



Short Term Disability Policy

Intent

The Group Health Centre understands that not all illnesses and injuries require an employee to be absent from work. However, when an employee is unable to attend work and cannot perform their assigned duties due to illness or injury lasting more than 5 consecutive working days the Employer will provide a Short-term disability benefit.

This policy is intended to outline the short term disability benefit which provides eligible employees with an income replacement plan to support employees when they suffer an illness or injury that may lead to a long-term absence and LTD.

The Group Health Centre recognizes that long-term absences can result in employees not being assisted or directed to seek assistance for their absence. As such, the Group Health Centre has developed a **Short-Term Disability Support Program** to assist employee with illness or injury with the process of reporting sick, initiating Short-term Disability Benefits, and returning to work. The program will also assist eligible employees with a transition to Long-Term Disability Benefit.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees of the Group Health Centre who meet the following eligibility requirements.

- All full-time and part-time permanent Group Health Association employees shall be eligible for short-term disability benefits as defined by the employees respective Collective Agreement where applicable.
- In the event that an employee requires a medical leave due to illness, disability or injury, and can supply supporting medical documentation as required, they shall be eligible for short-term disability benefits.
- Short-term disability benefits shall begin upon receipt and approval of the medical documentation as required, or on the effective start date specified by the medical professional, whichever comes first.



Definitions

Sick Leave

Time off from work on account of an employee's temporary inability to perform work duties because of illness or injury, lasting less than five (5) consecutive days

Short Term Disability

A disability resulting in an employee being unable to perform work duties lasting more than five (5) consecutive days but less than one hundred and twenty (120) days

Long Term Disability

A total disability resulting in an employee being unable to perform work duties lasting longer than one hundred and twenty (120) days

Please refer to the Benefit booklet for more details.

Disability

- a. any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical coordination, blindness or visual impairment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance device;
- b. a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability
- c. a learning disability or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language
- d. a mental disorder; and/or
- e. an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997

Support Administrator

Refers to an independent, third party provider of Short Term Disability and Return to Work support services

General Guidelines

Please refer to the [Short-Term Disability Support Program](#).



Roles and Responsibilities

Manager/Supervisors are responsible for the following:

- Understand and uphold the principles of the Short Term Disability Support Policy
- Establish procedures for employees to report an absence due to illness or injury
- Provide necessary support and assistance when needed
- Communicate attendance expectations and procedures to employees when absence is due to illness or injury
- Inform employees of available resources and programs (i.e. Employee Assistance Program, Modified Work and Work Accommodation)
- Communicate with absent employees to monitor progress and expedite a safe and successful return to work
- Facilitate early return to work of employees through modified or alternative duties, where applicable

Employees are responsible for the following:

- Understand and consistently uphold the principles of the Short Term Disability Support Policy
- Follow established procedures for reporting absence due to illness or injury
- Attempt best efforts to be physically and mentally fit for work
- Attend to work on a regular basis in order to fulfill employment contract with the Group Health Centre
- Maintain health and take precautions against illness
- Provide appropriate medical documentation as requested
- Access available resources and programs when necessary (i.e. Occupational Health, Employee Assistance Program, Modified Work and Work Accommodation)
- Recognize that short term disability benefits (sick pay) are an insurance against loss of wages to be utilized in times of illness/injury and that it is not permissible to utilize these benefits other than for legitimate personal illness/injury
- Follow recommended assistance or treatment programs to facilitate prompt return to work, where applicable
- Advise treating health care provider of the availability of modified alternative work duties, where applicable

Human Resources are responsible for the following:

- Ensure consistent and effective administration of short term disability benefits
- Provide Management support and consultation on attendance related scenarios
- When appropriate, provide assistance with the administration of return to work planning



- Ensure Department Managers have opportunities to learn how to approach and interview employees who are currently enrolled in the Short Term Disability Support Program
- Maintain confidential employee files containing documentation related to short term disability

Short Term Disability Support Administrator (Support Administrator) is responsible for the following:

- Provide respectful and supportive services to the employee during absence through regular communication with the employee/HR and through regular follow up regarding recovery and Return to Work (RTW) abilities
- Coordinate appropriate RTW plans in communication with health care providers, employees, managers and HR
- Validate absences through confidential review of medical information and provide clear restrictions to employer for possible offer of accommodation when determining safe return to work planning

The Union, where applicable, is responsible for the following:

- To support and advise the employee
- To attend initial and follow-up meeting with the employee as per the relevant collective agreement and standard operating procedure
- To support awareness about the importance of regular attendance