

ATTENDANCE POLICY (HR-5.13)	
Summary	Carolinas HealthCare System wants to forward our goal of providing the best patient care and services. The commitment and dedication of team members is one of the largest parts of meeting this goal. Too much missed work by team members could have a harmful effect on Carolinas HealthCare System's ability to provide quality care. Likewise, being late to work can burden the unit or department. Reliable attendance and timeliness is important and expected of team members.
Applies to:	➤ All Carolinas HealthCare System team members.
Definitions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Event of Absence ➤ Pattern of Absence ➤ Absent without Notice ➤ Tardiness ➤ Leave Early
Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ General Guidelines ➤ Team Member Responsibilities ➤ Leader Responsibilities
Related Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Policy 2.03, Fair Labor Standards Act ➤ Policy 2.16, Concurrent Jobs ➤ Policy 4.05, Infectious Diseases Prevention ➤ Policy 5.15, Team Member Counseling ➤ Policy 5.17, Absent Without Notice
Related Links	

ATTENDANCE POLICY**(HR-5.13)****Definitions****➤ Event of Absence**

An event of absence is when a team member does not report for a scheduled work shift. An event of absence is a continuous period of absence. For example: A team member who is out three consecutive days will have one event of absence. A team member who is out one day, returns for one day, and is out the following day will have two events of absence.

If a team member misses work for the following, it is not considered an event of absence: Paid time off (PTO) approved in advance, bereavement leave, work-related injuries or illness, jury duty, attendance at approved meetings, low census time, disability under the ADA (Americans with Disability Act), and approved leaves of absence including the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA). Infectious diseases are counted as an event (unless FMLA qualified); time is built into the attendance policy factoring in healthcare team members' heightened exposure to the flu and other such illness.

➤ Pattern of Absence

A pattern of absence is a noticeable pattern that happens three or more times. Examples of a pattern of absence are:

- Absence happening right before or after scheduled days off.
- Absence on weekends or holidays.
- Absence the day after pay day.
- Coming in to work and leaving prior to the end of the shift.
- Repeated written or final warnings. For example, earning an additional event of absence around the same time another event of absence has dropped off.
- Combinations of events, including tardiness, that show an undesirable overall attendance. For example, after a written counseling for absence the team member begins to leave early.

➤ Absent without Notice

If a team member does not report to work and does not tell the unit or department leader of their absence, it is considered "absent without notice". Each work shift in which this occurs is counted as a separate absence without notice. Each absence without notice is an absence event and is also separately subject to team member counseling.

➤ Tardiness

Tardiness is when a team member is not in the work area at the starting time of the work shift or when reporting back to work from a meal period or work break. Each event of tardiness is counted separately, even if they happen on the same day.

➤ **Leave Early**

When a team member leaves work before the end of the scheduled shift, it is a leave early. If a team member does not complete at least 50% of the scheduled work day, it is considered an absence.

General Guidelines

- Reliable attendance and timeliness is important and expected of team members. Too much missed work or being late to work could have a harmful effect on Carolinas HealthCare System's ability to provide quality care. Team members who miss work too much (events), are late to work, or show patterns of absence may receive counseling, up to the end of employment at Carolinas HealthCare System.
- Absence monitoring is not a statement by Carolinas HealthCare System or leadership that any team member was not truly ill or that time off was not necessary. The goal is to focus on the absence and not the reason for it. In order to keep a fair and reasonable work environment, it is necessary that the attendance policy be applied equally to all team members.
- Absences are looked at on a rolling calendar year basis (12 months). Events older than one year will not be considered in any new counseling action. If no events have happened in the year after the last counseling, all absence counseling is cleared and the team member has a fresh start.
- Team member counseling for attendance/tardiness violations is generally separate from progressive counseling for other policy violations; however, at leadership's discretion, multiple written attendance and/or tardiness counseling may be considered in combination with other policy violations in order to advance a team member to the next developmental counseling step up to, and including, the end of employment.
- Employment classifications are considered in absence event counseling. For instance, weekenders have made special contract commitments with Carolinas HealthCare System for a higher rate of pay. Carolinas HealthCare System depends on these weekenders for core staffing on days that are typically harder to staff. As shown in the chart below, the attendance requirements are stricter for weekenders.
- Team members with concurrent jobs will be on a single track for absence and tardiness events. Please see Policy 2.16, [Concurrent Jobs](#) for more information.
- New team members (those who have been with Carolinas HealthCare System 90 days or less) who are determined to have an absenteeism or tardiness problem will not be retained after the orientation period. An absenteeism or tardiness problem will be solely defined and determined by Human Resources and the unit or department leader jointly.
- The charts below outline absence counseling.

