

**EASTERN MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT
HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**



SECTION: Attendance Policy	DATE: December 20, 2000	PREPARED BY: Angela Carman
PAGE: 1	REVISION DATE:	APPROVED BY:

PURPOSE

To define and clarify the District's policy and attendance standards, including absenteeism and tardiness. Also to provide guidelines for supervisors and managers to use when required to address cases of abuse.

POLICY

It is the policy of Eastern Municipal Water District that employees report to work on time every scheduled work day. Unscheduled absences, late arrivals, and early departures must be kept to a minimum.

BACKGROUND

Unscheduled absences, late arrivals, and early departures could require adjustments in work assignments and could affect the ability of the District to meet its service requirements. In order to minimize the disruptions resulting from unscheduled and excessive absences and tardiness, the District utilizes two approaches.

The first approach provides incentives for employees to accrue sick leave. Two monetary incentives encourage employees to minimize sick leave usage. First, employees are paid for, or may have converted to vacation hours, all accrued sick leave hours over 529 at the end of the calendar year. Second, upon separation from District employment an employee is paid for unused sick leave in an increasing percentage. The more sick leave the employee has accrued the greater the percentage of payoff.

The second approach utilizes the District's discipline policy to address situations where absences and/or tardiness are excessive or where abuse is suspected. Non-approved leave, non-approved absence without leave, tardiness, and chronic absenteeism/tardiness are all offenses identified in Employment Ordinance No. 30, as amended, as offenses subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

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DEFINITIONS

1. Tardiness
Failure to report to work or return from breaks or meal periods at scheduled time.
2. Scheduled Absence/Leave of Absence
Vacation, meritorious leave, floating holidays, bereavement, sick leave, etc., when requested and approved in advance of absence.
3. Unscheduled Absence/Leave of Absence
 - A. Leaving work early due to personal or family illness.
 - B. Absence or Leave of Absence taken on the day of the request.

NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

1. Tardiness
As soon as an employee realizes he/she will not arrive at, or return to work at the established time, he/she is expected to notify his/her supervisor or another departmental supervisor or manager of the tardiness and indicate when he/she expects to arrive. If the employee is unable to arrive at work at the time previously indicated, additional notification to the supervisor is required.
2. Scheduled Absence/Leave of Absence
A minimum of one week advanced notice is required for the use of paid vacation time, floating holidays, and any other leaves of absence, excluding sick leave. A Department Head may require more notification for a scheduled absence due to scheduling requirements, but advanced notice requirements will not exceed two weeks. Notice requirements established by the Department Head will be provided in writing to all employees in the department. Exceptions may be allowed by the immediate supervisor in cases of emergency or other circumstances necessitating shorter notification.

It is the responsibility of the supervisor to provide a written response to a timely request for paid vacation time, floating holidays or other types of leaves of absence within 48 hours of receipt of the request.
3. Unscheduled Absence/Leave of Absence
 - A. An employee required to leave work prior to the end of the work shift because of an emergency must notify his/her supervisor before leaving the premises. If his/her supervisor is unavailable, another departmental supervisor or manager must be notified.

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- B. Except in the case of emergency, employees must personally notify their department head, supervisor, or another departmental supervisor or manager of their illness or injury within 15 minutes after the start of their work shift on the first day of absence from work in order to qualify for Sick Leave with pay, as well as to avoid such other forms of disciplinary action as may be deemed appropriate by the General Manager. If the employee is unable to return to work at the time previously indicated, additional notification to the employee's department head or supervisor is required.
 - C. Absences continuing beyond the first day require daily notification as indicated above unless a written off work order is provided by the treating professional specifying when it is expected the employee will return to work.
 - D. Absences due to the employee's illness or injury, or that of an immediate family member, that continues for more than three consecutive days, requires a written "off work" and "return to work" order from the treating professional in order for the employee to continue to be eligible to use paid leave time.
4. Disciplinary Actions
- A. Every instance of tardiness should be addressed by the supervisor with the employee. Continued occurrences of tardiness will be addressed through the District's progressive Employee Disciplinary Policy contained in Ordinance 30, as amended.
 - B. Every instance of unscheduled absence without proper notification as outlined in Section 5.2 above, should be addressed with the employee by the supervisor. Continued occurrences of unscheduled absences without proper notification will be addressed through the District's progressive Employee Discipline Policy contained in Ordinance 30, as amended.

FAMILY CARE & MEDICAL LEAVE/PROTECTED SICK LEAVE

Absence or tardiness resulting from an approved Family Care & Medical Leave (FCML) or worker's compensation injury or illness are exempt from consideration for disciplinary action as long as required documentation is provided in a timely manner pursuant to District policy and procedure. Employees are permitted to use, in any calendar year, accrued sick leave in an amount not less than the amount earned during 6 months employment to care for a sick child, parent, or spouse (as defined in the District's Family & Medical Care Leave Policy) due to routine illness (such as cold, flu, earache, etc) and are generally not subject to disciplinary action for such use. For example, a full-time employee would be permitted to use up to 48 hours/calendar year of accrued sick leave for this purpose, and part-time employee use would be pro-rated based on accrual rate. The use of this type of leave will not be a factor in employee performance reviews, provided employees notify their supervisor of protected sick leave use at the time leave is taken.

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PERFORMANCE EVALUATION/PAY FOR PERFORMANCE

Attendance is a critical factor of job performance. No matter how well an employee performs his/her job when at work, if the employee cannot be relied on to be at work, the quality and quantity of work, as well as overall job performance, are negatively impacted. In evaluating the employee's performance, the supervisor shall take all factors into consideration including overall work performance, length of service, impact upon the department, extenuating circumstances, and past work/attendance history in order to arrive at an appropriate rating under the "Punctuality and Attendance" factor of the performance evaluation.

As a part of the overall performance evaluation rating, and the resulting "Pay for Performance" recommendation, "Punctuality and Attendance" shall be considered in a proportional relationship to all the individual classification anchors within the performance evaluation.

SCHOOL ACTIVITY ATTENDANCE

Consistent with State Labor Code Sections 230.8 and 230.7, employees shall be entitled to unpaid leave to appear in school (or licensed child day care facility) to participate in activities of the school or licensed child day care facility of any of his or her children, if the employee, prior to taking the time off, gives reasonable notice to the employer. The employee shall provide documentation from the school or licensed child day care facility as proof that he or she participated in school or licensed child day care facility activities on a specific date and at a particular time. Time off for this purpose may not exceed 8 hours in any month, and may not exceed 40 hours in any calendar year. Additionally, Section 48900.1 of the Education Code provides that employees required to attend a portion of the school day in class as a result of their child being suspended from class, must be allowed to attend. Employees may use available accrued vacation, floating holidays, or compensatory time off for the above purposes, or may use time off without pay. Employees using time off for this purpose shall not be discriminated against in any way by the employer for using such time. The use of this type of leave will not be a factor in an employee's performance review, provided reasonable notice and documentation from the school is provided to the employee's supervisor.

AUTHORIZED SIGNATURES ON FILE