

SUPERIOR-GREENSTONE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Section PERSONNEL

Policy Name **DISABILITY SUPPORT**

723

Board Approved: _____

Reviewed: _____

Review By: December 2025

BACKGROUND

The Board's Disability Support Guideline is an integrated partnership among employees, Supervisors/Administrators, Unions, and health care providers that supports employees to attend work which assists students to succeed and make a difference. This Guideline fosters a widespread understanding that the way to reduce the incidence and duration of an employee's absences is through early communication, intervention and support.

PURPOSE

- The Disability Support Guideline provides employees with a safe and timely transition from illness/injury that allow them to remain at work or return to work.
- When appropriate, the Guideline assists employees by providing rehabilitation support, accommodations or modifications to remain at work, gradually return to work and/or modified work prior to commencement of regular full-time, part-time or occasional work.
- When a permanent disability exists, the Board will endeavor to modify both the work and the workplace to accommodate the needs of the permanently disabled employee, based on medically-supported restrictions/limitations, provided it does not cause undue hardship to the Board.

1.0 Temporary Disability

1.1 Restrictions and Limitations:

An employee who becomes ill or is injured and it appears that an absence from work will result, is responsible for providing medical restrictions, limitations and functionality identified by the appropriate treating medical practitioner or specialist for assessment by the **Disability and Wellness Administrator** or designate. The restrictions, limitations and functionality shall be shared with the Principal/Vice-Principal or Immediate Supervisor and, at the discretion of the employee, the union representative.

2.0 Permanent Partial Disability:

- 2.1 An employee who becomes permanently disabled from an illness or injury, such that they are unable to meet the demands of their former position, may be provided with appropriate accommodations or modifications and/or suitable work based on their physical, mental and vocational capabilities and within the context of operational needs.

2.2 The conditions for providing such work may be:

- The employee provides current medical restrictions and limitations from the appropriate treating medical practitioner and/or by submitting a Functional Abilities Evaluation (F.A.E.).
- Where the Employer deems it necessary, clarification on the medical information provided will be undertaken to properly understand the disability and assist with its responsibility to explore accommodation solutions.
- The Board will consider the retraining of injured employees as circumstances warrant.
- Employees who have a permanent partial disability may be given preference for suitable job postings.
- Employees are accommodated on the basis of availability of positions and ability to perform the essential duties of a job.

3.0 Responsibilities:

3.1 Disability and Wellness Administrator or Designate may:

- 3.1.1 On initial contact, informs the employee that should they desire, they may have a union representative attend any meetings;
- 3.1.2 Will contact the employee directly in one of two ways:
 - phone to discuss the Board's Disability Management Guideline; and/or
 - send a letter to the employee outlining the Board's Disability Management Guideline;
- 3.1.3 Work with employees to understand the disability, assess restrictions, limitations and functionality;
- 3.1.4 Co-ordinate the return to work of all disabled employees with the employee, the appropriate treating medical practitioner, Principal/Vice-Principal or Immediate Supervisor, and the union representative at the employee's discretion;
- 3.1.5 Notify the appropriate union(s) of an employee's participation in the Disability Management Guideline;
- 3.1.6 Assess the employee's work capabilities in conjunction with medically-supported restrictions and/or limitations provided by the appropriate treating medical practitioner(s);
- 3.1.7 Inform the employee's Principal/Vice-Principal or Immediate Supervisor of the work restrictions/limitations and initiates the development of the Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan;
- 3.1.8 Perform a workplace assessment with the Principal/Vice-Principal or Immediate Supervisor to ensure compatibility of work restrictions and the duties to be performed within the work environment:
 - Co-ordinates the modification of the work or workplace, as needed, in conjunction with medically-supported restrictions/limitations;
 - Assesses the need for change in location and/or assignment;

- 3.1.9 Co-ordinate the development of a Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan with the employee, his/her Principal/Vice-Principal or Immediate Supervisor, the appropriate treating medical practitioner(s), the employee's union representative, Workplace Safety and Insurance Board, LTD Insurance Carrier, Human Resources and Operations Superintendents, as appropriate;
- 3.1.10 Shall distribute a copy of the Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan to the above parties and the employee;
- 3.1.11 Maintain regular contact with the employee and his/her Principal/Vice-Principal or Immediate Supervisor for the duration of the Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan;
- 3.1.12 Maintain an ongoing assessment of the Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan;
- 3.1.13 Arrange regular follow-up during the Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan to modify the Plan, as required.

