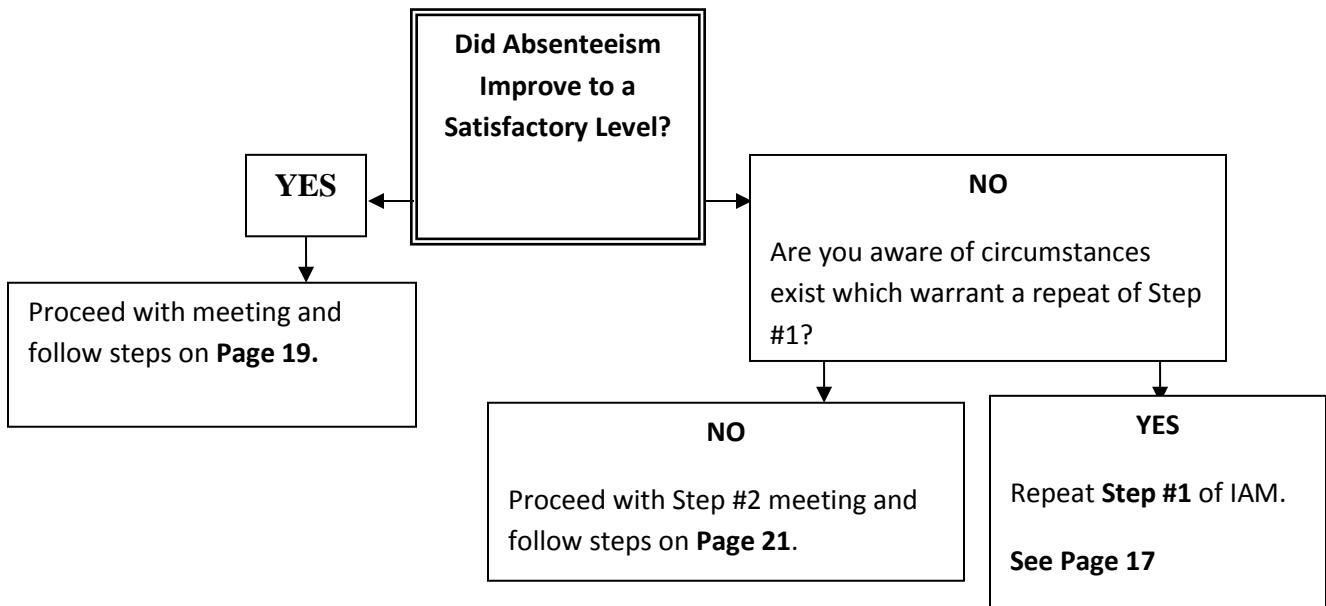
Employee: \_\_\_\_\_  
Department: \_\_\_\_\_  
Staff Rate: \_\_\_\_\_

### **IAM Step #1**

#### **Formal Communication of Absenteeism Management Concern: Initial Meeting**

Task to Be Completed by Manager	Done ( <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> )
<b>Before the Meeting with the Employee:</b>	
Review employee's absenteeism records to gather number of hours missed relative to the comparator group.	
Advise the employee that the meeting is to discuss the employee's absenteeism.	
Ask the employee if he/she would like a union representative present at the meeting.	
<b>At the Meeting with the Employee (and Union)</b>	
Inform the employee that this meeting is non-disciplinary	
Inform the employee of the IAM program and that this is Step #1. Provide the employee with IAM materials.	
Share with the employee the information collected in regard to absences and the concern that results from such level of absence.	
Encourage open dialogue with assurances of confidentiality with the expressed intent of identifying any causes of absence that may be mitigated by the efforts of the employee, the employer, the union or jointly by all of the parties and establish plans of how this will be accomplished.	
Discuss and request information from the employee as to the cause(s) for the absenteeism.	
Clearly communicate expectations in regard to absenteeism -- i.e., a rate of attendance is required at or below the comparator group. Each and every employee has a contractual obligation to attend work.	
Offer assistance where possible - remind the employee of the availability of confidential medical and counseling facilities (e.g. Employee and Family Assistance Program, Occupational Health). <b>Have these contact numbers available to give to the employee, if requested.</b>	
At the conclusion of the meeting, advise that a follow-up meeting will occur in approximately 12 weeks to continue the discussion and review progress. Set date for next meeting.	
Advise that if the required improvement in absenteeism is not achieved at that time that the next step in the IAM process may be implemented at the next meeting.	
<b>After the Meeting:</b>	
Document the meeting and discussion and keep in your management file. <b>This documentation does not get copied to the Employee file.</b>	
<b>Immediately Prior to Next Meeting:</b>	
Review absenteeism records and Assess whether there has been an improvement in the level of absenteeism to a satisfactory level (i.e. at or below average of comparator group).	

Your steps at the second meeting depend on whether or not there was an improvement in the level of absenteeism and if so, to what degree:



