



Administrative  
 Departmental

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**POLICY TITLE:**  
Guidelines for Employee Attendance

**SUMMARY & PURPOSE:**  
To state leadership's expectations of employees with respect to attendance at work, and to provide guidelines for addressing excessive absence and tardiness.

**POLICY:**  
Leadership recognizes that employees need time away from work for rest, relaxation, recuperation from illness as well as personal and family needs. For this reason regular employees are offered considerable time away from work in the form of vacations, holidays, sick leave, bereavement leave, jury duty leave and several types of unpaid leaves of absence.

It is equally important, however, for leaders and work groups to be able to rely on the consistent attendance of all employees when they are scheduled to work. Unexcused or excessive absences and tardiness must be avoided as they may jeopardize patient care, add stress to fellow employees who must cover for absent or tardy colleagues, and reduce the work group's confidence in the absent/tardy employee.

To assist leaders in properly staffing their areas, employees are required to notify their leaders as soon as possible if they are unable to report to work on time or unable to report for work due to illness, injuries, or other emergencies. Notification to the department shall be made in accordance with departmental policies and procedures.

Employees with excessive absences or tardiness, which are unrelated to an FMLA-qualifying serious health condition or a qualifying disability, will be subject to corrective action up to and including discharge. Any employee who fails to report to work and call-in for three (3) consecutive days will be considered to have abandoned his/her job and have resigned without notice to Baptist Health.

**SCOPE/APPLICABILITY:**

Applies to all Baptist Health South Florida employees.

**PROCEDURES TO ENSURE COMPLIANCE:**

1. Definitions:

- a. Tardiness - Occurs when an employee reports to his or her designated work area, ready for work, after the scheduled beginning time of the assigned shift.
- b. Planned Absence - Occurs when permission was sought, in advance, by the employee for time off from work and such time off was approved in advance by the responsible leader.
- c. Unplanned Absence - Occurs when:
  - i. An employee notifies their leader prior to the start of their shift (per department guidelines) and identifies that they will not be at work for that shift due to illness, injuries or other emergencies; or
  - ii. An employee becomes ill or injured while on the job and is discharged to home, by Employee Health Services (EHS) or Emergency Department (ED), before the completion of his/her shift. In the event of a communicable illness, as determined by EHS or ED, in consultation with Infection Control, the employee will be released from duty for the safety of patients and co-workers, in accordance with Infection Control Policy 582.00 Employee Health Guidelines.
- d. Unexcused Absence - Occurs when an employee fails to report for work when scheduled and/or fails to remain at work for the duration of the employee's shift and does not have prior management approval for the absence. If, upon the employee's return, a reason for the absence is verified in writing and the reason precluded the employee from notifying the leader in advance, the absence may be considered an unplanned absence.

2. Attendance Guidelines:

a. Tardiness.

Punctuality in reporting to work is important for several reasons:

- i. Medical staff, patients, and other employees may be dependent on the services of the employee and are hampered by tardiness.
- ii. Tardiness can be interpreted by others as lack of commitment or dependability, and this reduces the trust needed for teamwork among employees.
- iii. Tardiness, when condoned and allowed to continue, tends to suggest that management has reduced its expectations.

Therefore:

- iv. Two or more instances of tardiness within a 30-day period, which are unrelated to an FMLA-qualifying serious health condition or a qualifying disability, shall be cause for a corrective action.
- v. Within the following six months, two or more instances of tardiness within a 30-day period, which are unrelated to an FMLA-qualifying serious health condition or a qualifying disability, shall be cause for pursuing additional steps in the Corrective Action policy.

b. Unexcused Absences:

- i. The first occurrence of an unexcused absence is grounds for corrective action. The second occurrence within the following 12 months will be grounds for termination.

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- ii. An unexcused absence of three or more consecutive work days shall be considered a voluntary resignation without notice, based on job abandonment.
  - iii. If an employee's advance request for an excused absence is denied, and the employee subsequently fails to report on the same day, the occurrence will be treated as an unexcused absence. If the employee advises that he/she did not report to work that day because of illness, an emergency, etc. the employee will be required to provide documentation of the excuse. If the employee fails to provide acceptable documentation of the excuse, the absence will be treated as an unexcused absence.
- c. Unplanned Absence:
- i. An employee may have numerous unplanned absences, each for valid reasons, but when all are considered together they may constitute excessive time away from work. Extensive or repeated absences, which are unrelated to an FMLA-qualifying serious health condition or a qualifying disability, may result in termination of employment if it is determined that the employee's availability does not meet Baptist Health's need for regular, consistent attendance.
  - ii. Each unplanned absence of one or more consecutive days, regardless of its length, will be counted as an occurrence. However, an unplanned absence on a major holiday, as defined in Human Resources Policy 2325 Holidays, shall be counted as 2 occurrences.
    - 1. Four (4) occurrences of unplanned absences within a six-month period are cause for corrective action.
    - 2. Continued demonstration of unacceptable attendance within the following six-month period shall be cause for pursuing additional steps of the Corrective Action policy.
    - 3. If during the six-month period after a corrective action is issued, the employee has another absence, that absence will be viewed based on a retroactive rolling six-month period. If that absence accounts for four or more occurrences during the previous six months, then the next level of corrective action is warranted.
    - 4. If the employee has no further deficiencies related to employee attendance in a six month period since the last corrective action step, but subsequently returns to an unacceptable level of performance and/or conduct, the process will repeat the last step. If an employee corrects his or her attendance (excessive absence and/or tardiness) after counseling or corrective action, but shortly thereafter returns to an unacceptable level of attendance, the leader should re-institute the corrective action process at the next higher step.
  - iii. Several experts are available to assist the leader and employee in collaboratively seeking solutions to the unplanned absences. Employees are encouraged to contact the Employee Assistance Program director, the Employee Health Services Disability Benefit Coordinator, or the campus Employee Relations consultant.  
It is particularly important to work with the Disability Benefit Coordinator in the early stages of absenteeism if the absences are because of the employee's own serious health condition, or the serious health condition of a family member requiring the employee's care. The employee may be eligible for a Family and Medical Leave of Absence as prescribed by federal law. The Disability Benefit Coordinator can discuss ways for balancing organization and individual needs in these situations. If an employee is on an authorized leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), as described in more detail elsewhere, Baptist Health will not consider such leave to be an unplanned or unexcused absence.
- d. Badging In and Out
- i. All hourly employees must badge IN and OUT at the designated (determined by payroll) electronic badge reader (clock) nearest his/her work station. Badging in or out for another employee, or badging at a clock that is not assigned, is not permitted and is cause for disciplinary action. Anytime an hourly employee leaves the hospital premises during his/her shift, he/she must badge out when leaving, and badge back

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in when he/she returns (unless he/she is on a management assigned business errand or meeting).

- ii. Four (4) occurrences of missed punches are cause for corrective action.
- iii. Continued demonstration of failure to badge in/out will be cause for pursuing additional steps of the Corrective Action Policy.

**SUPPORTING/REFERENCE DOCUMENTATION:**

N/A

**RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND ASSOCIATED FORMS:**

- BHSF Administrative Human Resources Policies:
  - 2325 Holidays
  - 3400 Family Medical Leave of Absence (FMLA)
  - 5300 Corrective Action
  - 5600 Termination of Employment
- BHSF Administrative Policy: 634.02 Time Record Preparation - Payroll

**ENFORCEMENT & SANCTIONS:**

Violation of this policy may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.