

<b>Policy Name:</b>	<b>ATTENDANCE SUPPORT</b>		
<b>Policy #:</b>	AD 5.10	<b>Last Updated:</b>	2021-10-21
<b>Issued By:</b>	SUPPORT SERVICES BUREAU	<b>Approved By:</b>	SURREY POLICE BOARD
		<b>Review Frequency:</b>	AS REQUIRED

**RELATED POLICIES**

- AD 5.1 Court Processes Management
- AD 5.3.2 Short Term Disability
- AD 5.3.3 Long Term Disability
- AD 5.4 Fit for Duty
- AD 5.7 Human Rights and Respectful Workplace
- AD 5.8.2 Occupational Health and Safety – Workplace Injuries
- AD 5.9 Duty to Accommodate

**1. PURPOSE**

- 1.1. To confirm the Surrey Police Service’s (SPS) commitment to provide a healthy and safe work environment for all Employees.
- 1.2. To communicate SPS’s Employee attendance expectations and support Employees in attending work regularly, on time, and carrying out the duties for which they were hired.
- 1.3. To provide support and direction for Employees who are unable to attend work due to sickness or injury (personal or work related).

## 2. SCOPE

2.1. This policy applies to all SPS Employees.

## 3. POLICY

3.1. SPS expects Employees to attend work as scheduled and to carry out the duties for which they were hired. SPS is committed to assisting Employees in achieving and maintaining acceptable levels of work attendance by providing benefits, health and wellness programs, workplace accommodation, and offering a safe, engaging, and inclusive workplace.

3.2. SPS recognizes that while Employees are expected to be at work on a regular basis, from time-to-time injury or illness (personal or work related) may prevent an Employee from being at work.

3.3. The SPS is responsible for:

- i. providing benefits, and health and wellness programs for eligible Employees which includes contracting with third party benefit and health and wellness administrators;
- ii. ensuring the privacy of medical information which is provided to the SPS and/or its administrators in compliance with BC *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*;
- iii. providing workplace accommodation options, (see AD 5.9 *Duty to Accommodate*) (including working with Stakeholders for an Employee's safe and productive return to work); and
- iv. providing a safe, engaging, and inclusive workplace.

3.4. An Employee who is unable to report for work is required to contact their Supervisor or authorized designate as soon as practicable prior to the start of shift on the first day of absence. In this contact, the Employee will provide the nature of their illness/injury and/or reason for the absence, and their anticipated return to work date of return to work.

3.5. Failure to report an absence prior to the start of shift may result in the recording of an unauthorized absence, loss of pay, and other employment related actions.

3.6. The Inspector, Employee Services Section (ESS) or designate is responsible for ensuring effective, confidential, and supportive administration of benefits and health and wellness programs.

3.7. The process of attendance support is assessed on a case-by-case basis recognizing the Employee circumstances, with a goal of being supportive and inclusive.

## 4. PROCEDURE

### Employee Services Responsibilities

4.1. In relation to Employee attendance support, ESS is responsible for:

- i. educating Supervisors in supporting Employee attendance in the workplace;
- ii. providing regular attendance reports to Supervisors;
- iii. supporting a safe and productive return to work;
- iv. promoting awareness of available benefit and health and wellness programs; and
- v. developing and delivering a variety of attendance support initiatives such as benefits programs, Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP), wellness and health initiatives, and return to work and duty to accommodate processes.

### Employee Responsibilities – Absence Due to Illness or Injury

4.2. An Employee who is absent from work due to illness or injury must contact their immediate Supervisor as soon as practicable before their first shift of absence, providing information on the general nature of the absence and the expected return to work date. An Employee who is absent from work must meet the requirements of the program from which they are seeking coverage (e.g., Workers' Compensation, Short Term Disability, Long Term Disability, EI Sick Benefits, Disability Pension, etc.).

4.3. An Employee attending medical/dental specialists' appointments for consultation, examination, or treatment are encouraged to schedule such appointments outside their scheduled work hours. Employees should refer to their employment contract or collective agreement to determine if such absences are paid.