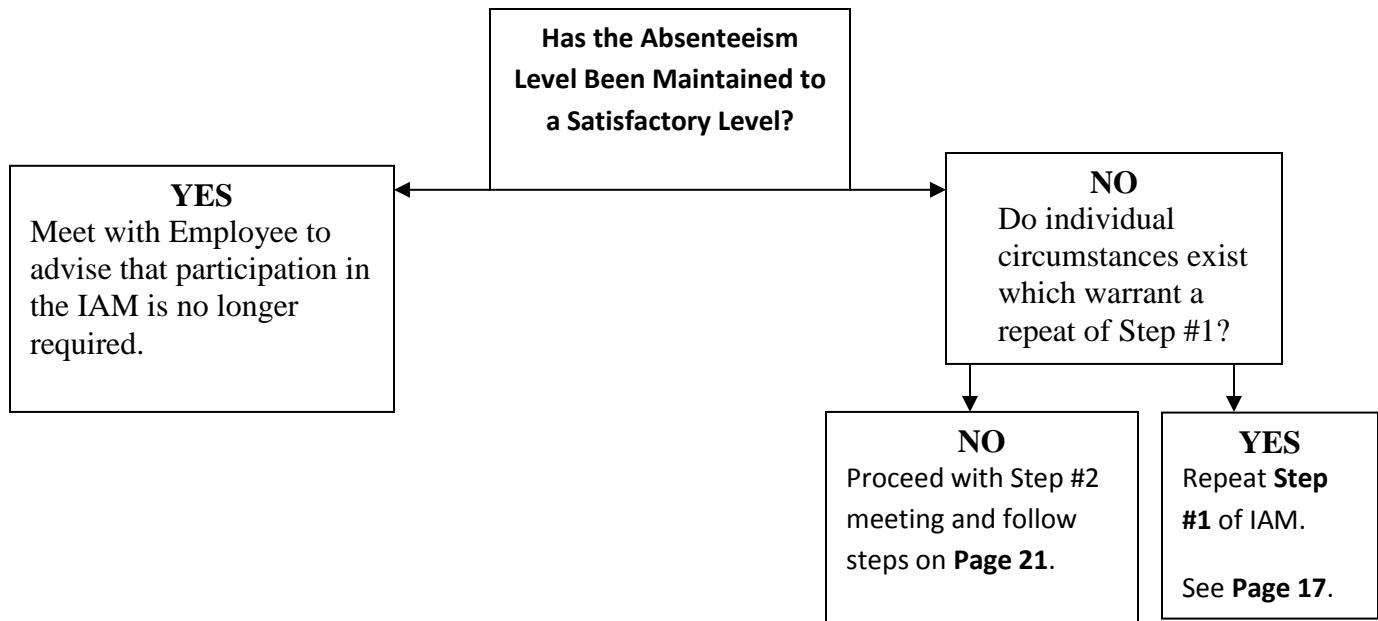
Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Present at Meeting: \_\_\_\_\_  
Comparator Rate: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee: \_\_\_\_\_  
Department: \_\_\_\_\_  
Staff Rate: \_\_\_\_\_

If Absenteeism has improved to a satisfactory level, After Step #1 (i.e. at or below average of comparator group)

Task to Be Completed by Manager	Done ( <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> )
<b>Before the Meeting with the Employee:</b>	
Review employee's absenteeism records.	
Consult with Human Resource Services identifying the nature of the situation and planning the next steps.	
<b>At the Meeting with the Employee (and union):</b>	
Meet with the Employee and review the absenteeism record since the meeting 8 -10 weeks prior.	
Inform the employee that based on their improved absenteeism they remain at <b>Step 1 of IAM</b> .	
Review and discuss the strategies discussed and implemented at the last meeting and how they may need to be supplemented/revised to assist in maintaining regular absenteeism.	
Ask for the employee's commitment to continue in their efforts to improve his/her absenteeism.	
Inform the employee that their absenteeism will continue to be monitored and that a follow-up meeting 12 weeks hence will be held to review their absenteeism and that you trust the improvement will be maintained. Set the date for next meeting	
Advise the employee that if improvement is maintained that an assessment will be made after the next meeting as to whether further meetings are required. If absenteeism is not maintained, then advise employee that they may be moving to Step #2 of IAM at the next meeting.	
<b>After the Meeting:</b>	
Document the meeting and discussion and keep in your management file. <b>This documentation does not get copied to the Employee file.</b>	
Task to Be Completed by Manager	Done ( <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> )
<b>Immediately Prior to Next Meeting:</b>	
Assess whether level of absenteeism has been maintained to a satisfactory level (i.e. at or below average of comparator group).	

Your next steps depend on whether or not there was an improvement in the level of absenteeism:



Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Present at Meeting: \_\_\_\_\_  
Comparator Rate: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee: \_\_\_\_\_  
Department: \_\_\_\_\_  
Staff Rate: \_\_\_\_\_

