



SECTION: HR
TOPIC: SICK LEAVE 01
MGT OF
FEBRUARY, 2007

ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICES MANUAL

SUBJECT: SICK LEAVE USE-MANAGEMENT OF

It is the policy of Dane County that there be fair, equitable, consistent and uniform management of sick leave across departments and bargaining units. The following procedures have been established as guidelines for monitoring sick leave use, while at the same time allowing for management discretion to deal with case-by-case differences.

Employees are expected to report for duty as scheduled. They are expected to notify the designated departmental representative in a timely manner whenever they are unable to do so. Failing to work as scheduled or failing to report on time detracts from the effectiveness of County operations and may adversely affect customer service.

END OF POLICY



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RESPONSIBILITY

Manager/Supervisor

ACTION

1. Establish a uniform approach to managing sick leave.
2. When employee calls in sick he/she must call either the department head, supervisor or designee. If the message is left with a co-worker, the manager or supervisor, at his/her discretion, may call the employee and verify the absence.
3. Annual performance evaluations should address sick leave usage.
4. Review sick leave on an annual basis. If the employee has reached one of the thresholds listed below, then investigate to determine if any action will be taken.
5. There are many reasons why an employee may have used an "excessive" amount of sick leave, including but not limited, to the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). Sick leave used under the provisions of either the State or Federal FMLA is explicitly excluded when computing the level of use. FMLA provides for the use of sick leave, therefore, employees cannot be counseled or disciplined for using this entitlement. It is expected that a manager will distinguish between an appropriate and inappropriate use of sick leave and reserve the use of any remedial action only for true abuse of sick leave. Any discipline imposed should be consistent with applicable County policies and/or labor agreements.
6. The following system is designed to provide a continuum of appropriate responses to sick leave usage from no response to remedial action. Usage is based on percentage of



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6. (continued) hours earned in the previous calendar year. A percentage was established in order to take into account employees who work ten (10) hour days, are part-time or whose work schedules differ in other ways from the norm.
7. If an employee's annual sick leave usage is less than 50%, no action is required.
8. As an employee approaches the 66% threshold, the department head or designee should consider meeting with the employee in order to discuss the developing situation. There could be two results from this discussion: a) the usage is explainable and justifiable and no further action is required or b) the usage is of a questionable nature. If usage is a concern, then this session could be designed as an opportunity to discuss issues that are contributing to the usage, and to make a referral, if appropriate, to the County Employee Assistance Program.
9. A meeting should be held with an employee who has used more than 66% of his/her sick leave in the previous year. The determination should be made as to whether the usage is justifiable or questionable. Justifiable usage requires no action. An employee with questionable usage may be required for each subsequent absence to provide a statement from the primary physician that indicates the date the employee was examined and the expected return to work date. An employee's failure to comply with this requirement will be considered insubordination subject to discipline.



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10. If sick leave usage exceeds 76%, then another meeting should be held with the employee to determine the specific circumstances causing the rate to be at this level. If the level of use is justified then no action should be taken. If the usage is a cause for concern, then the manager may consult with the Employee Relations Division for advice on uniform remedial action. Such action is appropriate if for example: a) there is a pattern of absenteeism in conjunction with paydays, or immediately following every vacation, or same days of the week; b) there is use of unscheduled leave under false pretenses; or c) the employee has an excessive series of undocumented absences.
11. At the manager's discretion, a physician's release to return to work may be required after three (3) consecutive days of absence due to illness.
12. Managers have the discretion to make exceptions to the recommended continuum due to an extended illness or other extenuating circumstances. Note: absences covered by FMLA are specifically excluded from the continuum, as described above.
13. When sick leave is exhausted, sick time may be converted to other leave balances, including vacation, holiday and comp time, before using short-term non-preapproved absence without pay. Due to the system of oversight outlined in this procedure, it is recommended that records be maintained to account for any absence due to illness that has been deducted from other balances.

END OF PROCEDURE