Western Kentucky University

DFM Attendance Policy

Attendance Policy Purpose:

Timely and regular attendance is an expectation of performance for all WKU employees. To ensure adequate staffing, positive employee morale, and to meet expected productivity standards throughout Facilities Management, employees will be held accountable for adhering to their workplace schedule. In the event an employee is unable to meet this expectation, he/she must obtain approval from their manager/supervisor in advance of any requested schedule changes. This approval includes requests to use appropriate accruals, as well as late arrivals to or early departures from work.

Guidelines:

1. Department managers/supervisors will communicate to their employees the importance of timely and regular attendance and the process of utilizing the Call-off Notification Procedures. The Call-Off Notification procedure defines when and whom an employee will call if he/she is going to have an unscheduled absence. Caller must include: time they are making the call, date missing work, reason for absence, and expected date of return to work.

2. Requests for scheduled absences, including: jury duty, vacation, non WKU approved holiday, bereavement, military leave, FMLA leave, medical leave and preapproved/scheduled medical appointments must be requested as far in advance as possible consistent with University and department policy. It is the employee’s responsibility to complete a written leave request form at least 24 hours prior for medical appointment utilizing sick leave time and at least 5 days prior for vacation requests utilizing vacation time. All written request(s) for time off does not guarantee that it will be granted, subject to department operational and business needs. (See #8)

3. An unscheduled absence will be recorded as an occurrence per the Attendance Violation tracking process. If an employee is on a medically approved Family Medical Leave or Extended Medical Leave of absence, then time off is considered an approve absence/scheduled absence. If not in an approved FMLA or Extended Medical Leave then time off may result in absences being counted as unscheduled absences.

4. Notification of any unscheduled absence must be made as far in advance as possible but a minimum of one (1) hour prior to the start of shift. Calls must be made into the department’s designated call-in number, see Call-Off Notification Procedures for assistance. Notification and acknowledgment of unscheduled absence will not mean that it is classified as an excused or scheduled absence.

5. Employees who are unable to report to work as scheduled (except for a University preapproved time or using FMLA leave or Medical leave) are required to contact their supervisor/manager each day unless otherwise instructed by their supervisor. Failure to contact may be subject to the Attendance Violation process and corrective action.

6. Occurrences will be tracked by each department based on a rolling twelve (12) month period.

7. Any absence of sick that is 1-3 days in length may be considered an unscheduled absence. No medical note is required. If sick time usage is more than 3 consecutive days off, then employee is required to contact DFM/HR regarding FMLA or Medical Leave, see WKU Human Resources Benefits Policy.

8. For routine doctor’s appointments, employees may use accrued sick time. The employee must notify the supervisor in advance of the appointment at least 24 hours in advance to be considered a schedule absence. When possible, such appointments should be scheduled at the beginning or the end of the shift.
9. Managers/Supervisors must be observant and identify pattern(s) of absences. Employees will be subject to immediate corrective action if a pattern of unscheduled absences are observed. An employee will receive written disciplinary notice for a pattern of unscheduled absence including a description of the pattern from the employee’s manager/supervisor or the Human Resource Representative.

10. Bi-weekly employees will not be compensated for time lost due to tardiness or lateness. However, an employee who is late seven minutes or less is considered tardy but will be paid for the time, see 7 minute rule for an explanation.

11. Being late of more than seven (7) minutes is considered unscheduled. Payment will be deducted from the employee’s appropriate available sick or vacation accruals. Meal periods and breaks may not be used to cover for absences or tardiness. An employee may not extend the normal workday or work beyond his/her scheduled shift to make up for being tardy without the prior approval of the employee’s manager/supervisor.

12. An employee who has an unscheduled absence will be required to use accrued vacation or sick leave time in accordance with University policy, if applicable. An employee will not be compensated for unscheduled absences that extend beyond his/her accrual balances.

13. A denied leave of absence or denied request for time off, or failure to return to work after an approved leave of absence, or failure to comply with these guidelines or other applicable University policies may result in the treatment of time away from work as an unscheduled absence and subject to the Attendance Violation process and corrective action.

14. Employees are responsible for swiping in and out using the DFM timekeeping system. If for any reason, an employee falsifies the swiping system, they may be subject to disciplinary action up to termination.

15. Employees will not be eligible for holiday pay if you have an unscheduled absence the day prior to, the day of, and/or the day after a holiday. Time prior to and after a Holiday must be in a ‘paid status’. However, if an employee takes sick time immediately before or after a scheduled holiday, they may be asked to bring in a doctor’s statement in order to be paid for this absence.