3.2 The Principal/Vice-Principal or Immediate Supervisor may:

- 3.2.1 Be designated by the **Disability and Wellness Administrator** to contact the employee and discuss the Disability Support Guideline and, in the case of a minor workplace related injury be asked to develop the employee's Remain at Work or Return to Work Plan.
- 3.2.2 Participate in the development of the employee's Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan;
- 3.2.3 Modify the work or workplace, as outlined in the Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan;
- 3.2.4 Assign work or duties according to the employee's Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan;
- 3.2.5 Closely monitor the progress of the employee through the Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan and immediately reports any problems or concerns to the **Disability and Wellness Administrator** or designate.

3.3 The Employee:

- 3.3.1 Engages in medical rehabilitation and/or treatment that can be expected to facilitate a timely return to work;
- 3.3.2 Participates in development of their Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan and recovery goals;
- 3.3.3 Maintains regular contact, as identified in the Disability Support Guideline, with the **Disability and Wellness Administrator** or designate, to provide timely updates on status, changes in condition, and review progress through their Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan;

- 3.3.4 Must provide appropriate documentation as required by the Absence Reporting Procedure.

4.0 Development of Individualized Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan:

4.1 Remain at Work or Return to Work:

- 4.1.1 Identification of likely candidates for the Disability Support Guideline shall be made initially by the **Disability and Wellness Administrator** or designate, based on information received from the appropriate treating medical practitioner and, when appropriate, representatives of the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board and Long-Term Disability (LTD) Insurance.
- 4.1.2 A Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan, in general, may include, but is not restricted to, some or all of the following:
- volunteer work
 - reduced work hours
 - modification of duties
 - workplace modifications
 - removal of physical barriers
 - if it is determined that the employee cannot perform the essential duties of their current position, with accommodation then reassignment to another available position if the employee has the necessary skills and abilities to perform the essential duties of that position.
 - Only in extenuating circumstances will requests for time off (i.e. Vacation) be approved during an employee's return to work.
- 4.1.3 The employee may be provided with an outline of the Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan to be given to the appropriate treating medical practitioner with an indication that accommodations and/or modified work are available. The outline may also include information regarding the employee's job description and physical and/or cognitive demands analysis.
- 4.1.4 While participating in the Disability Support Guideline, the employee's status will be monitored by the **Disability and Wellness Administrator** or designate, Principal/Vice-Principal or Immediate Supervisor, in consultation with the appropriate treating medical practitioner(s).
- 4.1.5 Ongoing reviews of the employee's Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan will be conducted with any necessary adjustments made to support the employee's success.
- 4.1.6 The Board will endeavor to modify both the work and the workplace to accommodate the needs of permanently disabled employees, provided that it does not cause undue hardship to the Board.
- 4.1.7 The **Disability and Wellness Administrator** or designate, and the employee will develop a Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan based on a fulsome understanding of the disability which may include all supported limitations, restrictions and functionality. A copy of the Plan will be distributed to all parties, as well as the WSIB for WSIB claims. The initial meeting may include the employee's supervisor and/or union representative. A written Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan may also be shared with the employee's

appropriate treating medical practitioner and/or Immediate Supervisor and/or union representative.

- 4.1.8 Any necessary changes to the work environment will take place prior to the employee's commencement of Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan.
- 4.1.9 Should the employee not be able to participate in a Return to Work Plan, the employee and the **Disability and Wellness Administrator** or designate, will maintain regular contact. Ongoing, updated documentation will be obtained to determine when participation in the Return to Work Plan will be feasible.
- 4.1.10 The employee may be required to participate in a Functional Abilities Evaluation and/or Independent Medical Evaluation, conducted by a third party, to determine limitations, restrictions and/or functionality and to assist in the development of an individualized Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan.
- 4.1.11 The Individualized Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan may include the following information:
- essential job duties/tasks
 - specific physical requirements
 - restrictions and limitations
 - work schedule
 - follow-up work assessment date(s) by the Appropriate **Disability and Wellness Administrator** or designate
 - a gradual resumption of duties assigned under the Disability Management Guideline
 - a gradual increase in hours worked
 - expected date of completion of plan
 - signatures of employee, Appropriate **Disability and Wellness Administrator** or designate, Principal/Vice-Principal or Immediate Supervisor, appropriate treating medical practitioner(s), union representative
 - next meeting date
 - conditions for withdrawal of the individual from the Guideline
 - Regular follow-up meetings may occur during the Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan to ensure that the employee's needs are being met and to make any necessary changes to the modifications or accommodations should there be a change in the employee's restrictions or limitation.
- 4.1.11.1 The employee continues to participate in their Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan until they have reached Maximum Medical Recovery and are working at full capacity within any restrictions or limitations, including those that may be permanent in nature.

Also refer to:

HR Policy – Attendance Support Program
HR Guideline - Confidentiality of Medical Records
HR Guideline – Absence Reporting
