



Short Term Disability Management Program

POLICY

Number: **HR 07-044**

Manual: Global Human Resources Manual

Approval Date: February 21, 2022

Section in Manual: Occupational Health & Safety

Approved by: Human Resources Quality Committee

Cross References: *HR 07-30, AD 01-150, AD 01-160*

Policy Statement

St. Joseph's Care Group recognizes the importance of ensuring that employees are supported through any periods of absence and their subsequent return to work. This policy aims to ensure that all sick absences are managed in a consistent, supportive and effective manner.

The program, applicable to all full-time and part-time employees (permanent and temporary), is managed by Occupational Health, Safety & Wellness (OHSW) for sick absences that are more than 5 calendar days.

Any information shared with OHSW by an employee regarding their Personal Health Information or treatment is confidential.

Procedure

1. The employee must contact their manager or designate as soon as possible to report a sick absence and expected return to work date. An employee is not required to disclose medical information to their manager or designate.
2. If an employee is absent or expects to be absent for more than 5 calendar days, the employee must contact OHSW. In addition, the employee must submit an [Attending Physician Statement](#) (APS) form or an [Attending](#)

This material has been prepared solely for use at St. Joseph's Care Group (SJCG). SJCG accepts no responsibility for use of this material by any person or organization not associated with SJCG. No part of this document may be reproduced in any form for publication without permission of SJCG. A printed copy of this document may not reflect the current electronic version on SJCG's iNtranet.

[Practitioners Statement](#) form (for those St. Joseph's Hospital ONA employees hired prior to January 1, 2006).

3. Employees are expected to maintain ongoing communication with OHSW and the manager or designate for the duration of the sick absence for the following purpose:
 - i. to provide information of their progress
 - ii. to provide an expected duration of the absence and an anticipated return to work date
 - iii. to establish contact arrangements during the sick absence
 - iv. to determine if the employee requires access to the transitional return to work program
4. OHSW verifies medical proof of total disability and authorizes the sick absence. If the medical information does not support total disability, the payment of sick benefits does not occur.

Some of the criteria evaluated in determining whether or not the medical supports total disability include:

- i. APS is completed in full with a satisfactory description of the nature of the employee's illness or injury (without disclosure of the diagnosis)
 - ii. The employee is undergoing treatment for their disability or the employee is under active, continuous, and medically appropriate care for their illness/injury and following the treatment prescribed by the physician for that disability
 - iii. Level of impairment - the treating practitioner has described the functional limitations that prevent the employee from being at work.
5. In order for the employee to continue to qualify for ongoing approved sick leave, proof of total disability that is satisfactory to the employer is required. The proof is required throughout the duration of the sick absence and may be used to support the employee's sick absence if transitioning to further benefits (Employment Insurance Sick Benefits and Long Term Disability)
6. The employee, OHSW and the manager will work together to share information and find the most appropriate accommodation/ return to work plan.

Manager:

- i. Provides the employee with the return to work information/short term disability package
- ii. Helps resolve any problems with treatment if requested to do so by the employee. Maintain contact with OHSW
- iii. Maintains regular contact with the employee during the sick absence
- iv. Ensures work practices are safe for the returning employee
- v. Assists with identifying accommodations in cooperation with the employee and OHSW, assist to identify and attempt to provide suitable employment that is consistent with the employee's abilities/restrictions.
- vi. Assists with analyzing the demands of each job task, provide a Physical Demands Analysis (PDA) for review of the current job

Employee:

- i. Contacts their manager/designate and OHSW as soon as possible regarding any incident or illness that will prevent them from performing the duties of their job and seek medical attention if required.
- ii. Provide medical documentation, Attending Physician Statement (APS), and [Functional Abilities Form](#) (FAF) regarding restrictions.
- iii. Provide updated medical information, as requested by OHSW. Updated APS and/or FAF to support return to work plan
- iv. Provide reassessment dates to OHSW/manager/designate
- v. Provides their health care provider with the return to work information

Health Care providers, union/workplace representatives and health and safety professionals may also participate in the process, if needed.

7. Develop a return to work plan

- i. After identifying the most appropriate accommodation, safety considerations and any transitional measures, the details will be captured in the return to work plan
- ii. Depending on the circumstances, the employee may:
 - a. Return to the original position

- b. Return to the original position with accommodations on a temporary or permanent basis
- c. Return to an alternate position on a temporary or permanent basis

The return to work plan is uploaded to the employee's electronic health file and individual accommodation plan.

8. Implement, Monitor and update the plan

Following implementation of the return to work plan, the employee and manager will monitor and review the plan regularly to ensure that it remains effective. If the accommodation is no longer appropriate, they will reassess the situation (Step 2) and update the plan.

- i. OHSW will coordinate and facilitate a modified return to work plan meeting. The meeting will include the employee, manager, union representation (if applicable), OHSW
- ii. OHSW will assist the manager/designate to identify temporary suitable work based on the employee's restrictions.
- iii. Monitor employee's progress throughout the program in cooperation with the manager and in follow up return to work meetings.
- iv. Liase with WSIB or LTD provider (if applicable)
- v. Follow up meetings will occur every 2 – 3 weeks while the employee is working within the return to work plan to monitor and review the plan regularly to ensure that it remains effective.
- vi. An individualized return to work plan will be created for the employee, using the return to work plan template and a copy will be emailed to the employee, union rep, manager, OHSW, payroll and HR. To protect the privacy of the employee's personal information no personal health information will be identified in the return to work plan. The plan will only indicate hours to be worked during the plan.
- vii. A copy of the documented individualized return to work plan is uploaded to the employee's electronic health file by OHSW.

- viii. For employees that do not progress to full hours and duties in the return to work plan, the accommodation process will be initiated according to the [Accommodating Workers with Disabilities Policy HR 07-030](#)