

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

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|------------------------|-----------------------|
| Policy Number: | Approved Date: |
| Effective Date: | Review Date: |

Why Have a Policy?

The purpose of this policy is to provide a standard of attendance and punctuality for all employees. Because employees are vital to the work of the Municipality, reliable and consistent attendance is condition of employment.

THE POLICY

1. PREAMBLE

All Municipal employees will work such hours and days in accordance with the operational needs, requirements and determinations of the Employer, which will not be less than forty (40) hours per week from Monday to Friday.

2. DEFINITIONS

All terminology of this policy shall bear the same meaning as in the applicable legislation.

3. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

- Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995
- Basic Conditions of Employment Act 77 of 1997
- Main Collective Agreement 2007 – SALGBC

4. SCOPE AND APPLICATION

This policy applies to all employees of the Ubuhlebezwe Municipality. Employees are expected to be at their work area at their scheduled start time.

5. OBJECTIVES OF POLICY

The policy objective is to provide a standard attendance and punctuality framework for all employees. Because employees are vital to the work of the municipality, reliable and consistent attendance is condition of employment.

6. POLICY CONTENT

6.1 Absence.

Employees are considered absent from work when not available for the assigned work schedule regardless of the reason.

6.1.1 Scheduled Absences:

Employees are to notify their supervisors as early as possible about scheduling time off from work (e.g. doctor's appointment, personal days etc), whether paid or unpaid. Scheduled absences are arranged at the mutual convenience of the Directorate and employee based on the operational needs of the Directorate. Absence can be considered scheduled if a 24-hour advance notice is given in advance, and the absence is approved by the supervisor.

6.1.2 *Unscheduled Absences:*

If an employee misses work due to an unscheduled absence (e.g. Calling-in due to sickness), he/she must call the supervisor or his/her assignee within an hour (1 hour) after the scheduled start time. Failure to do so may result into instituting disciplinary action. After six (6) consecutive days of unscheduled absence, failure to notify and receive approval will be considered job abscondment and the employees' status can be terminated effective from the day following the last day of work.

6.1.3 *Excessive Unscheduled Absences:*

Excessive unscheduled absences may result in instituting disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Supervisors will notify an employee when patterns or concerns develop that may place them at risk of being reprimanded. The following factors should be considered in determining if unscheduled absences are excessive:

- **Patterns of absence:** A pattern of absence demonstrates a predictable routine. For example, is the employee consistently absent the day after pay day, or a particular day, e.g. Monday or Friday, or always on the day before or after a holiday, etc
- **Frequency of absence:** How often does the employee have unscheduled absence. Repeated instances of unscheduled absences, such as call-ins, early departures, not reporting etc, should be considered. Even though the absences may not constitute a predictable pattern, is the employee often absent.

6.1.4 *Tardiness:*

Employees are considered tardy when he/she fails to report to the assigned work area at the scheduled time. This includes returning from breaks and lunch breaks. Employees who expect to be late are to notify the supervisor or his/her assignee. Employees may not extend a normal workday to make up for being tardy without supervisors approval.

6.1.5 *General Behaviours and Actions:*

The following will be considered by the Municipality to be misconduct and could result in disciplinary action and possible dismissal:

- Abuse of sick leave
- Absence from work without good reason
- Reporting late for work
- Leaving work early
- Extended or unauthorised breaks during working hours
- Failure to produce sick certificate
- Unauthorised absence from workplace for any reason
- Sleeping on duty
- Habitual absence for a period of up to 2 days without good reason
- Desertion, i.e. unauthorised absence of longer than 2 days without good reason
- Absconding, i.e. unauthorised absence of more than 6 days

6.1.6 Attendance Register:

Where applicable, employees must use a time reporting system or attendance register to document work time and breaks from work. Absences, late arrivals, early departures, and extended breaks in the workday are accounted for on employees time record. Failure to adhere to time reporting procedures may be grounds for instituting disciplinary procedures up to and including dismissal.

6.2. Dealing with absconsion

After an unauthorised absence of more than 6 days, send a letter / ultimatum to return to work to the employee demanding that he/she returns to work by a specific date (the day after he/she is likely to have received your letter). Send the letter by courier, registered post, personal delivery or other means that provides proof of delivery.

