



BOARD ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

806 Disability Management – Early Intervention, Accommodations and Return to Work

DIRECTIONAL POLICY

Nurturing Employee Relations

Title of Administrative Procedure:

Disability Management – Early Intervention, Accommodations and Return to Work

Date Approved:

June 2026

Projected Review Date:

June 2031

Directional Policy Alignment:

The *Disability Management -- Early Intervention, Accommodations and Return to Work Administrative Procedure* aligns with the *Nurturing Employee Relations Directional Policy*, by promoting a compassionate and supportive approach to employee wellness. Through early intervention, collaborative planning, and appropriate accommodation, the procedure reflects the Board's commitment to supporting employees through periods of illness or injury.

Alignment with Multi-Year Strategic Plan:

The *Disability Management – Early Intervention, Accommodations and Return to Work Administrative Procedure* aligns the priorities of the Multi-Year Strategic Plan including the tenants of "To Belong" and "To Nurture," as it promotes an inclusive workplace through accommodation, early intervention, and collaborative support, ensuring employees experiencing illness or injury remain valued and supported.

[CDSBEO Multi-Year Strategic Plan](#)

Purpose

The CDSBEO Disability Management – Early Intervention, Accommodations and Return to Work Program provides employees with a safe and timely transition from illness/injury that allows them to remain at work or return to work.

When appropriate, the program 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 endeavour to modify both the work and the workplace to accommodate the needs of the permanently disabled employee, based on medically supported restrictions/limitations, provided that it does not cause undue hardship to the Board.

Action Required

Background

All school board employees play a vital role in contributing to a supportive, positive, and healthy workplace and learning environment. Stability and continuity within schools, classrooms, and board offices are essential for maintaining operational excellence, supporting student achievement, and fostering student well-being.

The Board's Disability Management Program is an integrated partnership among Employees, Principals/Managers/Supervisors, Unions, and Health Care Providers to support employee health, facilitate safe and timely returns to work, and maintain organizational stability across the school board.

This program promotes the understanding that early intervention and support are the most effective ways to reduce the frequency and duration of employee absences. The Procedure provides direction for the management of long-term absences from work. A long-term absence is defined as an absence of five (5) consecutive days or greater.

Employees have a responsibility to take an active role in their own medical care to maintain their health and well-being and minimize absences from work. The Board will make every reasonable effort to support employees in the workplace and to return employees to work safely and efficiently, in line with their Disability Management – Early Intervention, Accommodations and Return to Work Program.

Temporary Disability:

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 identified by the appropriate treating medical practitioner or specialist for assessment by the Wellness and Disability Management Coordinator or designate. The restrictions and limitations shall be shared with the Principal, Manager or Supervisor and the union representative.

Permanent Partial Disability:

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.

The conditions for providing such work may be:

- a. The employee provides current medical restrictions and limitations from the appropriate treating medical practitioner and/or by submitting a Medical Certificate outlining the limitations and/or restrictions.
- b. Employees who have a permanent partial disability may be given preference for suitable job postings, subject to mutual agreement by the employer and the relevant union(s).
- c. Employees are accommodated on the basis of availability of positions, ability to perform the essential duties of the job, and terms and conditions as outlined by the relevant collective agreement, individual contract, and/or relevant legislation.

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

Remain at Work or Return to Work:

1. Identification of likely candidates for the Disability Management – Early Intervention, Accommodations and Return to Work Program shall be made initially by the Wellness and Disability Management Coordinator or designate, based on information received from the appropriate treating medical practitioner and, when appropriate, representatives of the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) and the Long-Term Disability (LTD) Insurance provider.
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:
 - reduced work hours
 - modification of duties
 - workplace modifications
 - removal of physical barriers
 - reassignment to another position if the employee has the necessary skills and abilities to perform the essential duties of that position.

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 is available. The outline may also include information regarding the employee's job description and physical demands analysis.
4. Modified work is provided within the employee's own school or service area, wherever possible.
5. While participating in the Disability Management – Early Intervention, Accommodations and Return to Work Program, the employee's status will be monitored by the Wellness and Disability Management Coordinator or designate and the Principal, Manager or Supervisor, in consultation with the appropriate treating medical practitioner(s).
6. 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. The frequency of these reviews is established prior to the placement of an employee in the Program.
7. The Board will endeavour 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.
8. The Wellness and Disability Management Coordinator or designate, and the employee will develop a Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan based on the supported limitations or restrictions. 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 Principal, Manager or 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 Principal, Manager or Supervisor and/or union representative.
9. 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.
10. Should the employee not be able to participate in a Return-to-Work Plan, the

employee and the Wellness and Disability Management Coordinator 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.

11. 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 and/or restrictions and to assist in the development of an individualized Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan.
12. 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 Wellness and Disability Management Coordinator or designate
 - a gradual resumption of duties assigned under the Disability Management – Early Intervention, Accommodations and Return to Work Program
 - a gradual increase in hours worked
 - expected date of completion of plan
 - signatures of employee, Appropriate Human Resources Officer, 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 Program
13. Regular follow-up meetings may occur during the Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan to ensure that the employees' needs are being met and to make any necessary changes to the modifications or accommodations should there be a change in the employees' restrictions or limitations.
14. 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.