16. Due to the nature of the services that DFM employees provide we are rarely able to close our operations. Please reference the WKU Attendance During Adverse Weather Condition Policy, 4.2501 for assistance. If an employee will be late or unable to report to work, the employee must notify his or her supervisor as soon as possible.

Definitions:

Scheduled Absence: occurs when an employee requests and is approved to take time off in accordance with department and University policies. Some examples of scheduled absences include; approved vacation, University approved holidays, jury duty, military related leaves, bereavement leave, FMLA leave, Extended Medical Leave, Short-Term Disability leave and medical appointments. All requests for time off must be made in writing by completing a Leave Request / Authorization Form to your direct supervisor/manager with as much advance notification as possible. At least 24 hours for medical appointment. At least 5 days prior to a vacation. Subject to Management approval based on other requests in the order they are received. All requests for time off will be considered in light of operational and business needs. A request for time off does not guarantee that it will be granted.

No call/no show: is an unscheduled absence without proper notification to the employee's manager/supervisor. For purposes of constructive counseling, each day off “no call, no show” will be followed with disciplinary action. The level of action depends on the stage the employee may be within the current disciplinary action process. Three (3) days of “no call, no show” will result in termination and considered a “voluntary termination”.

DFM Attendance Policy Revised December 2014
Pattern Absences: is a clear pattern of occurrences related to unscheduled absences. Example of patterns, are time off before or after a scheduled holiday, vacation or weekend. Or a pattern of absences following a payday, or special event, or immediately after accrued time is added to ones balances.

Tardy: is defined as failure to clock into the DFM reporting system by one (1) to seven (7) minutes after the expected start time and subsequently unprepared to start work. Excessive amounts of tardy may be subject to the Attendance Violation process.

Late Report: is when an employee reports to work, or leaves early from work or reports back from a rest or meal break by more than 7 minutes. Such late reporting is classified as an unscheduled absence and subject to the Attendance Violation process.

7-Minute Rule: DFM/Payroll tracks work time in 15-minute increments, the cutoff point for rounding down is 7 full minutes. If an employee works at least 7 full minutes, but less than 8 minutes, DFM/Payroll will round the number down to the nearest 15 minutes. If the employee works at least 8 full minutes, DFM/Payroll will round up.

Unscheduled Early Departure: is defined as failure to work a complete workday due to an early departure without a written and approved time off request.

Unscheduled Absence: failure to report to work on a scheduled workday or working less than a scheduled workday due to lateness or leaving early without a written and approved time off request. Absences on consecutive workdays for the same reason will count as one unscheduled absence under this policy. Some examples may include: absences due to car trouble, caring for a family member or yourself due to illness, home emergency or personal appointment.

Unpaid Status: not having available leave (vacation or sick) time to cover any lost time. It is the employees’ responsibility to maintain and monitor their leave balances to ensure they do not go in to an unpaid status. Employees who are in disciplinary action, or who are in an “Unpaid Status” due to poor use of time, not resulting from a qualified FMLA leave, will not be allowed to make up missed time. Approval of flexing or making up lost time is at the discretion of employee’s direct supervisor/manager. This situation will be subject to the Attendance Violation process.

Occurrence: includes all unscheduled, lost work time whether avoidable or unavoidable, regardless of the reason or the lack of fault of the employee and/or whether the employee receives pay for the time off.

Call-Off Notification Procedures: 

Employees must follow these call-off notification procedures any time they have an unscheduled absence.

When calling in to report an absence or being late for work, please call the following numbers based on which unit you are assigned to work:

- Housing Zone 1 (270) 745-5559
- Auxiliary Supervisors (270) 745-5824
- Housing Zone 2 (270) 745-6925
- Building Services Staff (270) 745-5826
- Housing Zone 3 (270) 745-6898
- Grounds Crew (270) 745-5820
- Any not listed should call (270) 745-3253

If an employee is unable to report to work as scheduled, it is their responsibility to call and leave a detailed message indicating the following: 
1. Time in which you are calling 
2. The day which you will be off work
3. The reason for the absence or lateness
4. An expected date in which you will return

All unscheduled call-off of a shift must be made at least one (1) hour prior to the scheduled start of your shift. Leaving a message with another staff member is not acceptable. Having another person call on your behalf is not acceptable, unless there are extenuating circumstances that prevent you from personally calling. If you will be absent for longer than one day, you will be required to keep your manager/supervisor informed of your status on a daily basis, unless directed otherwise by your manager/supervisor.

