Managing Attendance Issues
Quick Reference Guide

One of the most common workplace concerns facing University supervisors is managing unplanned, short notice, and/or unscheduled absences. This reference guide will help you address your employee’s misuse or pattern of unplanned absences.

**What are the most Frequent Attendance Concerns?**

- Employees not informing their supervisor in advance of their absence or tardiness;
- Extending lunch or work breaks;
- Utilizing sick leave when the employee is not actually sick and/or extend weekends or holidays; and
- Exhausting available leave as soon as the leave is earned.

**What Steps Should I Take to Address Attendance Issues?**

1. **Establish Clear Expectations** - Supervisors often assume that employees understand their expectations about flexing their schedules, taking breaks, and submitting leave requests. Many issues can be resolved by simply communicating specific expectations. Remember that it is your job to establish the expectations and the employee’s responsibility to meet the expectations.

2. **Communicate Your Expectations** – Clearly communicate the impact of missed work such as:
   - Lack of availability for students and staff
   - Missed deadlines or deliverables, and
   - Incomplete training and external communication

3. **Monitor Employee Attendance** - It is your responsibility as a manager to have an accurate understanding of your employees’ leave utilization and to intervene at the earliest possible opportunity if an attendance issues exists. Interventions may include verbal and written counseling, requiring health care provider verification of the absence, reprimands, and/or disciplinary actions.

4. **Manage Your Expectations** – It is not a manager’s job to fix attendance issues but rather to identify the attendance issue and provide resources to employees that may help them fix their attendance issues.

Remember that medical issues and records are subject to need to know. If an employee’s illness must be verified by their medical provider, it is only necessary to verify that the employee visited the health care provider. You should not verify the reason for the visit or the diagnosis. Additionally, if an employee approaches you with a Family Medical Leave (FMLA) request for a serious health condition or a reasonable accommodation for a disability, it is not your responsibility to understand the underlying conditions. It is, however, your responsibility to understand how to refer the employee to Human Resource Services for FMLA approval and/or accommodation.