

DEPARTMENT: Human Resources
POLICY NAME: Attendance Control
POLICY NUMBER: V-38
ORIGINATOR: Human Resources
EFFECTIVE DATE: 8/89
REVISED DATE(s): 7/09, 10/11, 3/14, 7/14, 2/16, 1/19
REVIEWED DATE: 4/12, 7/13, 3/14

SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees.

PURPOSE

Meritus Health is committed to establishing and maintaining work schedules on a fair and consistent basis and providing opportunities for the employee and manager to jointly manage attendance. The purpose of this policy is to define the intent with respect to tracking employees' time, attendance at work, and managing employees' attendance to meet the scheduling and business needs of the department.

Employees' work schedules should be established and maintained on a fair and equitable basis, and in a way that assures patient care, health of the employee, and the safe and efficient operation of the organization. Absences that qualify for protection under the Maryland Healthy Working Families Act (MHWFA), commonly referred to as Safe and Sick Leave (SSL) and the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) will also be tracked and monitored through the Attendance Control Policy.

The policy is a tool for use in managing attendance of all employees. Standardization and consistency is necessary, but good judgment and discretion are also vital to the success of the program. While the techniques and tools should be consistent, the treatment of people must continue on an individual basis.

DEFINITIONS

Occurrence:

The assigned penalty applied to absences, tardy, leave early and double occurrence as defined below. Except for the following situations:

Exceptions:

1. Planned or unplanned absences, tardy, leave early or double occurrence protected as SSL or approved FML will not be counted as an occurrence under this policy.
2. Authorized bereavement leaves, military leave and jury duty.

3. Other leaves of absence or time off approved by employee's department head such as attendance at seminars, workshops etc. Time off covered by Worker's Compensation Policy is not chargeable under this policy for disciplinary action purposes.
4. Employees who have been found to present an infection control or safety risk due to illness or injury and are instructed to leave the workplace.

Absence:

Not present or not in attendance for a scheduled shift and/or missing 50% or more of a scheduled shift. An absence is not viewed as approved or unapproved. Any absence may be chargeable under this policy for disciplinary action purposes.

Tardy:

Missing less than 50% of a shift from the beginning of their start time. There is a five (5) minute grace period at the start of a scheduled shift, so the employee is considered tardy when he/she accesses the time and attendance system six (6) minutes after the scheduled shift starts. For the purposes of this policy, two (2) incidents of tardiness = 1 occurrence.

Leave Early:

Missing less than 50% of a shift at the end of a shift. Leave early does not include employees sent home for departmental productivity requirements. Two (2) incidents of leave early = 1 occurrence. Exception: tardiness of employees required to open/close an off-site location will count as a full (1) occurrence.

Double Occurrence:

Meritus will double the value of an occurrence when the unexcused absence occurs as follows:

1. When an employee calls off for the scheduled shift before, after, or on a recognized holiday.
2. When an employee calls off for the last scheduled shift(s) before an approved vacation/PTO day or the first scheduled shift after an approved vacation/PTO day(s).

Rolling Twelve (12) Month Period will be considered by beginning with the most recent occurrence and counting twelve (12) consecutive months backwards. On the anniversary of the absence or tardiness the occurrence will expire, reducing the number of occurrences for the rolling twelve (12) months. A net of two new occurrences is required for advancing to the next step of discipline.

* If a full shift is worked between absences, an occurrence will be assigned to each absence.

POLICY

It is each employee's responsibility to meet the posted schedule. It is also recognized that staff may have limited situations where absences from the work schedule are unavoidable. However an absence and/or tardiness/leave early record, which becomes excessive, will result in corrective counseling up to and including termination.