In the letter, advise the employee that:

- If he/she doesn't report to work by 8 am on the day specified, he/she will be deemed to have absconded and a disciplinary hearing will proceed in his/her absence.
- If he/she does come back, he/she will still face a disciplinary hearing to determine the legality of his/her absence.

Mention that this conduct is viewed in very serious light by the Municipality and his/her actions may result in dismissal.

Arrange a disciplinary hearing to be held with or without the employee present on the day the employee has been told to return to work.

7. IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

This policy will be implemented and effective once recommended by the Local Labour Forum and approved by Council.

8. COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to all Municipal employees using the full range of communication methods available to the municipality.

9. POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually and revised as necessary.

10. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Municipal Manager or his/her delegate assignee accepts overall responsibility for the implementation and monitoring of the policy.

11. PENALTIES

Non compliance of any of the stipulations contained in the Policy will be viewed as misconduct and will be dealt with in terms of the municipality's Disciplinary Code.

12. DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Any dispute arising from this policy due must be referred to the Executive Committee.

Annexure A

Tips for managing absenteeism

1: Keep a proper record of absences from work

You need to get a sense of the size and cost of your absenteeism problem. You should start by keeping proper records of absences from work. You can use your attendance figures, gathered from clock cards or attendance registers, for this purpose. Transfer the details to the VIP HR Module's Sick Leave Absenteeism Record. This record should capture the following details:

- The duration of absences;
- Trends, e.g. which days or periods are most 'popular' for sick leave (these will become apparent over time);
- Costs of the sick leave absences (a rough estimate will do);
 - Take employee's gross monthly salary and divide by the normal number of working days in a month
 - Multiply by the number of days the employee has been absent in a year
- The type of illnesses that occur most frequently (if you record the illnesses, the most common illnesses will become apparent over time)

2: Conduct return to work interviews

It is useful to introduce a Return to Work Interview Form (see below) for the immediate supervisor to complete each time the employee returns from sick leave. This is a form of 'visible' management of the problem.

3: Take early action against any employee or manager who contravenes your policy

Even if your absent employee produces a medical certificate to justify the absence, the failure to report is in itself a disciplinary transgression that may lead to dismissal if it is repeated. Typically, employers allow for progressive sanctions ranging from a verbal reprimand, written warning, final written warning and dismissal. You should, of course, allow employees an opportunity to explain their failure before imposing these sanctions and conduct a disciplinary hearing before dismissing the employee concerned.

4. Monitor the municipality's absenteeism rate

Set a standard, for example, absenteeism must be less than 20 days a month in winter and less than 15 a month in summer. By monitoring the absenteeism rate on a monthly basis, you can identify a problem as it develops and take steps to deal with it.

You can also monitor absenteeism by calculating the cost to the municipality:

- Calculate average gross daily payroll (do this on a monthly basis because the amounts do not remain the same):
 - Take the total gross monthly salary for all employees eg R 1 000 000
 - Divide by the total number of employees eg 100 = R 10 000
 - Divide by number of working days in an average month eg 22 = average of R 455 per day per person

- Calculate cost of absenteeism for a specific month
 - Multiply daily payroll by total number of days taken (by all employees) during the month for short term illness or unauthorised absence, eg 12 days x R 455
 - That is, the cost of absenteeism to the municipality for the month is R 5 460

Annexure B**Return to Work Interview Form**

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| Name of employee | |
| Employee number | |
| Employee's job title | |
| Department | |
| Date of appointment | |
| Number of days sick or on unauthorised absence | |
| Reason for unauthorised absence if not due to illness | |
| Will the unauthorised absence be converted to annual or other leave? If no, it will be deducted as unpaid leave. | |
| Reason for sick leave NB: an employee can refuse to provide this information | |
| Has the employee recovered? NB: an employee can refuse to provide this information | |
| Is the employee taking medication? NB: an employee can refuse to provide this information | |
| If yes, what are the side effects? NB: an employee can refuse to provide this information unless it could have a negative impact on safety in the workplace | |
| Other | |

Attach medical certificate if applicable

Signed by manager

Date

Signed by employee

Date

