

A) POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of Joe Morolong Local Municipality to investigate all absenteeism in the organization and render assistance, if and when possible, through a process of counseling in order to correct the problem or to work around the problem. Where it is not possible to correct or work around the problem, then the appropriate action must be taken.

B) INTRODUCTION

Absenteeism is not always caused by willful or negligent conduct on the part of an employee, but may be caused by an employee's incapacity. Nevertheless high levels of absenteeism are having a significant adverse impact on the municipality's operational requirements and are to be dealt with in accordance with the provisions of this policy.

It is important that supervisors / managers scrutinize attendance records to establish negative trends in attendance since such behaviour may often be indicative of more deep seated problems (psychological, physical, logistical, domestic, etc). It is the duty of supervisor / managers to attempt to ascertain underlying reasons which might be impacting on the attendance of their subordinates, to attempt to isolate the underlying causes of the problem, and to find effective solutions that prevent disruption to the normal operation of the municipality.

C) STANDARDS

The following standards are set regarding absenteeism arising from sick leave or any other reason:

1) SICK LEAVE

- a) Employees are to notify their supervisors before 08H00 when they are unable to attend work due to illness.
- b) Employees are to submit sick leave forms with the supporting Medical Certificate, where required, within 48 hours of the employee (i.e. 2 days) absenting themselves.
- c) A Medical Certificate issued by a registered medical practitioner (as envisaged by the Basic Conditions of Employment Act 75 of 1997) must be automatically submitted in all cases of sick leave of 2 or more days duration.
- d) Medical certificates issued by a registered medical practitioner (as envisaged by the Basic Conditions of Employment Act 75 of 1997) must be produced by employees upon request by supervisors for periods of **sick leave of less than 2 days** duration with the following conditions:
 - i) Where the supervisor requests such a certificate for sick leave of less than 2 days, the employee must still be paid for that days sick leave,

unless the circumstances set out in para ii) below exist.

- ii) If the employee has been absent on account of illness on 2 or more occasions in an eight - week period and when requested by the supervisor does not supply a medical certificate as prescribed above, then unpaid leave will be granted for such absences.
- E) Staff members who are on sick leave for any reason are required to be at their home resting. Should staff not comply, disciplinary action is to be taken against them. Should an employee need to leave home, prior consent must be obtained from the relevant supervisor.

2) **ABSENTEEISM**

- a) Employees are to notify their supervisors before 08H00 when their absent for any urgent personal reason other than illness.
- b) Absence without leave is unacceptable and will lead to disciplinary action being taken against employees by supervisors.
- c) If an employee absent without leave, his/her salary will be deducted for the period of absence. This deduction will be made in addition to any disciplinary action being taken.
- d) Staff members who are absent for 5 consecutive working days or more without liaising with their supervisor will be deemed to have deserted / absconded from their employment.
- e) Staff members who are absent without leave will not be granted vacation leave or annual leave retrospectively, but will salary deducted as stated above.

ABSENTEEISM

THE COUNSELLING PROCESS

1. STAGE ONE (by immediate supervisor)

- 1.1. The counseling process may involve the employee's representative who should be asked to personally involve himself/herself in attempting to assist with the problem. The process itself should be approached constructively and not in an antagonistic and adversarial fashion.
- 1.2 The employee and his/her representative should be called aside and in a discussion asked to review the issue of the employee absenteeism. Notice of such "review" is not required since the employee is merely being asked to comment on factual situation.
- 1.3 The counseling process could involve three distinct stages:-
 - a) **Provide Facts:** firstly, the employee should be informed of why it is considered that his/her attendance is inadequate and unacceptable, eg. "you have been absent on 4 separate occasions during the last eight weeks and because of your important role in the Department, your absence has a seriously disruptive effect on the normal operation of your department";

- b) **Listen to Explanation:** secondly, the employee must be asked to provide an explanation for his/her absenteeism and to suggest reasonable ways in which the problem must be rectified;
- c) **Find Acceptable Solution:** the final stage requires the both the supervisor/manager and the employee to accept that a problem exists regarding attendance together with the problems that causes and for the employee to commit himself /herself to taking active steps to remedy the problem. It should be specifically brought to the employee attention that the company cannot allow poor attendance to continue.

1.4 **Set up Monitor /Feedback System:** The parties should agree that the employee`s attendance will be monitored over the following 8 weeks period and that they will meet to review the situation that should this prove necessary.

1.5 **Record Event:** This gist the above process should be summarized in a letter, a copy of which should be given to the employee and the copy placed on his / her personal file (see poor attendance – memo- Annexure B hereto)

2 STAGE TWO (follow up action based on Agreement)

- 2.1. If within the following period agreed upon between the supervisor/manager and the employee concerned, the employee`s attendance record continues to indicate the absenteeism and the supervisor/manager is of the view that the employee is showing no ability / inclination to improve his/her attendance, then stage two of the counseling process should be invoked.
- 2.2 Stage two is in essence a repeat of the procedure involved in stage one. In addition the supervisor/manager should highlight to the employee;-
- a) The basis of the previous discussion at which a problem was identified and a commitment made to remedy it and why the employee has again failed to meet the required standards;
- b) It is important at this stage that the employee be clearly informed that unless he/ she is able to improve attendance, the municipality may well have to consider taking more serious action to prevent disruption to the operation of the municipality, which action may include the termination of the employee`s services.
- 2.3 Again the gist of the above process should be summarized in a letter, a copy of which should be given to the employee and a copy placed on hi/her personal file (see poor attendance – Brief 2 on page.....) This letter would take the form of a verbal warning.

3. STAGE THREE (FORMAL ENQUIRY)

3.1. Where the situation persist and the supervisor / manager is of the view that the employee is either unable to remedy it, or has shown no positive inclination to do so, an enquiry should be convened in keeping with the municipality`s requirements for the conducting of a fair disciplinary enquiry

- 3.2 If the absenteeism is beyond the control of the employee, the incapacity procedure must followed.
- 3.3 The normal prescriptions of progressive discipline should apply i.e. progressive warnings should be issued.
- 3.4 The termination of the employee's services will be a measure of last resort.
- 3.5 The disciplinary hearing must follow the normal rules of discipline.

sign at..... by.....



JOE MOROLONG LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

POLICY REGULATING ABSENTEEISM