A. Absence Reporting

1. An employee who will be absent for any reason is required to call in and report the intended absence consistent with his/her departmental procedures. (An employee who is aware of a need to be absent in advance should notify the supervisor as soon as possible.)
2. Failure to comply with the above will result in counseling action. Instances of three consecutive days with no actual contact being made with the department head/business manager, supervisor, or designated representative may result in immediate separation of employment as a voluntary resignation without notice.
3. All non-exempt employees and non-supervisory clinical exempt employees are to record start and end of shift by either swiping or calling the time and attendance system to record hours worked. All exempt employees need only swipe in or out sometime during their shift.
4. Under typical business settings, employees are required to use assigned home clocks unless your manager authorizes a change or you are working at a different location. Compliance with using the home clock will be audited on a periodic basis. Non-compliance may result in disciplinary action.
5. It is the responsibility of each department head or immediate supervisor to review the time records in the system to ensure that the time recorded is accurate and to approve the time for payment.
6. In order to allow the employee the convenience of swiping or calling the time and attendance system upon arrival or departure, the following rounding rules and grace periods will be used.

B. Rounding Rules

1. Kronos rounds punch times to the nearest 15 minute mark. The punches at the beginning and end of a shift round based on the actual punch time. Rounding occurs between the 7 and 8 minutes, 1-7 minutes round down and 8-14 minutes round up. For example, punches between 7:53am to 8:07am will round to 8am and punches between 8:08am and 8:22am will round to 8:15am.
2. Punches that occur mid-shift will round based on the total minutes taken for the unpaid time. For example, a lunch punch out at 12:07pm and lunch punch in at 12:44pm is 37 minutes in length and therefore the time is rounded to 30 minutes. A lunch punch out at 12:07pm and lunch punch in at 12:45pm is 38 minutes and therefore is rounded to 45 minutes. Lunch periods of 15 minutes or less will be paid.

Punch rounding rules have no bearing on tardy or leave early indicators.

Grace Periods:

- a. Employees are considered tardy if they punch in six (6) minutes after the scheduled shift start time.
- b. Employees are considered “leave early” when they punch out six (6) minutes before the scheduled shift end time.
- c. Grace periods are used for attendance tracking and will not affect pay.

C. Discipline

- 1. **No Call/No Show** - Three (3) consecutive shifts of "no call/no show" is considered voluntary separation of employment and is coded as job abandonment.
- 2. **Disciplinary Steps** - Occurrences should be combined with incidents of tardiness. For disciplinary action, two (2) incidents of tardiness equal one occurrence. Corrective Counseling must be administered after the total occurrences have reached the established level in a given pay period no later than 30 days from the end of the pay period containing the most recent occurrence. Should an employee be absent during this time period, counseling will be conducted within three days of the employee’s return to work.
- 3. Employees may be terminated without proceeding through each step as outlined in this policy if an employee has three (3) written counseling’s within 18 months.

Corrective Counseling

Excessive Absences:

Disciplinary Action

Four (4) occurrences within 12 months Required Verbal Warning/Crucial Conversation

Six (6) occurrences within 12 months Written Warning

Eight (8) occurrences within 12 months suspension Written Warning/with 1 day unpaid
(A net of two new occurrences is required for advancing to this step).

Ten (10) occurrences within 12 months Discharge
(A net of two new occurrences is required for advancing to this step).

- 4. Human Resources will monitor staff attendance on a per pay period basis. An attendance record which appears to be excessive will be reviewed by a Human Resources representative and forwarded to the manager for administration of the Corrective Counseling. Before the discharge step is administered, a final review with the next level of departmental management and Human Resources must occur.

D. OTHER:

1. It shall be a violation of Meritus Health policy, subject to corrective counseling, for:
 - a. An employee to falsify times or hours worked on his/her time record.
 - b. To make swipes, calls, or unauthorized entries on another employee's time record.
 - c. To request another employee to make swipes, calls, or unauthorized entries on an employee's time record.
 - d. Employee has repeated occurrences of failing to clock in/out. Three occurrences in a twelve month period is considered excessive.
2. Where possible, all questions of recorded times or hours worked should be resolved prior to approving the time record.

Reception of corrective counseling for absences will also impact the following:

Tuition Reimbursement HR IV-31

Internal Employment Process HR II-13

Implemented for MEI effective 10/1/11

RESPONSIBILITY

Human Resources

RELATED POLICIES

Leave of Absence