4.4. An Employee who is absent from work for personal or work-related injury or illness is responsible:

- i. to provide clear, current, and sufficient medical information to the Staff Sergeant, ESS, or their designate, as required;
- ii. to make every reasonable effort to recover from the illness/injury, including participation in reasonable treatment or rehabilitation programs as recommended by medical professionals;
- iii. to promptly inform the Staff Sergeant, ESS of any changes in medical condition;
- iv. to make reasonable efforts to actively work towards returning to work, either to their own occupation or to a modified role where applicable;
- v. to assist the Staff Sergeant, ESS, applicable union and other Stakeholders in identification of other work or job duties that they may be capable of doing;
- vi. to accept any reasonable offer of modified employment from the SPS;
- vii. to maintain regular contact with the Staff Sergeant, ESS or designate during an absence from work; and
- viii. to respond to enquiries from the Staff Sergeant ESS, or their designate in a timely manner.

- 4.5. Failure to meet these responsibilities, without an acceptable explanation, may adversely affect continued entitlement to SPS Benefits and may have additional employment consequences.
- 4.6. After an absence of five (5) consecutive days, or when requested by the Staff Sergeant, ESS an Employee will provide acceptable documentation to support the absence. The documentation must show that the Employee is under the care of a health care professional, describe the Employee's ability to attend and perform work with or without accommodation, and provide an estimated return to work date for modified or regular duties. The documentation may be provided in a sealed envelope to the Staff Sergeant, ESS or designate, as determined by the Staff Sergeant, ESS.
- 4.7. SPS may require additional medical certification of illness or injury, and information relevant to the Employee's ability to attend and perform work either from the Employee's health care professional, and/or from a medical examination by a health care professional identified by the Staff Sergeant, ESS or designate, when SPS considers such actions necessary.
- 4.8. If insufficient medical information is provided or if attempts to gain sufficient medical information have been exhausted an Employee may be required to undergo an independent medical examination by a physician selected by the SPS or its designate, at the SPS's expense. The information will be used to support an Employee's return to work and determine ongoing eligibility for benefits.

#### **Supervisor/Managers Responsibilities**

- 4.9. Supervisors/Managers are expected to:
- i. communicate SPS benefits and health and wellness programs to their Employees;
  - ii. communicate SPS attendance expectations to their Employees;
  - iii. maintain and monitor attendance records for their Employees;
  - iv. maintain regular contact with absent Employees;
  - v. promptly deal with Employee attendance issues and seek support and assistance from ESS where appropriate;
  - vi. support and facilitate modified duties or graduated return to work programs; and
  - vii. acknowledge and recognize Employees with excellent attendance records.
- 4.10. When an Employee notifies their Supervisor that they are booking off sick or injured, the Supervisor will send an email to the ESS general email address ([ESS\\_General@surreypolice.ca](mailto:ESS_General@surreypolice.ca)) providing the following:
- i. the Employee's name who has booked off sick;
  - ii. the Employee's first day off;
  - iii. the Employee's expected return to work date, if known; and

- iv. general nature of illness or injury.

#### **Graduated Return to Work / Modified Duties**

- 4.11. Employees expected to be absent from work for an extended time should facilitate an early return to work where practicable by participating in a Graduated Return to Work or Modified Duty program, arranged through the Inspector, ESS or delegate.

#### **On-Duty Injuries**

- 4.12. Employees who are injured while on-duty shall follow procedures as set out in AD 5.8.1 *Occupational Health and Safety – Workplace Injuries*.

#### **Privacy and Confidentiality**

- 4.13. Employee medical information that has been obtained by SPS, in keeping with BC privacy law and medical profession privacy standards, will be secured and maintained by the Staff Sergeant, ESS or designate, in a strictly confidential manner.

## **APPENDIX A: DEFINITIONS**

“Employee” means any employee of SPS (including Members and civilian staff).

“Member” means a sworn Police Officer appointed by the Surrey Police Board.

“Stakeholder” means any applicable union, SPS management, WorkSafe BC, or any applicable third-party benefits provider.

“Supervisor” means a Team Leader, Manager, Staff Sergeant, Sergeant, Inspector, Superintendent, Deputy Chief Constable, Chief Constable, and any other person acting in a supervisory capacity who is accountable for a particular area or shift on behalf of the SPS.

## **APPENDIX B: REFERENCES**

*Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, R.S.B.C. 1996, c. 165.

*Workers Compensation Act*, R.S.B.C. 2019, c. 1

*Workers Compensation Act: Occupational Health and Safety Regulation*, B.C. Reg 296/97