



Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority
ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

SUBJECT/TITLE: ATTENDANCE POLICY	NO.: 1999-2
	EFFECTIVE DATE: 8/1/99 Revised: 10/1/99
	SUBJECT AREA: Personnel
ADMINISTRATOR: Myers Rollins, Exec. Director of Office of Small Business and Employment Opportunity	APPROVED BY:

1.0 PURPOSE/SCOPE:

In order to provide quality service to its customers, both internal and external, the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (GCRTA) relies on the services of every employee for every hour he/she is scheduled to work. Toward that end, the Authority has established this policy which outlines the attendance standards and desired performance, provides guidelines necessary to evaluate attendance performance and relies on the Positive Discipline Program. The intent of the policy is to properly recognize employees with good attendance and to provide for appropriate and equitable action to be taken to assist employees in correcting their attendance performance when it falls below an acceptable level. This policy provides consideration to both the needs of the GCRTA and the employee.

2.0 REFERENCES:

- 2.1 Positive Discipline Program
- 2.2 Employee Performance Code
- 2.3 Family or Medical Leave Covered under Family Medical Leave Act
- 2.4 Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual
- 2.5 Conditions of Employment between the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority and the Amalgamated Transit Union Local 268
- 2.6 Merit System Rules for Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority
- 2.7 Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority and the Fraternal Order of Police/ Ohio Labor Council

3.0 POLICY APPLICATION:

This policy applies to all employees of the Authority, except for temporary employees. Probationary employees and part-time Transit Police Officers may be accelerated through the formal discipline and discharge guidelines under Sections 7.0 and 9.0. All employees should thoroughly familiarize themselves with the information contained in this policy.

4.0 RESPONSIBILITY:

Department Directors, Managers and Supervisors are responsible for informing employees of the policy, administering the policy as outlined and encouraging employees to maintain acceptable attendance performance. However, the ultimate responsibility for attendance rests with the employee.

5.0 THE DESIRED EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE STANDARDS:

- 5.1 Employees are expected to be at work and performing their job duties during all hours they are scheduled to work, to report to work on time and to remain at work until the end of the assigned time period.
- 5.2 All employees are expected to strive for perfect attendance. Although the Authority recognizes that from time to time employees will need to be absent from work, each employee must make reasonable efforts to minimize the time away from work.
- 5.3 Employees are expected to utilize sick leave for its purpose as defined in the collective bargaining agreements or Personnel Policies and Procedures, whichever is applicable. Employees absent for reasons not covered by sick leave need to utilize the appropriate type of time off including bereavement, jury duty or court leave, union leave, personal days, vacation days or leaves of absence.
- 5.4 Employees are required to inform their immediate supervisors or a designated alternate person in advance when they are absent. When supervisors are informed in advance of employees' absences and anticipated return to work dates, they are able to more effectively manage the employees' duties during the period of absence and plan for their return to work. Except for serious illnesses or accidents which occur on an emergency basis, absent employees are expected to request sick leave from their supervisors as soon as possible, but at a minimum, thirty (30) minutes prior to the beginning of the shift. Operators in the Bus and Rail Transportation Departments must request sick leave at least ninety (90) minutes prior to their shifts. In no case should an absent employee fail to communicate with his/her supervisor during the entire shift of eight hours or longer. For extended absences of more than three days, employees must regularly inform the designated supervisors of their continued need to be absent and/or their return to work dates. Such supervisors will establish a reporting schedule with the employee based on the individual circumstances.
- 5.5 Employees are required to inform their supervisors as soon as possible of tardiness and, when practical, in advance. Employees who leave work prior to the end of the shift or daily schedule must request authorization from their supervisors in advance. Similar to absences, providing supervisors with advance notice of tardiness or leaving early helps them to more effectively manage the employees' duties. Bus and Rail Operators are not subject to tardies, instead they are subject to "misses" which are governed by Article II, Section 12 of the Conditions of Employment between GCRTA and ATU, Local 268. Operators are subject to the requirement to complete all parts of their daily runs as assigned.
- 5.6 Employees who are absent for more than three consecutively scheduled work days for non-work related injuries or illness are required to provide written medical documentation directly to the Medical Services area within fifteen (15) calendar days of the first day of absence. Employees will be advised by Medical Services of the type of documentation required which explains the entire period of absence. Upon return to work, they must also provide their supervisors with a medical release authorizing their return to full duty. If circumstances are such that a supervisor deems it necessary, employees may be required to provide medical documentation for shorter periods of absence.

- 5.7 Employees who are absent for one or more days due to an on job injury/illness are required to be seen by a medical provider and must provide appropriate medical documentation directly to the Workers Compensation area of the Risk Management Department.

6.0 THE EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM:

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is available by self-referral to assist employees in dealing with a variety of problems. If personal problems are impacting on an employee's attendance or other aspects of an employee's job performance, employees are urged to call the EAP and/or to arrange to meet with a counselor. When appropriate, supervisors are expected to recommend the EAP services to employees who must make their own decisions whether to utilize the EAP services for attendance management.

7.0 LONG-TERM ABSENCES:

There are some injuries or illnesses that result in extended periods of absence. During these times, it is particularly important that employees inform their designated supervisors as to their status. When employees are absent for six months the Authority will evaluate the factors involved, taking into account the length of time the employee has worked for the GCRTA, the employee's work record, the importance of the employee's job to the functioning of the GCRTA and a prognosis from a physician as to the length of time before the employee can once again be fully functional. When it is the Authority's judgment that the employee will not be retained for an additional period of time, the employee will be terminated from the GCRTA and this action will be classified as an "Administrative Separation Due to Extended Absence".