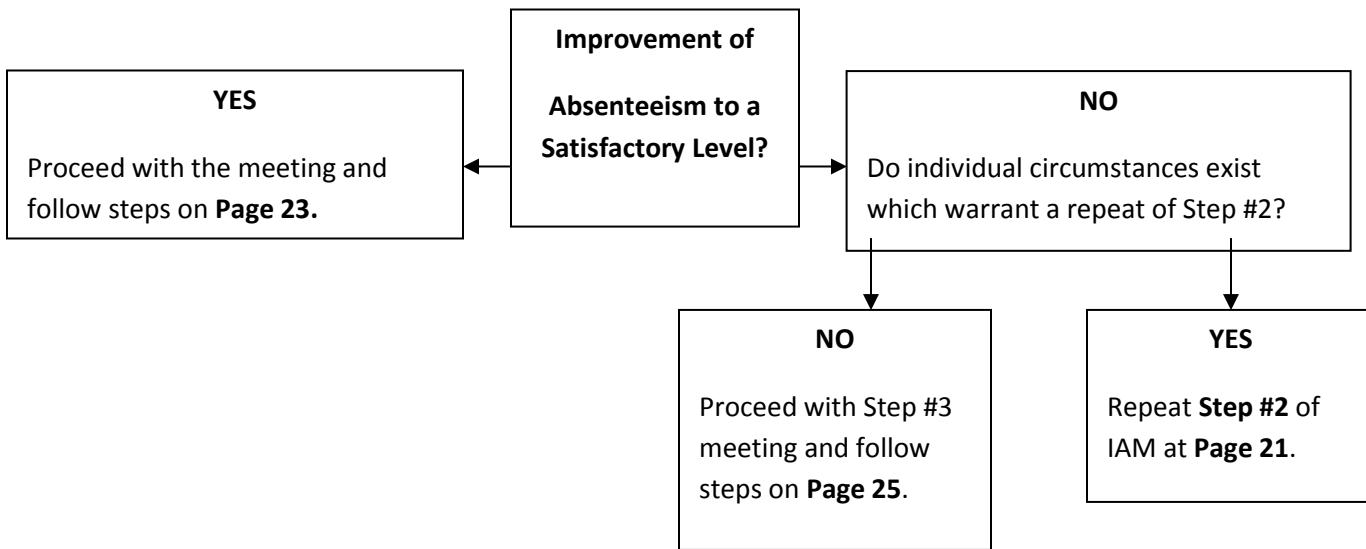
## **IAM Step # 2**

### **Formal Attention to Absenteeism**

Task to Be Completed by Manager	Done ( <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> )
<b>Before the Meeting with the Employee:</b>	
Review employee's absenteeism records.	
Consult with Human Resource Services identifying the nature of the situation and planning the next steps.	
<b>At the Meeting with the Employee (and union):</b>	
Meet with the Employee and review the absenteeism record since the meeting 8-10 weeks prior.	
Advise the employee that, due to inability to achieve a satisfactory level of absenteeism, he/she is at <b>Step #2 of IAM</b> .	
If some level of improvement has occurred, recognize this fact.	
Ask the employee if he/she has had an opportunity to review the IAM information and policy and ask whether he/she has any questions or requires any clarification. Ensure that IAM is identified as a tool to improve absenteeism.	
Discuss and ask the employee to identify the cause(s) for the absenteeism.	
Review and discuss the strategies previously developed and implemented at the last meeting and how they may need to be supplemented/revised to assist in achieving regular attendance.	
Offer assistance where possible - remind the employee of the availability of confidential medical and counseling facilities (e.g. Employee and Family Assistance Program, Occupational Health). <b>Have these contact numbers available to give to the employee, if requested.</b>	
If a medical condition is identified as a contributing factor to absence, <b>in consultation with Human Resource Services</b> , ask for medical verification and/or information in regard to medical restrictions and assess whether any accommodation for the employee may be required/appropriate.	
If appropriate or available, assess with the employee whether a (temporary or permanent) reduction in EFT, change in position, leave of absence, temporary suspension of picking up additional hours, etc. may be appropriate to assist the employee in his/her efforts to improve absenteeism. <b>Note: this option cannot be mandated by the Employer and can only be implemented if agreed to jointly by the employee, employer and the union.</b>	
Ask for the employee's commitment to continue in any efforts to try to improve his/her absenteeism.	
Inform the employee that his/her absenteeism will continue to be monitored and that a follow-up meeting 12 weeks hence will be held to review that absenteeism and that you trust an improvement will be achieved. Acknowledge that a meeting may take place sooner if circumstances warrant. Set the next meeting date.	

Advise the employee that a written record of this meeting will be produced and shared with the employee and maintained on the employee's <b>File</b> – written record shall be copied to the union if requested or required by the collective agreement. See <b>Template Letter #1, Page 37.</b> <b>(If Step #2 is repeated, use Template Letter #2, Page 38)</b>	
Advise the employee that if satisfactory improvement is not achieved/maintained by the next meeting, that we may be proceeding to Step #3 of IAM.	
<b>After the Meeting:</b>	
Follow up on all actions items.	
Ensure a written record of the meeting is sent to Human Resource Services for the Employee file.	
Ensure a written record of the meeting is provided to the employee and union representative.	
<b>Immediately Prior to Next Meeting:</b>	
Assess whether there has been an improvement in the level of absenteeism to a satisfactory level (i.e. at or below average of comparator group).	

Your next steps depend on whether or not there was an improvement in the level of absenteeism:



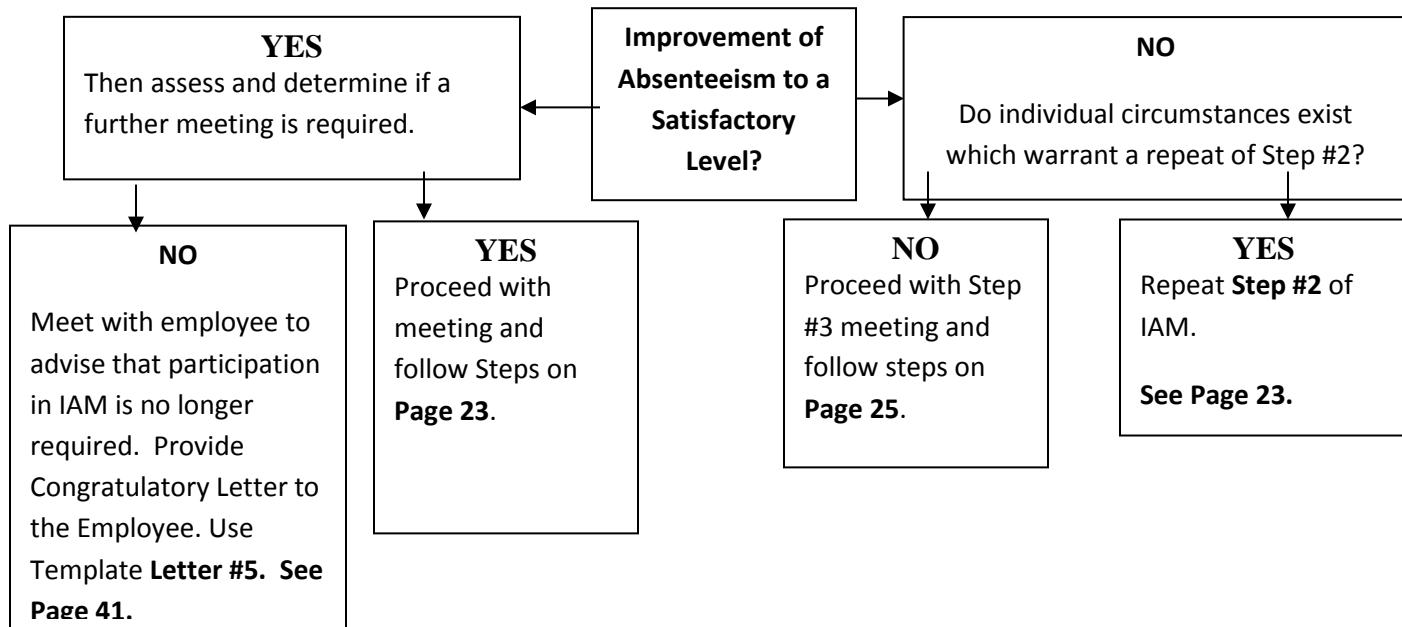
Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Present at Meeting: \_\_\_\_\_  
Comparator Rate: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee: \_\_\_\_\_  
Department: \_\_\_\_\_  
Staff Rate: \_\_\_\_\_

If Absenteeism has improved to a satisfactory level, after Step #2 (i.e. at or below average of comparator group)

