I. PURPOSE

This policy provides guidelines to Medical School managers for monitoring the attendance and punctuality of employees. The intent is to promote a high level of attendance through a cooperative relationship between managers and employees.

By working with an employee who has a poor attendance record, a manager can help that employee correct problems related to poor attendance. Positive incentives and feedback from managers are encouraged to instill in the employee the importance of good attendance and punctuality. This policy also allows a manager, after taking all mitigating circumstances into account, to discipline an employee for violation of this policy and other University of Wisconsin work rules relating to attendance, should such action be required.

II. POLICY

This policy applies to all classified employees of the Medical School and prohibits excessive absenteeism, excessive tardiness and sick leave abuse. Medical School employment assumes a commitment to regular attendance. Employees are expected to report for duty as scheduled and to notify the designated departmental representative in a timely manner whenever they are unable to do so.

Supervisors will provide a copy of this policy to new employees at the time of hire and will explain to the employee that regular attendance and reporting to work as scheduled are essential for effective department operations.

Employees are responsible for reading and understanding this policy. If an employee does not understand any part of this policy, questions to clarify an understanding should be addressed to the department manager or the employee’s supervisor. This policy will be applied equitably and in conjunction with University of Wisconsin Classified Employee Work Rules.

Employees are expected to be responsible for scheduling their leave time and for ensuring that they have enough leave time to cover their absences. The Medical School may grant leaves without pay in exceptional circumstances such as the extended illness of an employee or a family member.

III. PROCEDURE

Notification of Absence:

Each employee must report an unscheduled absence to the designated departmental representative within the notice period specified. Employees must provide the reason for absence, estimated time of return and type of leave that he/she wishes to use.

Each department will designate the appropriate person(s) to be contacted and will define what is considered to be reasonable notice for its operational needs. This information will then be communicated to the employees of the department.
Failure to comply with notification standards may result in the scheduling of a pre-disciplinary meeting, which may result in discipline up to and including discharge.

Reporting an absence does not guarantee that the absence will be automatically approved. Depending upon the nature of the reason for the absence, the supervisor may require additional verification before deciding if the absence is considered approved.

Review:

It will be the responsibility of each designated departmental representative or the appropriate supervisor to monitor the attendance record of each employee and to determine through a review process whether excessive absenteeism, excessive tardiness or sick leave abuse exists. A review of an employee's attendance or punctuality may be initiated if any of the following circumstances exist:

A. three (3) unscheduled absences of any length in any 12 week period, including for reasons of illness or personal business,

B. tardiness on three (3) occasions within a 12 week period. (Tardiness is defined as failing to report promptly, ready to work, at the scheduled starting time of the shift or taking unauthorized extended rest or meal periods.)

C. a pattern of unscheduled absence in conjunction with:
   - scheduled days off,
   - legal holidays,
   - weekends,
   - same days of the week,

D. any "0" sick leave balance,

E. the use of unscheduled leave under false pretenses,

F. unscheduled absences:
   - immediately following discipline,
   - after working a double shift,
   - after working overtime,
   - after having a leave request denied,
   - under any other suspicious circumstance as determined by a department manager,
Absences approved under the Federal or State Family Medical (FMLA and WFMLA) laws may not be used as a basis for discipline.

Absences due to job injury, funeral leave, vacation, holidays or other scheduled leave will not be included as a basis for discipline.

Absences for which employees provide acceptable medical verification of their inability to work shall not be considered as unexcused absences. Note, however, that unexcused absences for which an employee brings in acceptable medical information may still be excessive and subject to possible discipline if the employee has no leave time to cover the absence and has exhausted FMLA and contractual leave without pay benefits.

If a review of an employee's attendance is initiated, the manager must take into consideration any mitigating circumstances before determining that possible excessive absenteeism, excessive tardiness or sick leave abuse exists. Discipline is NOT to be automatically applied until the following procedure is followed.

The manager should arrange for a pre-disciplinary meeting with the employee whose record is being reviewed. For represented employees a union representative may be present. The attendance or tardiness record is to be discussed with the employee in an attempt to determine if there is a mitigating reason for the poor record or possible abuse. The manager must be willing to work with the employee to resolve whatever circumstances are adversely affecting the attendance record.

Progressive Discipline:

Consultation with the Medical School Human Resources Office is required before disciplining an employee for violation of this policy or any other work rules relating to attendance.

If, after the pre-disciplinary meeting, the manager determines that a violation of workrule exists and that discipline is appropriate, progressive discipline is to be applied. Typical progressive discipline includes the following steps:

- 1st violation - written reprimand
- 2nd violation - one day suspension without pay
- 3rd violation - three day suspension without pay
- 4th violation - five day suspension without pay
- 5th violation - termination

These progressive steps will be taken in the order listed in all cases except where the manager determines that a violation is serious enough to warrant a higher level of discipline. Examples of serious violations include: no-call/no-show or leaving work without authorization. No-call/no-show for five consecutive days or more will result in the scheduling of a pre-disciplinary meeting and may result in discharge without prior discipline.