

Reference: HUMAN RESOURCES
Section: WORK RULES
Title: SICK LEAVE AND ABSENTEE CONTROL
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I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set forth the standards of the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority and the Niagara Frontier Transit Metro System, Inc. (collectively referred to as "NFTA" or "Authority") for sick leave usage that has been deemed as excessive, and to define the process for dealing with employees who have records of excessive sick leave usage.

II. POLICY

A healthy work force is integral to the Authority's efforts in providing the citizens of Erie and Niagara Counties with consistent, high-quality transportation services.

Sick leave is provided as a benefit for those employees who are legitimately ill. The wise and legitimate use of sick leave ensures maximum productivity and at the same time protects employees and their families from the loss of income during illness or injury.

The Authority has a managerial right and a public responsibility to monitor and control the use of sick leave. In order to do so, the use of sick leave will be monitored and evaluated on the basis of the following described criteria:

- The use of ten (10) or more days consecutive per calendar year without medical documentation.
- The use of seven (7) single days per calendar year without medical documentation.
- The use of four (4) or more single days per calendar year in conjunction with holidays, regularly scheduled days off, or following paydays without medical documentation.

It is important to note that the three categories of excessive use of sick leave listed above are not exclusive. The above are standards as to what constitutes the excessive use of sick leave and in no way limits the Authority's right, on a case-by-case basis, to require medical documentation or take other appropriate action not in conflict with existing collective bargaining agreements regardless of the amount or the timing of sick leave usage.

Supervisors will review the employees' sick leave records, and the names of employees who fall within one of the above-listed categories of excessive sick leave usage will receive written notification from their supervisor that their sick leave usage is excessive. In addition, employees who reach an excessive level of sick leave usage may be referred to the Authority's Medical Department and possibly, to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for counseling and health management advice. The Authority's Medical Department may contact the employee's physician to verify any medical information provided by an employee and if necessary, may refer the employee to the Authority's Medical Director.

The attendance rating of employees subject to performance evaluations will be noted and considered on the Employee Evaluation Form. Employees who, in addition to vacation and personal leave, use sick leave levels less than those deemed excessive, shall be regarded as VERY GOOD. Employees who are absent for approved extended sick leave, compensation or disability may be considered SATISFACTORY. Employees who use an excessive amount of sick leave may be considered UNSATISFACTORY.

In addition, there is a negotiated Absenteeism Control Program, which governs Authority employees represented by the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU). This program requires medical documentation for unpaid absences.