Task to Be Completed by Manager	Done (✓)
<b>Before the Meeting with the Employee:</b>	
Review employee's absenteeism records.	
Consult with Human Resource Services identifying the nature of the situation and planning the next steps.	
<b>At the Meeting with the Employee (and union):</b>	
Meet with the Employee and review the absenteeism record since the Step #2 meeting 8 -10 weeks prior.	
Inform the employee that due to his/her efforts and ability to maintain an acceptable level of absenteeism he/she is remaining at <b>Step #2 of IAM</b> .	
Review and evaluate the strategies discussed and implemented at the last meeting and how they may need to be supplemented/revised to assist in maintaining regular attendance.	
Ask for the employee's commitment to continue in the efforts to improve his/her absenteeism.	
Inform the employee that his/her absenteeism will continue to be monitored and that a follow-up meeting 12 weeks hence will be held to review that absenteeism and that you trust the improvement will be maintained. Set the date for the next meeting.	
Advise the employee that a written record of this meeting will be produced and shared with the employee and maintained on the employee's <b>File</b> – written record shall be copied to the union if the union was present at the meeting or if required under the collective agreement. <b>See Template Letter #2, Page 38.</b>	
Advise the employee that if improvement is maintained, an assessment will be made after the next meeting as to whether further meetings are required. If absenteeism is not maintained, then advise employee that he/she may be moving to Step #3 of IAM.	
<b>After the Meeting:</b>	
Follow up on all actions items.	
Ensure a written record of the meeting is sent to Human Resource Services for the Employee File.	
Ensure a written record of the meeting is provided to the employee and union representative.	
<b>Immediately Prior to Next Meeting:</b>	
Assess whether an improvement in the level of absenteeism has been achieved to a satisfactory level (i.e. at or below average of comparator group).	

Your next steps depend on whether or not there was an improvement in the level of Absenteeism:



Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Present at Meeting: \_\_\_\_\_  
Comparator Rate: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee: \_\_\_\_\_  
Department: \_\_\_\_\_  
Staff Rate: \_\_\_\_\_

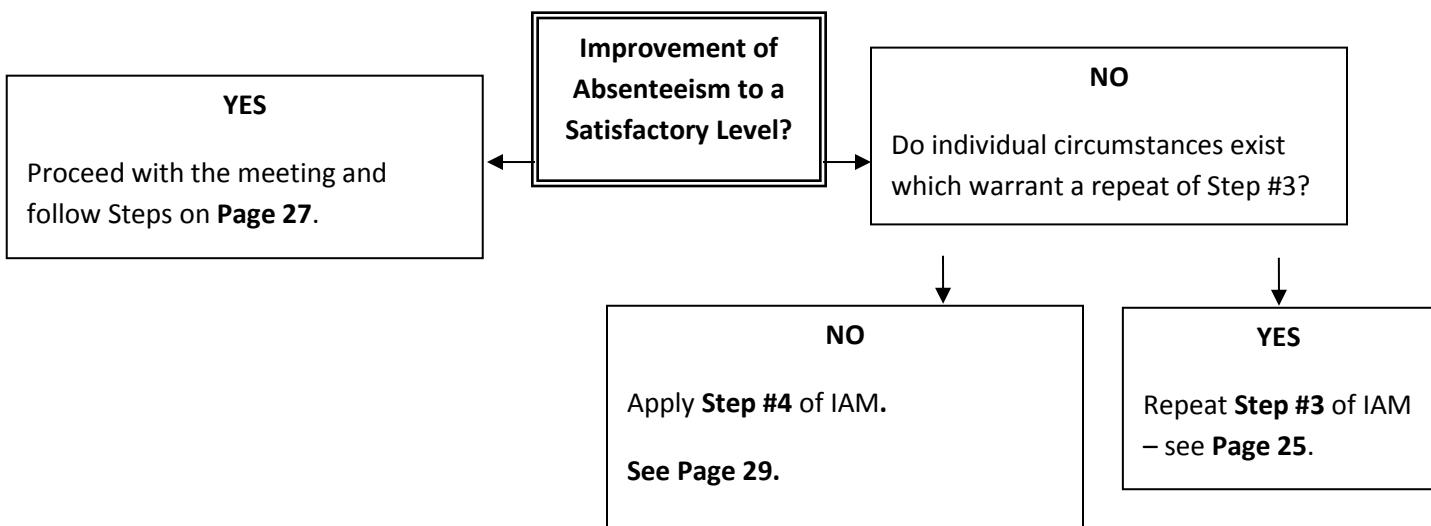
### **IAM Step 3**

#### **Formal Attention to Absenteeism: Notice of Possible Termination**

Task to Be Completed by Manager	Done ( <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> )
<b>Before the Meeting with the Employee:</b>	
Review employee's absenteeism records.	
Consult with Human Resource Services identifying the nature of the situation and planning the next steps.	
<b>At the Meeting with the Employee (and union):</b>	
Meet with the Employee and review the absenteeism record since the meeting 12 weeks prior.	
Inform that due to an inability to achieve an acceptable level of absenteeism, he/she are at <b>Step 3 of IAM</b> .	
If some level of improvement has occurred, recognize this fact.	
Ask the employee if he/she has any questions or requires any clarification in regard to IAM. Ensure that IAM is identified as a tool to improve absenteeism. <b>IAM is not a disciplinary process.</b>	
Discuss and identify the cause(s) for the absenteeism, if possible.	
Review and discuss the strategies discussed and implemented at the last meeting and how they may need to be supplemented/revised to assist in achieving regular attendance.	
Offer assistance where possible - remind the employee of the availability of confidential medical and counseling facilities (e.g. Employee Assistance Program). Have these contact numbers available to give to the employee, if requested.	
If a medical condition is identified as a contributing factor to absence, <b>in consultation with Human Resource Services</b> , ask for medical verification and/or information in regard to medical restrictions and assess whether any accommodation for the employee may be required/appropriate.	
If appropriate and available, assess with the employee whether a (temporary or permanent) reduction in EFT, change in position, leave of absence, etc. may be appropriate to assist the employee in his/her efforts. <b>Note: this option cannot be mandated by the Employer and can only be implemented if agreed to jointly by the employee, employer and the union.</b>	
Ask for the employee's continued commitment to trying to improve his/her absenteeism.	
Inform the employee that absenteeism will continue to be monitored and that a follow-up meeting 12 weeks hence will be held to review his/her absenteeism and that you trust an improvement will be achieved. Set the date for the next meeting.	
Advise the employee that a written record of this meeting will be produced and shared with the employee and maintained on the employee file and copied to the union if the union was present at the meeting. <b>See Template Letter #3, Page 39.</b>	

