

Corporate Policies and Procedures			
DEPARTMENT: Human Resources			POLICY #: G-03
POLICY: Employee Substance Dependence Problems			
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POLICY STATEMENT:

The County of Renfrew provides guidance to employees who develop social or health problems as a result of substance dependence that affects the quality of their life and job performance. The objective is to identify employees whose work habits are affected by a substance dependence problem and to attempt to correct an employee's work habits through the establishment of corrective actions that may include a rehabilitation program. Successful rehabilitation of an employee results in improved health and well being of an employee, increased productivity and improved general morale. The County and society in general gains in terms of improved safety of the employee, co-workers and the public, and decreased alternative costs of social assistance and other social services required by the employee and his/her family.

PROCEDURE:

1. Assisting an employee who has a substance dependence problem is a cooperative venture of the individual, staff, and management and may require referral to, and assistance from, one or more treatment agencies. It has been found that this team concept produces the best results.
2. Clear directions from management are required to motivate the employee to accept help.
3. The success or failure of the treatment/rehabilitation program is measured through work performance and/or attendance data. The facts are therefore properly recorded and brought to the employee's attention on a regular basis. The employee needs to know that his/her job depends on his/her successful rehabilitation.
4. Management will consult their Human Resources Coordinator **or Administration Supervisor (Homes)** and the Employee Health Coordinator (EHC) prior to initiating Step 1 of the process.
5. Step No. 1:
 - (a) Whenever it is suspected that lower work performance, poor attendance, poor employee relations, or other problems indicate the existence of a substance dependence problem, the supervisor conducts an interview with the employee.
 - (b) The employee is requested to provide the employer via the office of the EHC, expressed authorization to release/receive relative information with appropriate

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health and medical professionals. The employee is referred to the EHC for appropriate action and follow-up as indicated by individual case circumstances.

- (c) The employee is given the opportunity to provide input into a corrective action plan and identify reasonable workplace intervention that may assist with improving performance and/or attendance.
- (d) The employee is informed by his/her supervisor that his/her work must improve within a specified time frame (usually one (1) month). A formal letter of a corrective action plan is issued to him/her in accordance with the provisions of the applicable Collective Agreement.
- (e) The details of this interview are recorded by the Supervisor and filed with the Department Head and Director of Human Resources.

Note: The subject employee may actually initiate this step, and is, in fact, encouraged to do so.

6. Step No. 2:

- (a) A confidential record of the employee's performance is maintained by the Department Head who, after the time frame specified in Step No. 1, either:
 - (i) Files a report with the Director of Human Resources that the employee's problems are being resolved.
 - (ii) Sends the employee a letter including a corrective action plan and warning that suspension or discharge follows repetition of the act(s) referred to.
- (b) In the case of the latter, the Department Head specifies a time frame for immediate improvement.
- (c) A copy of all corrective action letters are filed with the Director of Human Resources, the supervisor, the secretary of the applicable union, and, if required, with the employee's treating professional(s).

7. Step No. 3:

- (a) The employee's work record is maintained regularly and, after the time frame specified in Step No. 2, the Department Head sends the employee one of the following letters:
 - (i) If the employee's work record has improved and rehabilitation is progressing as confirmed by the treating professional(s) via the EHC

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office, a letter of commendation, with a note that his/her work habits shall continue to be evaluated on a regular basis.

- (ii) If work has not improved, a letter of suspension or discharge.
- (b) If the Department Head opts for suspension rather than discharge, a new trial period, as per Step No. 2, is established.
- (c) Copies of these letters are sent to the Director of Human Resources, the supervisor, the secretary of the appropriate union, and the treating professional(s) are notified via the EHC office.

Note: The foregoing procedures are guidelines only and may be altered to cope with specific situations. This Policy does not bind the County to undertake any rehabilitation procedures since summary dismissal may be a more expedient course of action. The provisions of any Collective Agreements are, however, strictly adhered to. Confidential documentation is vital for either the rehabilitation or the disciplinary process. If absenteeism is part of the presenting circumstances, refer to Corporate Policy E-09 – Employee Attendance.