Responsibilities

The Board of Trustees is responsible for:

- Ensuring this administrative procedure is in alignment with the Nurturing Employee Relations Directional Policy.
- Reviewing the Disability Management – Early Intervention, Accommodations and Return to Work Administrative Procedure as part of its regular policy and procedures review cycle.

The Director of Education is responsible for:

- Designating resources for ensuring the implementation of and compliance with this Administrative Procedure.

Wellness and Disability Management Coordinator or Designate is responsible for:

- Informing the employee, on the initial contact, that should they desire, they may have a union representative attend any meetings;
- Contacting the employee directly in one of two ways:
 - phone to discuss the Board's Disability Management – Early Intervention, Accommodations and Return to Work Program; and/or
 - send a letter to the employee outlining the Board's Disability Management – Early Intervention, Accommodations and Return to Work Program;
- Working with employees to assess restrictions and/or limitations;
- Co-ordinating the Return-to-Work (RTW) of all disabled employees. The RTW meeting should include the employee, the appropriate treating medical practitioner, the Principal, Manager or Supervisor, and the union representative;
- Notifying the appropriate union(s) of an employee's participation in the Disability Management – Early Intervention, Accommodations and Return to Work Program;
- Assessing the employee's work capabilities in conjunction with medically supported restrictions and/or limitations provided by the appropriate treating medical practitioner(s);
- Informing the employee's Principal, Manager, or Supervisor of the work restrictions/limitations and initiates the development of the Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan;
- Performing a Workplace Assessment with the Principal, Manager or Supervisor to ensure compatibility of work restrictions and the duties to be performed within the work environment:
 - Co-ordinating the modification of the work or workplace, as needed, in conjunction with medically supported restrictions/limitations;
 - Assessing the need for change in location and/or assignment;

- Co-ordinating the development of a Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan with the employee, their Principal, Manager or Supervisor, the appropriate treating medical practitioner(s), the employee's union representative, the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB), the Long-Term Disability (LTD) Insurance Carrier, and the Superintendents, as appropriate;
- Distributing a copy of the Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan to the above parties and the employee;
- Maintaining regular contact with the employee and their Principal, Manager, or Supervisor for the duration of the Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan;
- Maintaining an ongoing assessment of the Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan;
- Arranging regular follow-up during the Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan to modify the Plan, as required.

Principals, Managers, and Supervisors are responsible for:

- Referring the employee to the Wellness and Disability Management Coordinator and providing them with the contact information should they need to discuss the Disability Management – Early Intervention, Accommodations and Return to Work Program.
- Participating in the development of the employee's Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan;
- Develop the employee's Remain at Work or Return to Work plan in the case of a minor workplace related injury;
- Modifying the work or workplace, as outlined in the Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan;
- Assigning work or duties according to the employee's Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan;
- Closely monitor the progress of the employee through the Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan and Immediately report any problems or concerns to the Wellness and Disability Management Coordinator or designate.
- Contacting the Wellness and Disability Management Coordinator when an employee will be off work 5 days or longer.
- Directing employees to send all medical documentation to HR.medical@cdsbeo.on.ca

Employees are responsible for:

- Engaging in medical rehabilitation and/or treatment that can be expected to facilitate a timely return to work;
- Providing the appropriate medical documentation (e.g. Medical Certificate) as requested and forwarding it to HR.medical@cdsbeo.on.ca . Medical documentation is required using the Board approved certificate following an absence of 5 days or longer.

- Participating in the development of their Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan and recovery goals;
- Maintaining regular contact, as identified in the Disability Management – Early Intervention, Accommodations and Return to Work Program, with the Wellness and Disability Management Coordinator or designate, to provide updates on status, on changes in condition, and to review progress through their Remain at Work Plan or Return to Work Plan;
- Providing appropriate documentation as required by the [E1: 8 - Absence Reporting Administrative Procedure](#).

Progress Indicators

- Employees are returning to work following a long-term absence in a safe and timely manner.
- Employees are providing the required medical documentation when required consistently.
- The Wellness and Disability Management Coordinator is consistently aware of an employee's absence when they reach five (5) or more consecutive days.

Definitions

Disability - As per the Ontario Human Rights Code, a disability is defined as any of the following:

- Any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness, including, but not limited to, diabetes, mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical coordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impairment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device.
- A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability.
- A learning disability or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language.
- A mental disorder.
- An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act.

Disability Management File - An individual's file which contains confidential medical documentation related to an employee's disability. This file is kept separate from their personnel file.

Long-Term Absence – Any absence which is 5 consecutive days or greater.

Medical Certificate – The designated template for employees to provide medical information related to their absence that is five (5) consecutive days or greater.

Maximum Medical Recovery - the point in an injury or illness recovery where a person's condition has plateaued and medical professionals have determined that, despite ongoing treatment, the condition is not likely to significantly improve.

Related Documents

[OECTA Medical Certificate](#)

[CUPE Medical Certificate](#)

[Non-Affiliated Medical Certificate](#)

References

[Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990, c. H.19 | ontario.ca](#)

[E1: 8 - Absence Reporting Administrative Procedure](#)