Advise the employee that if satisfactory improvement is not achieved by the next meeting (i.e. at or below average for comparator group) that an assessment will be made by the Employer as to whether his/her employment will be continued or whether it will be terminated due to frustration of contract because of his/her inability to attend work on a regular basis. (Step #4 of the IAM)	
<b>Task to Be Completed by Manager</b>	Done (✓)
<b>After the Meeting:</b>	
Follow up on all actions items.	
Ensure a written record of the meeting is sent to Human Resource Services for the Employee File.	
Ensure a written record of the meeting is provided to the employee and union representative.	
<b>Immediately Prior to Next Meeting:</b>	
Assess whether there has been an improvement in the level of to a satisfactory level (i.e. at or below average of comparator group).	

Your next steps depend on whether or not there was an improvement in the level of absenteeism:

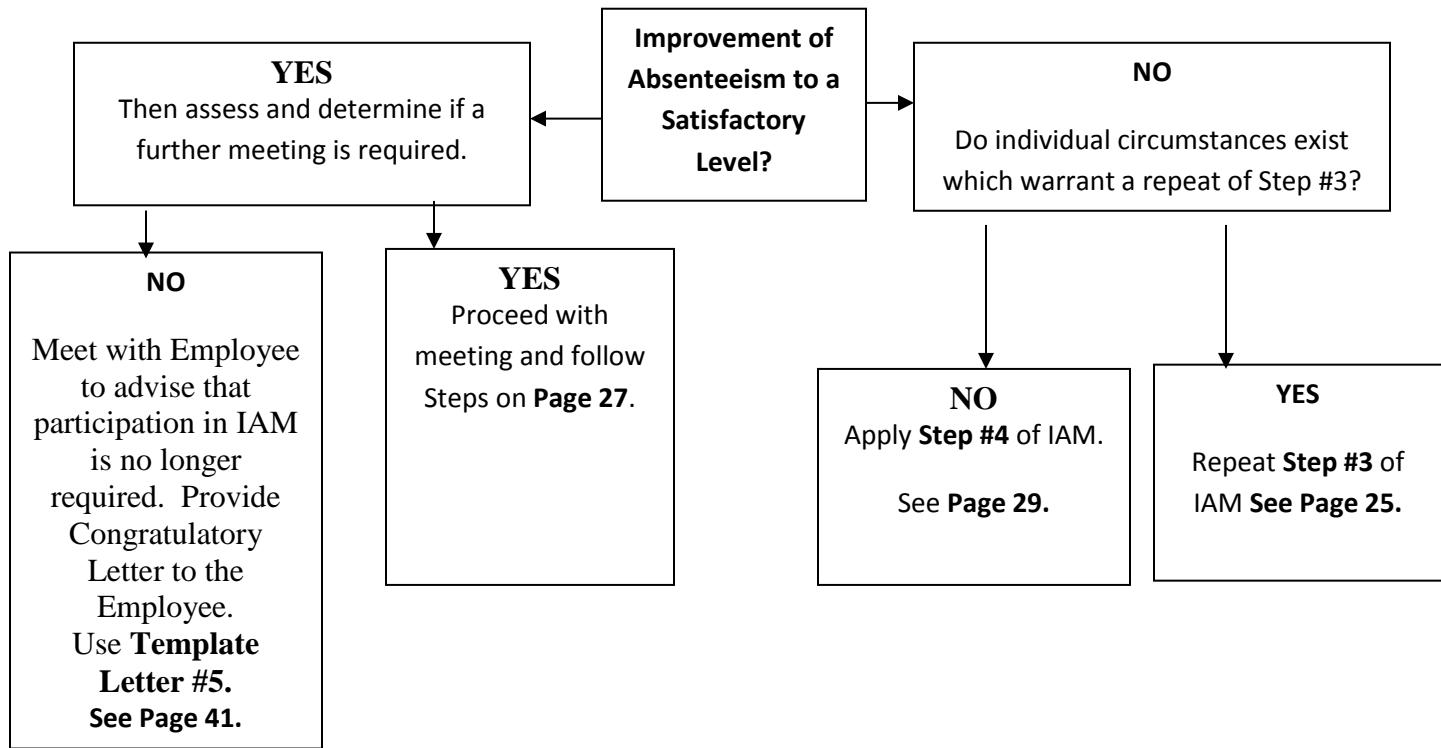


Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Present at Meeting: \_\_\_\_\_  
Comparator Rate: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee: \_\_\_\_\_  
Department: \_\_\_\_\_  
Staff Rate: \_\_\_\_\_

**IF ABSENTEEISM HAS IMPROVED TO A SATISFACTORY LEVEL AFTER STEP #3 (i.e. at or below average of comparator group):**

Task to Be Completed by Manager	Done (✓)
<b>Before the Meeting with the Employee:</b>	
Review employee's absenteeism records.	
Consult with Human Resource Services identifying the nature of the situation and planning the next steps.	
<b>At the Meeting with the Employee (and union):</b>	
Meet with the Employee and review the absenteeism record since the meeting 8 -10 weeks prior.	
Inform the employee that due to his/her efforts and improvement in absenteeism, they are remaining at <b>Step 3 of IAM</b> .	
Review and discuss the strategies discussed and implemented at the last meeting and how they may need to be supplemented/revised to assist in maintaining regular attendance.	
Ask for the employee's commitment to continue in the efforts to improve his/her absenteeism.	
Inform the employee that absenteeism will continue to be monitored and that a follow-up meeting 12 weeks hence will be held to review that absenteeism and that you trust the improvement will be maintained. Set date for the next meeting.	
Advise the employee that a written record of this meeting will be produced and shared with the employee and maintained on the employee's file – written record shall be copied to the union if the union was present at the meeting. <b>Template #3, See page 39.</b>	
Advise the employee that if improvement is maintained an assessment will be made after the next meeting as to whether further meetings are required. If absenteeism is not maintained, then advise employee that an assessment will be made by the employer as to whether he/she may be moving into Step #4 of IAM. (Termination of Employment)	
<b>After the Meeting:</b>	
Follow up on all actions items.	
Ensure a written record of the meeting is sent to Human Resource Services for the Employee File.	
Ensure a written record of the meeting is provided to the employee and union representative.	
<b>Immediately Prior to Next Meeting:</b>	
Assess whether there has been an improvement in the level of absenteeism has been achieved to a satisfactory level (i.e. at or below average of comparator group).	



Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Present at Meeting: \_\_\_\_\_  
Comparator Rate: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee: \_\_\_\_\_  
Department: \_\_\_\_\_  
Staff Rate: \_\_\_\_\_

## **IAM Step 4**

### **Formal Absenteeism Management: Assessment of Ongoing Viability of Employment**

Task to Be Completed	Done (✓)
Meet with Human Resource Services prior to meeting with employee and determine, based on the factual circumstances, whether a further opportunity to improve should be afforded the employee (repeat of Step #3 – See page 27) or whether it is time to end the employment relationship.	
If employment is to be terminated, <b>Human Resource Services must be present</b> at the meeting. Human Resource Services will prepare the letter of termination and will conduct the meeting. See Letter Template #4, Page 40.	

#### **KEY POINT**

Before terminating for non-culpable or innocent absenteeism, two conditions must be satisfied before termination will be upheld:

1. That the employee has a history of excessive absenteeism, was aware of it and the need to improve it to a reasonable level; and
2. That the employee is incapable of maintaining regular and consistent attendance in the future, supported by medical prognosis or evidence of failed efforts to improve.

The onus of demonstrating frustration of contract in situations of termination as a result of absenteeism rests with the **employer** and must be demonstrated through **clearly documented** objective evidence.

## APPENDICES

## **SUGGESTED ANSWERS TO FAQ'S**

- Q. The absenteeism of many others is much worse than mine. Why have I been singled out?
- A. This meeting has been arranged to discuss your absenteeism. It would not be appropriate to discuss another individual's absenteeism record in this meeting.
- Q. I have medical certificates for every one of the days you mentioned. Don't you realize that I was sick on each one of those days?
- A. Yes, I realize you were sick on those days and I do not believe you have been abusing the sick leave policy. If I did, I would be considering a disciplinary process. However, I am concerned that you are unable to be at work on a regular basis and that your absences have resulted in unsatisfactory absenteeism. Good attendance is a requirement of your position. We are entitled to expect a reasonable level of attendance from you. Your absences create staffing problems and increase workload for other staff. I would like to be able to provide you with support or resources that would help you with this problem. If there is a medical problem, it will benefit all to ensure that you seek advice and resources to remedy the situation. If you have a medical condition that may require accommodation, I can refer you to the accommodation specialist in Human Resources.
- Q. How long will you be monitoring my absenteeism?
- A. I monitor all my employees' absenteeism on an ongoing basis. In addition, as a result of your absenteeism record, you will remain in the absenteeism management program until you maintain an acceptable absenteeism.
- Q. Why is absenteeism management being implemented now?
- A. Absenteeism management is not a new expectation or process at the College. This guide has been developed to better assist employees and managers in understanding absenteeism expectations.
- Q. How can I be disciplined for being sick?
- A. The absenteeism management process is not a disciplinary process. The purpose of absenteeism management is to assist employees in understanding absenteeism requirements as well as support employees in effectively managing absenteeism through discussions and coaching.
- Q. Can I no longer use sick leave?
- A. Employees can still utilize their sick leave. Sick leave is available to assist employees who are unable to be at work as a result of illness or injury. However, management has a responsibility to monitor absenteeism and the performance of all employees and discuss concerns that may arise with employees. This includes discussions surrounding improving absenteeism.

- Q.** Other staff are sick as much as me. Why is my manager meeting with just me?
- A.** Information surrounding an employee's specific absenteeism record and actions being taken are not shared or discussed with other co-workers. Some employees may feel they are being singled out when, in reality, conversations have occurred with others but this information is confidential and not shared.
- Q.** How is absenteeism management supportive when it might lead to the termination of my employment?
- A.** The objective of Absenteeism Management is to encourage and assist employees in achieving regular and consistent attendance at work and to provide support to employees in achieving that goal. In cases of prolonged excessive absenteeism from work where there is no likelihood of improvement, it may become evident that the employment relationship must end. The employment relationship may be legally terminated, as all employees have a contractual obligation to attend work.

Termination of employment due to excessive absenteeism is used as a last resort and only after an employee has been given a reasonable amount of time to improve.

- Q.** Can I bring my union representative to an Absenteeism Management meeting?
- A:** Because Absenteeism Management for non-culpable absenteeism is a non-disciplinary process, employees do not require union representation at the meetings. However, an employee may request union involvement if they wish.

## How to Begin a Difficult Conversation

Using the “POISED” principle means you are calm, confident and ready to “attend” to absenteeism. Try this approach when one of your employees experiences an absence from work:

Purpose	Explain your Purpose
Observation	State your Observation
Information	Exchange Information
Solution	Discuss a Solution
End	End on a Positive Note
Document	Document your Discussion

### Sample Conversation:

*Manager:* I'd like to spend a few minutes talking about your absenteeism. You're an important member of this team and I'm concerned that the team/unit will be challenged to handle the workload if you are not able to regularly attend work. [Purpose]

Perhaps we could start with you telling me a bit about your recent absence from work? [Observation]

*Employee:* I haven't missed that much work. Which time are you referring to?

*Manager:* The absenteeism records show that you've missed 3 Fridays over the past 6 weeks – January 6, 20 and February 3. We can discuss each day separately if that would make more sense or, if it's easier for you, we can just discuss the absences in more general terms. [Information]

*Employee:* I won't need to be away in the future. I'll be able to get the work done, don't worry.

