HARTNELL COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

AP 7344  Attendance Policies and Notification to District of Illness or Absence

References:  Education Code sections 87781 and 88191, Collective Bargaining Agreements

Good attendance is important for the success of every employee in the District and, ultimately, for the success of the District’s students. This policy sets forth the rules for attendance, including requesting time off and notifying the District of late arrivals or absences for all employees.

Where collective bargaining agreements or working conditions contain additional or conflicting rules around absences or notification of absence, those agreements and working conditions control.

I. Attendance and Hours of Work

a. Classified staff

All employees are expected to be at work, ready to work, at the beginning of each work day. If an employee’s work requires that they be away from their normal work station, e.g., at a meeting, or consulting with people from another office, their whereabouts should be reported to their supervisor, following procedures established in their department or division.

Arriving late to work at the beginning of the work day and after scheduled breaks or meal periods, or leaving early, is prohibited.

Within the work day, each employee will be provided a paid non-accumulative 15-minute rest period for each 4-hour period of work, at about the midpoint of that period, but not during the first or last hour of the workday, and not added to the meal period. The District provides an unpaid, uninterrupted lunch period of one hour for each employee that should be taken at about the midpoint of the day, and scheduled by the supervisor. While changes to the timing of this period may be requested as needs arise and coordinated within each work unit, in no case may the meal period, during which the employee is free from all work obligations, be less than one-half hour.

Most District offices are open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., but other schedules exist. The normal work schedules for classified employees are provided at the time of hire, and changes in work schedules must follow rules set forth in the collective bargaining agreements or working conditions, and be reported to the Human Resources Office by the supervisor. Attendance times that differ from these agreed schedules must be coordinated with supervisors and reported to the Human Resources Office.
b. Faculty

Faculty must be on time for each assigned class, office hour, and scheduled appointment, and hold class for the scheduled duration. Faculty attendance is reported in increments of quarter days.

c. Management employees

Management employees must hold a work schedule that is conducive to their effective management of their office and department. Work schedules should be approved by their supervisors.

II. Requests for Time off and Notification of Absence

Requests for time off should be made with as much advance time as possible. Classified staff and management employees requesting vacation days should normally make those requests at least two weeks in advance.

An employee is required to seek advance permission from his or her supervisor for any foreseeable absence or deviation from regular working hours, by filling out the appropriate Request for Time Off form and submitting it to the appropriate supervisor.

The need for some absences—such as those due to illness or accident—cannot be predicted, and so the request or notice should be made as soon as the need is known, and before the start of the work day, if possible.

When prior notice or authorization is not possible, the employee who was absent must complete the Request for Time Off upon his or her return to work, with an explanation for why advance notice of absence was not possible.

a. Employee’s Duty to Notify of Late Arrival or Absence

An employee who is unable to report for work as scheduled must notify his or her immediate supervisor or designated departmental representative as early as is practical, but no later than the start of the work day, and report the expected time of arrival or absence, as well as the reason for being late or absent. If the employee's immediate supervisor is not available, the employee must notify the next level supervisor. This notification must be direct to the supervisor or designated representative, and not through third parties, including co-workers or friends. A supervisor may provide for a particular modality of notification, e.g., voicemail, text, email, which, when communicated to employees in writing, will control.

Unless there are exceptional circumstances that prohibit timely notification, an employee who fails to timely notify the supervisor of an absence, or who is not present
and ready to work during all scheduled work times, will be deemed to have an unauthorized tardy or absence and will not receive compensation for the period of absence.

Unless the employee’s absence due to illness or injury has been supported by a physician’s note with a specific return to work date, the employee must report his or her absence daily. Unless there is a different period stated in the employee’s collective bargaining agreement or working conditions, an absence of three or more days due to illness or injury requires a supporting doctor’s note.

Faculty – A faculty member who must be absent due to illness or injury must notify his or her immediate supervisor of the intended absence as far in advance of the start of his or her work shift or first class as possible so that a substitute instructor might be found, unless conditions make notification impossible. If that supervisor is unavailable, the employee may contact the next level supervisor or the administrative assistant who has been designated to receive such notifications.

This notification is required even if the faculty member has a suggested substitute in mind for covering his or her class.

b. Excessive Tardiness/ Absenteeism

Excessive use of sick leave, tardiness, and failing to use the call-in procedures when absent or tardy, can negatively impact the performance of an employee’s job, negatively affect others in the performance of their jobs, and detract from the District’s ability to provide exemplary services to its students and the public.

Factors that will be considered in determining whether use of sick leave or absenteeism is excessive include, but are not limited to, the number of absences as compared to other employees, whether absenteeism is limited to a finite time period or whether it continues over time, whether a pattern of absences exist, e.g., whether absences always occur on certain days, the basis for the absenteeism, and the significance of the absences’ impact on the performance of the employee’s job or that of others.

Excessive absenteeism occurs when the number of absences exceeds three days in any three-month period, excluding approved absences, including vacation time and other approved leave.

Excessive tardiness occurs when an employee is late to work or returning from breaks more than three times during any 30-day period. “Tardiness” includes any period when the employee is expected to be at work but is not at work, including at the beginning and end of the work day, and surrounding breaks during the day.
Excessive tardiness or absenteeism may be grounds for discipline, up to and including termination. Abuse of, or misrepresentation of, any form of accrued paid or unpaid leave time will be grounds for discipline, up to and including termination.

c. **Absence without Permission**
Absence without permission for five consecutive work days, whether voluntary or involuntary, is deemed an abandonment of the employee’s position, and an automatic resignation from the District, as of the last date the employee worked.

An employee may, within 90 days of the effective date of the separation from employment, file a written request with the District for reinstatement; provided that, if the Chief Human Resources Officer or designee has notified the employee of his or her automatic resignation, any request for reinstatement must be made in writing and filed within 15 days of the service of notice of separation. Service of notice shall be made personally or by certified mail. Reinstatement may be granted only if the employee makes a satisfactory explanation to the superintendent/president as to the cause of the employee’s absence and his or her failure to obtain leave therefore, and the superintendent/president finds that he or she is ready, willing, and able to resume the discharge of the duties of his or her position or, if not, that he or she has obtained consent to a leave of absence to commence upon reinstatement. An employee so reinstated will not be paid salary for the period of his or her absence or separation.

See Board Policy 7340

Date approved by Superintendent/President: March 21, 2017