8.0 DEFINITIONS:

- 8.1 An absence is the failure to be present for work as scheduled. A half-absence occurrence is a period of time equal to or greater than two hours but less than one-half of the employee's straight time shift, (i.e. up to a maximum of 4 hours and 59 minutes for employees on a 4/10 schedule). Any time equal to or greater than half of an employee's straight time shift will be considered a full absence occurrence. Absences for one or more consecutive, scheduled workdays will be counted as one absence occurrence. Absences approved under the FMLA, Temporary Total Compensation under Ohio Workers' Compensation law or authorized leaves under bereavement, military, union leave or jury duty will not be counted as absence occurrences.
- 8.2 A tardy incident is defined as a late arrival to work of less than two hours. A leaving early incident is defined as any absence during the scheduled shift or workday of less than two hours. If tardiness and leaving early occur on the same day, they will be treated as two separate incidents. Incidents of tardiness and leaving early will be added together for the total occurrences during a rolling twelve month period. They will be counted separately from absences. When an employee works without either a tardy or a leaving early incident for a period of thirty days, one tardy/leaving early incident shall be removed from his/her record. The thirty day period shall be days actually worked.

- 8.3 Absent without Leave (AWOL) occurs when an employee takes time off and one or both of the following occurs: 1) the employee fails to communicate with the supervisor in a timely manner as required by the policy and the supervisor; 2) the time off is taken without authorization or an approved leave status. The collective bargaining agreements, Merit System Rules and Personnel Policies and Procedures describe the different types of leave and the guidelines for requesting and qualifying for each type of leave.
- 8.4 A trend is a reoccurring pattern of absences, tardies, leaving early or other attendance performance problems established over time. Examples include an employee whose absences regularly occur around weekends, holidays or paydays, or who leaves early on the same day for several weeks.

9.0 ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES:

- 9.1 Because each employee's situation and work record is different, each case will be decided on its individual merits. However, the guidelines given below will be adhered to as closely as possible. All discharges and formal discipline, if any, resulting from the application of this policy may be grieved and appealed through the grievance procedures for bargaining unit employees or the complaint process for non-bargaining unit employees.
- 9.1.1 Perfect and outstanding attendance should be acknowledged and recognized as provided for under Section 11.0 Employee Recognition of the Positive Discipline Program.
- 9.1.2 Any occurrence of Absent Without Leave (AWOL) warrants coaching or formal discipline. A three day AWOL is included in the Employee Performance Code's "List of Offenses that May Result in Immediate Discharge".
- 9.1.3 A total of six or seven absence occurrences within a rolling twelve month period warrants coaching.
- 9.1.4 A total of six or seven tardy/leaving early occurrences within a rolling twelve month period warrants coaching.
- 9.1.5 When it is the third time during a rolling twelve month period that an employee has a total of six absence occurrences this may warrant formal discipline.
- 9.1.6 When it is the third time during a rolling twelve month period that an employee has a total of six tardy/leaving early occurrences this may warrant formal discipline.
- 9.1.7 When it is the second time during a rolling twelve month period that an employee has a total of seven absence occurrences this warrants formal discipline.

9.1.8 When it is the second time during a rolling twelve month period that an employee has a total of seven tardy/leaving early occurrences this warrants formal discipline.

9.1.9 When an employee has eight or more absence occurrences within a rolling twelve month period this warrants formal discipline.

9.1.10 When an employee has eight or more tardy/leaving early occurrences within a rolling twelve month period this warrants formal discipline.

9.1.11 A trend of absence occurrences or tardy/leaving early occurrences warrants coaching or formal discipline. An appropriate time period, not to exceed three years, will be used to determine a trend.

9.1.12 Any other failure to meet the standards defined in "The Desired Employee Performance" section may warrant coaching or formal discipline.

10.0 APPLYING THE POSITIVE DISCIPLINE PROGRAM:

On a regular basis, but at a minimum once per quarter, supervisors are required to evaluate the attendance performance of their employees and to consistently and equitably apply the guidelines. The supervisor will review each situation which falls within these guidelines to determine if recognition, coaching or formal disciplinary action is necessary. If appropriate, coaching will be utilized to help employees perform at an acceptable level. When an employee does not respond to coaching or when the performance problem is otherwise serious enough to warrant it, the supervisor will utilize the levels and procedures for formal discipline as outlined in the Positive Discipline Program, Sections 13.0 and 14.0. Supervisors must follow the approval process for administering formal discipline as outlined in the Positive Discipline Program, Section 16.0. Formal discipline administered under the attendance policy will be categorized under "Rule VI. Responsibility to Abide by Authority Policies" of the Employee Performance Code.

11.0 TRANSITIONING UPON IMPLEMENTATION:

Upon implementation of this policy existing discipline for violations of the Absence Control Policy will be treated as follows:

- Amnesty will be granted for all discipline issued prior to the effective date of the policy. Employees' total counted AWOL, absence or tardy occurrences during the previous twelve month period will remain the same except that, upon implementation of this policy, all employees shall have two absences and two tardies removed from the total count in each area.
- Last Chance Agreements for attendance performance will not be subject to amnesty or modification.

12.0 ATTACHMENTS:

None.