*Manager:* I'm not solely concerned about your past absences but I want to make sure you are OK. I feel that you bring some great skills to the team and I want to make sure that things are acceptable for you to attend work here. About the absences over the past few weeks, what do you need or what can we do to help you attend work regularly? [Information]

*Employee:* I've been having some trouble with my day care and there have been a few days when I couldn't find alternate day care for my kids. I've solved the problem and it won't happen again.

*Manager:* I know that finding suitable day care can be very difficult in this city. I am glad to hear that you have found a solution. How did you do it? Were the arrangements fairly easy to make? [Information & Solution]

*Employee:* Yeah, I've moved my kids to a different day care that offers better hours for me.

*Manager:* Well, that's great. So, you're not expecting to have further absences because of day care issues?

*Employee:* No.

*Manager:* That's good. If you think you'll need to be absent again because of this issue, I'd like us to develop a plan for how we can deal with your absence. Is there any way that you can anticipate future day care issues, perhaps in discussion with your new day care? **[Solution]**

*Employee:* I can speak to them just to make sure the hours will remain regular, and to see if they can accommodate all the hours I might have to work over the next few months.

*Manager:* That would be excellent. So, we've agreed that you'll speak with your day care to help avoid any future scheduling issues, and you will call me in advance if you anticipate any absences due to day care issues? **[Solution]**

*Employee:* Yes.

*Manager:* Great! I'm glad we discussed this because you're a part of a really strong team we have here, and we'll be even stronger with everyone attending regularly. **[End]**

#### MANAGER'S ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

- Will this person keep facing the same problem?
- Have we identified all of the root causes of the problem?
- Is there a clear action plan in place to avoid the root cause of the problem recurring?

## **Tips for Meeting with Employees Regarding Absenteeism**

### **BE POSITIVE**

- make sure you are feeling positive and resourceful at the time of the meeting
- know that your behaviour will set the pace for the meeting
- don't expect the worst - or you might get it!

### **LISTEN ACTIVELY**

- stop talking and really listen to the employee
- paraphrase what the employee says - state it back in your own words: "So what I hear you saying is...."
- empathize with the stated (or unstated) emotions: "I can see you are upset ...."
- confirm that you have clearly understood the employee's perspective

### **SEPARATE PERCEPTION FROM INTERPRETATION**

- ask for specifics/examples. If the employee says something like: "You don't care about me!" Rather than responding with a defensive remark like: "I do so!" inquire about how the employee came to that conclusion (interpretation). Say something like: "Can you give me an example of something I have done or haven't done that has communicated to you that I don't respect your work?" (perception/behavior)

### **MANAGE YOUR OWN EMOTIONS**

- let the employee 'own' his/her own emotions. Taking on an employee's destructive emotions can be debilitating and limit your effectiveness as a supervisor.
- take time out if you need it. It is better to call a 5 minute break - walk around the office to cool off, and then resume the meeting - than to risk losing credibility with your employee because you were not able to manage your own emotions
- practice deep breathing. You can do this on the way to the meeting and during the meeting. This practice actually results in a physiological change that allows you to be more resourceful and in control when you need to be

### **RESCHEDULE IF IT SEEMS APPROPRIATE**

- ask employee to take some time to calm down.
- reschedule for another time.

### RRC Absenteeism Policy

– Will be distributed.

## **IAM Template Letter #1**

PERSONAL & CONFIDENTIAL

DATE

NAME  
POSITION  
DEPARTMENT

**Sample**

Dear Employee:

**RE: ABSENTEEISM SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

This will confirm our meeting of [date] which was held to discuss concerns regarding your absenteeism. In attendance at this meeting, in addition to myself, was/were [name(s)]. To confirm, the employer does not doubt the legitimacy of the absences. The purpose of this Step #1 meeting was to review, in consultation with you, whether opportunities exist through the development of a plan to reduce the number of future absences. This meeting and the discussion about your absences is not disciplinary and does not constitute or create a disciplinary record.

The comparator group used by the employer for the purposes of assessing the average level of absence was the [insert comparator group], which has an average absence level of [\_\_] hours over the last [insert time period used] period of time. Your sick time utilization rate over that same period was [] hours.

Due to the number of absences experienced, the employer determined it appropriate, as part of the plan to assist you in your efforts to reduce your levels of absence, to enroll you in an Individualized absenteeism Management Program (IAM). A written description of this program was shared with you and you are encouraged to review this material and to direct any questions to me. We appreciate your commitment to participate in this program and your personal commitment to improve your future absenteeism. At a minimum, you are required to establish and maintain attendance that is equal to, or better than, the comparator group. Failure to achieve this may result in us moving to Step #2 of IAM.

As part of the program, the following options/efforts will be pursued to assist in your efforts to reduce your level of absence:

- [List the actions/steps that were committed to during the meeting by any of the participating parties]

These actions, together with your number of absences, will be reviewed at our next meeting which is scheduled for [insert date]. If you encounter any difficulties with matters affecting your absenteeism prior to the next meeting, you are encouraged to contact me, your union or other supports available to assist you as quickly as possible so that we can work together to address them.

We trust that our joint efforts will succeed in assisting you in your commitment to regular attendance in the future.

Sincerely,

cc:      HRC  
          Employee file  
          MGEU

## **IAM Template Letter #2**

PERSONAL & CONFIDENTIAL

DATE

NAME

POSITION

DEPARTMENT

**Sample**

Dear Employee:

**RE: ABSENTEEISM SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE**

This will confirm our meeting of [date], which was held to discuss your absenteeism. In attendance at this meeting, in addition to myself, was/were [name(s)]. The purpose of this meeting was to review whether there has been success in reducing your level of absence since our last meeting of [insert date]. This Step #2 meeting and letter, together with the discussion about your absences, is not disciplinary and does not constitute or create a disciplinary record.

Since our last meeting, your rate of absence was [ ], while the rate of absence for your comparator group was [ ].