Consequences for Number of Absence Events					
Team Member Classification	Coaching & Education	Verbal Counseling	Written Counseling	Final Counseling	End of Employment
Full Time/Part Time	4	5	6	7	8
Weekender	1	2	3	4	5
PRN PRNs working an average of 1040 or more hours yearly will be treated as a part-time team member.	1	2	3	4	5

Consequences for Absence Patterns, Tardiness, or Leave Early					
Situation	Coaching & Education	Verbal Counseling	Written Counseling	Final Counseling	End of Employment
Patterns	2	3	4	5	6
Tardiness or Leave Early	3 within 3 months	4 within 3 months	6	8	10
Absence without Notice	Not applicable	Not applicable	1	2	3

- Counseling actions taken from the above charts are combined and cumulative. For instance, a full-time team member receives a verbal counseling for tardiness (second chart). Then the team member accrues five (5) absence events. This second counseling would automatically progress to the next step (written counseling) due to the earlier counseling.
- The events outlined in the charts above are the typical number of events for each action. Events are typically adjusted downward if previous team member counseling has not been given. Events may be adjusted upward if an attendance/tardiness violation is in combination with another policy violation. For assistance with the progressive counseling process, contact your Workforce Relations representative.
- If a team member in counseling for absence transfers from part-time or full-time to PRN or weekender status, the team member will remain at the same point in the counseling process when the transfer takes place. If a team member in counseling transfers from a PRN or weekend status to part-time or full-time, the team member will keep the same number of events. Any further absence counseling will be based on number of events for that status.
- A team member missing work for more than 15 consecutive calendar days and not covered by paid time off (PTO), has not requested a leave of absence, has not provided required information to complete the leave application, or is not on administrative leave of absence, the end of employment may result. This is regardless of any step in the absence counseling process.

- Any counseling for absence events or patterns will be consistent with the requirements of the ADA (American Disabilities Act) where applicable.
- Exempt team members are paid on a salary basis. Exempt (salaried) team members may not have their pay reduced for variations in the quantity or quality of work performed. Subject to the exceptions listed in Policy 2.03, [Fair Labor Standards Act](#), an exempt team member must receive the full salary for any workweek in which the team member performs any work, regardless of the number of days or hours worked. Exempt team members do not need to be paid for any workweek in which they perform no work. Carolinas HealthCare System may reduce an exempt (salaried) team member's earned Paid Time Off (PTO) in hourly increments for personal reasons, sickness, or disability.

Team Member Responsibilities

- It is important that Carolinas HealthCare System be able to deliver quality services and care to patients. Because of this, unplanned team member absence is a serious event. If a team member misses work, the team member is to contact their unit or department leader daily. The unit or department leader may approve other call-in arrangements. Team members are to inform their unit or department leader of the date they will likely be returning to work.
- If a team member misses work because of an infectious disease, the team member is to get approval through Teammate Health before returning to work. Not all infectious diseases are excused from counting as an event (infectious diseases are only excused from counting as an event when they qualify for Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) or the American Disability Act (ADA)). For more details and a list of some common infectious diseases, please see Policy 4.05, [Infectious Diseases Prevention](#).
- Team members absent for an illness may need to provide a medical doctor's statement at any time. This will be at the request of Teammate Health or the Return to Work coordinator.
- If a team member is going to be or is absent more than three (3) consecutive scheduled work days due to a serious medical condition, the team member is to contact Leave of Absence Administration (LOAA) at (704) 631-0262.

Leader Responsibilities

- Leaders are responsible for monitoring team member absence patterns. Leaders are to determine if there have been at least three absence patterns, as necessary on the chart provided. If there is an absence pattern and the team member is not currently on an FMLA or intermittent FMLA leave, the leader is expected to start counseling with the team member. If there is an identified pattern and the team member is on an FMLA or intermittent FMLA leave, this is to be reported to Leave of Absence Administration (LOAA) and the leader will be advised of any action to be taken.
- Leaders are responsible for keeping timely, accurate and complete attendance records on all team members. Leaders are to counsel in a timely and progressive manner using this policy. The team member does not benefit from multiple counselings done at the same time. Absence counseling steps cannot be skipped. For example, if a full-time team member has seven (7) absence events, but has not yet had a verbal counseling, the team member is to receive a verbal counseling. In this case, the two (2) earliest absence events would be taken off so that the total number of events matches the level of counseling (5).

- If a new team member is absent for two weeks or longer during the orientation period, this normally results in the end of employment.
- Leaders are encouraged to recommend the services of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to team members. EAP may be helpful to those team members experiencing a high number of absences or patterns of absence.
- Leaders are encouraged to review team member counseling with their Workforce Relations representative to make sure counseling is equal across departments in facilities.
- If a team member has a concurrent job, primary and concurrent leaders are to communicate with one another before counseling is issued to make sure the team member is on a single track.
- If a team member transfers to another unit or department, the leader is to forward the team member attendance records to the new leader.
- If a team member is going to be or is absent more than three (3) consecutive scheduled work days due to a serious medical condition, the leader is to make sure the team member contacts Leave of Absence Administration (LOAA) at (704) 631-0262. If a leave of absence is approved, the original team member absence is not counted as an event.
- If a team member is absent due to a disability, the leader is to make sure the team member contacts Leave of Absence Administration (LOAA) at (704) 631-0262 to determine what, if any, accommodations are appropriate.

Related Policies

- Policy 2.03, [Fair Labor Standards Act](#)
- Policy 2.16, [Concurrent Jobs](#)
- Policy 4.05, [Infectious Diseases Prevention](#)
- Policy 5.15, [Team Member Counseling](#)
- Policy 5.17, [Absent Without Notice](#)