**Attendance Violation tracking process:**

- Two incidents of lateness equals one (1) occurrence (each, is one half (1/2) occurrence)
- Full day, unscheduled is one (1) occurrence
- One to three consecutive days of absence equals one (1) occurrence unrelated to an approved FMLA/Extended Medical leave
- Any unreported, patterned or unapproved absence(s) and excessive absenteeism will be one (1) occurrence
- Failure to report to work for three (3) consecutive days without notice will be deemed a voluntary termination by the employee. For each no call/no show day, the occurrence is subject to a corrective discipline.
- Excessive Tardy is one (1) occurrence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Calculation of Occurrence</th>
<th>Disciplinary Procedures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>No action - unchallenged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>No action - unchallenged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>No action - unchallenged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Employee Courtesy Reminder ECR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Verbal Reprimand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Written Reprimand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Disciplinary Suspension/Final Written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Termination</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Disciplinary Procedures:**

DFM Employees are expected to perform their jobs duties in a professional and responsible manner, which includes maintaining the highest level of honesty and ethical principles. Employees are also expected to be courteous and respectful in workplace relationships. Rules are necessary for any business to operate in an orderly, efficient maker, and to protect employees. In most cases, good judgment will be one’s guide. Inappropriate conduct is further explained in the University Standards of Conduct Policy.

The University reserves the right to utilize forms of discipline less severe than termination in differing circumstances in order to correct employee performance problems or unacceptable behavior. Although one or more of the following actions may be taken, the University reserves the right to terminate employment at any time for any reason unless prohibited by an employment contract. The responsible administrator should contact the Department of Human Resources for guidance prior to initiation of formal disciplinary action/discharge procedures. See HR Policy 4.850 Disciplinary Action

When policies, procedures, work rules, etc., are not being followed or there is poor performance or inappropriate conduct issues, it is the responsibility of management to take corrective action. This may be done by means of progressive disciplinary steps for infractions of different policies, procedures, work rules, performance, conduct, etc.
Corrective Action Steps:

Employee Courtesy Reminder (ECR) - Informal Counseling
The first step in any effort to improve employee performance is coaching. Consistent coaching addresses performance issues and assists the employee to take correct steps towards improvement. The goal of coaching is to work with the team members to solve performance problems and improve the work of the employee, team and department. Whenever possible, the first time a minor violation occurs, a manager/supervisor will first attempt to coach the team member by using an ECR.

Formalized Step 1: Verbal Written Warning
When ECR’s have not proven effective or for any violation that management feels the need to bypass informal reprimands, and employee will receive a documented verbal warning from management. This is the first step in the formal progressive disciplinary process. Verbal warnings are included and counted towards occurrences for 12 rolling months for the purpose of progressive disciplinary actions.

Formalized Step 2: Written Warnings
For offenses which management thinks are series or where verbal written warnings have proven insufficient in correcting a behavior or violation, written warnings are administered. Written Warnings are included and counted towards occurrences for 12 rolling months for the purpose of progressive disciplinary actions.

Formalized Step 3: Disciplinary Suspension/Final Written Warning
For offenses which written warnings have proven insufficient in correcting a behavior or violation, suspension is administered. Suspensions are included and counted towards occurrences for 12 rolling months for the purpose of progressive disciplinary actions.

Formalized Step 4: Discharge / Termination
An employee can be discharged if he/she has received one (1) Verbal Written Warning and two (2) Written Warnings, the most recent having been issued within the previous twelve (12) rolling months, and a 3rd incident or violation occurs. (Note: Infractions / violations do not necessarily have to violate the same rule). Employees may be discharged / terminated due to a serious breach of any of the violations listed in the University Standards of Conduct policy, Sexual Harassment, or Workplace Violence or other WKU Policy.

Refusal to Sign Disciplinary Actions:
All disciplinary actions are to be signed by the employee to acknowledge that they have read and understand the expectations for improvement. Refusal to sign a disciplinary action does not make it invalid. A second manager/supervisor will be called in and will witness the refusal to sign.

Appeal Process:
If you feel a disciplinary action is inaccurate or unwarranted, employees should exercise their right to appeal through administrative channels. (See the University Policy, Grievance Resolution Procedure)