During the meeting, we reviewed your Individualized Absenteeism Management Program (IAM) as well as the options/efforts discussed at our last meeting to assist in your efforts to reduce your level of absence. Specifically, we discussed the following changes/additional steps that would be taken to assist you in your continued efforts:  
[List the actions/steps that were committed to during the meeting by any of the participating parties]

[Insert following paragraph if improvement did not occur or was marginal] Your level of absence [despite some improvement] continues to be of substantial concern in regard to the comparator group. Once again, you are encouraged to review the IAM materials provided to you, to think of any further opportunities to assist in the efforts to reduce your rate of absence and to raise any questions to my attention.

Your number of absences, together with the actions forming part of IAM, will be reviewed at our next meeting scheduled for [insert date]. If you encounter any difficulties with matters affecting your absenteeism prior to the next meeting, you are encouraged to contact me, your union or other supports available to assist you as quickly as possible so that we can work together to address them.

[Insert following paragraph if satisfactory absenteeism] Your efforts and accomplishments, which have resulted in your achieving an acceptable level of absence, are to be congratulated. We trust that you will be able to sustain your attendance into the future.

[Insert following paragraph if absenteeism not satisfactory] Your efforts are appreciated and it is hoped that you will achieve an attendance level better than, or in keeping with, your comparator group. Failure to achieve this may result in moving to Step #3 of IAM. Achieving regular attendance is very important to your continued employment with us and your commitment to achieving this is the key to success.

Sincerely,

cc:      HRC  
          Employee file  
          MGEU

## **IAM Template Letter #3**

[EMPLOYER]

PERSONAL & CONFIDENTIAL

DATE

NAME  
POSITION  
DEPARTMENT

**Sample**

Dear Employee:

**RE: ABSENTEEISM SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE**

This will confirm our meeting of [date], which was held to discuss your absenteeism. In attendance at this meeting, in addition to myself, was/were [name(s)]. The purpose of this meeting was to review whether there has been success in reducing your level of absence since our last meeting of [insert date]. This Step #3 meeting and letter, together with the discussion about your absences, is not disciplinary and does not constitute or create a disciplinary record.

Since our last meeting, your rate of absence was [ ], while the rate of absence for your comparator group was [ ].

During the meeting, we reviewed your Individualized Absenteeism Management Program (IAM) as well as the options/efforts discussed at our last meeting to assist in your efforts to reduce your level of absence. Specifically, we discussed the following changes/additional steps that would be taken to assist you in your continued efforts:

[List the actions/steps that were committed to during the meeting by any of the participating parties]

[Insert following paragraph if improvement did not occur or was marginal] Your level of absence [despite some improvement] continues to be of substantial concern in regard to the comparator group. Once again, you are encouraged to review the IAM materials provided to you, to identify any further opportunities to assist in efforts to reduce your rate of absence and to raise any questions to my attention.

Your number of absences, together with the actions forming part of IAM, will be reviewed at our next meeting scheduled for [insert date]. If you encounter any difficulties with matters affecting your absenteeism prior to the next meeting, you are encouraged to contact me, your union or, other supports available to assist you as quickly as possible in order that we can work together to address them.

[Insert following paragraph if satisfactory absenteeism] Your efforts and accomplishments, which have resulted in your achieving an acceptable level of absence, are to be congratulated. We trust that you will be able to sustain your attendance into the future.

[Insert following paragraph if absenteeism not satisfactory] We must reinforce that it is extremely important that you achieve an attendance level better than, or in keeping with, your comparator group. Should you not be able to achieve a rate of absenteeism at or below the absence rate of your comparator group before our next meeting, the employer will need to decide whether to continue or terminate (Step #4) your employment, in light of your inability to attend work on a regular basis. We trust that you will immediately take the necessary steps and actions to reduce and maintain your absence to an acceptable level.

Sincerely,

CC:      HRC  
            Employee file  
            MGEU

## **IAM Template Letter #4**

[EMPLOYER]

PERSONAL & CONFIDENTIAL

DATE

NAME

POSITION

DEPARTMENT

Dear Employee:

**RE: ABSENTEEISM SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE**

This will confirm our meeting of [date] which was held to discuss your absenteeism. In attendance at this meeting, in addition to myself, was/were [name(s)]. The purpose of this meeting was to review whether there has been success in reducing your level of absence since our last meeting of [insert date]. This meeting and letter, together with the discussion about your absences, is not disciplinary and does not constitute or create a disciplinary record.

Your absenteeism has not shown improvement since our last meeting. Over this time, your rate of absence was [ ], while the rate of absence for your comparator group was [ ].

Every reasonable effort has been made to offer you assistance and work cooperatively with you to improve your absenteeism. Unfortunately, your absenteeism has not improved since the last meeting on [date] and there is no evidence available to support a foreseeable improvement in the future.

Due to your demonstrated inability to attend work on a regular basis and the lack of any foreseeable improvement, the employment contract has been frustrated. Effective immediately, your services as an employee of the Employer are being terminated. All earned wages, other monies and necessary documents will be processed and forwarded to you by registered mail within five (5) working days.

Thank you for your service. We wish you the best with your future endeavors and encourage you, should your circumstances change such that you can attend work regularly in the future, to contact us in regard to potential employment.

Sincerely,

CC:      HRC  
          Employee file  
          MGEU

**Sample**

## **IAM Template Letter #5**

[EMPLOYER]

PERSONAL & CONFIDENTIAL

DATE

NAME  
POSITION  
DEPARTMENT

Dear Employee:

**RE: ABSENTEEISM SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE**

This will confirm our meeting of [date] which was held to discuss your absenteeism. In attendance at this meeting, in addition to myself, was/were [name(s)]. The purpose of this meeting was to review whether there has been success in maintaining a satisfactory level of absenteeism since our last meeting of [insert date]. This meeting and letter, together with the discussion about your absences is not disciplinary and does not constitute or create a disciplinary record.

I am pleased to note that your absenteeism has been maintained at a satisfactory level. In light of your demonstrated ability and commitment to maintain an acceptable level of absenteeism over an extended period, I am very pleased to advise that you will no longer be required to participate in the Individualized Absenteeism Management Program. Please continue to access your manager, human resources and/or union for continued support, as required, in the future.

We applaud your hard work and efforts to achieve this result. Congratulations and thank you for being a valuable member of our staff.

Sincerely,

cc:      HRC  
          Employee file  
          MGEU

**Sample**