

AV1700 – EMPLOYEE HEALTH & WELLNESS PROGRAM

Interior Health would like to recognize and acknowledge the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the Däkelh Dené, Ktunaxa, Nlaka’pamux, Secwépemc, St’át’imc, syilx, and Tšilhqot’in Nations, where we live, learn, collaborate and work together.

Interior Health recognizes that diversity in the workplace shapes values, attitudes, expectations, perception of self and others and in turn impacts behaviors in the workplace. The dimensions of a diverse workplace includes the protected characteristics under the human rights code of: race, color, ancestry, place of origin, political belief, religion, marital status, family status, physical disability, mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, criminal or summary conviction unrelated to employment.

1.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to promote employee health and well-being when a disability exists. Interior Health values all our employees and is committed to building an inclusive, welcoming, accepting work environment.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
<i>Disability Management</i>	<i>A systematic, goal-oriented process of actively minimizing the impact of impairment on the individual's capacity to participate in the work environment, and maximizing the health of employees to prevent disability, or reduce the risk of further deterioration.</i>
<i>Disability</i>	<i>The loss or reduction of functional ability and activity due to impairment.</i>
<i>Disability Case Management</i>	<i>Coordination of activities to maintain or rehabilitate an employee to an optimal level of functioning and gainful employment without risk to the employee, fellow workers or patients/clients.</i>
<i>Duty to Accommodate</i>	<i>An accommodation is a modification to rules, policies, practices, or tasks to ensure that a person can fully participate in the workplace, without discrimination. Human rights legislation specifies that employers have a “duty to accommodate” a worker's needs in relation to a disability (either mental or physical). Each situation is unique, and any accommodation would need to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Employers are required to make every reasonable effort, short of undue hardship, to accommodate a worker (CCOHC).</i>

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<i>Early Intervention</i>	<i>Contacting the ill or injured employee within days of the onset of a medical absence and initiating case management if required.</i>
<i>Employee</i>	A person currently employed by Interior Health in a full-time, part-time, and/or term-specific position
<i>Employee Health & Wellness Program</i>	<i>A workplace program designed to facilitate the employment of persons with a disability through a coordinated effort that addresses individual needs, workplace conditions, and legal responsibilities.</i>
<i>Undue Hardship</i>	The point at which it is too unsafe, difficult, or expensive to remove barriers so people can participate in work. The point of undue hardship depends on the circumstances of each situation. It is the reasonable limit to how far the employer has to go to accommodate a disability.

3.0 POLICY

- 3.1 Pertains to all IH Employees.
- 3.2 Employee is automatically referred to the Employee Health & Wellness Program when absent from work for medical reasons (the first day for an occupational injury/illness or after an absence of five consecutive shifts for a non-occupational injury/illness). Employee Health & Wellness will:
 - 3.2.1 Manage absences due to illness or injury;
 - 3.2.2 Provide Early Intervention at the onset of an illness/injury; and
 - 3.2.3 Facilitate the rehabilitation of employees while expediting an early safe return-to-work through a return-to-work plan.
- 3.3 The Employee Health & Wellness Program uses best practices in Disability Management when managing employee medical absences in both human and financial terms.
- 3.4 Promote employee health and well-being for employees with a disability through active Disability Case Management, Early Intervention, and early safe return-to-work opportunities as per the Workers Compensation Act, Collective Bargaining Agreements, Enhanced Disability Management Program Policy & Procedures, BC Human Rights Code, Canadian Human Rights Code.
- 3.5 The Employee Health & Wellness Program will:
 - Convey the message that employees are valued by focusing on stay-at-work or early return to work opportunities that bring the employee back, as soon as medically able, to productive and meaningful work;

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- Follow confidentiality guidelines as per Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, Enhanced Disability Management Program Policies & Procedures, and Policy IH [AR0400](#) – Privacy & Management of Confidential Information;
- Focus on illness/injury prevention;
- Follow Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) language.

4.0 PROCEDURES

4.1 Corporate Director, Workplace Health & Safety

- 4.1.1 Responsible for managing the health-related absences and WorkSafeBC (WSBC)/Long Term Disability (LTD) claims processes.

4.2 Employee Health & Wellness Professionals

- 4.2.1 Employee Health & Wellness Professionals include, but are not limited to:
- Employee Health & Wellness Advisor,
 - Employee Health & Wellness Facilitator,
 - Employee Health & Wellness Assistant, and
 - Duty to Accommodate Coordinator.
- 4.2.2 Facilitates the occupational and non-occupational Employee Health & Wellness Program.
- 4.2.3 Communicates with benefits advisor regarding initiation of Long Term Disability (LTD) claims.
- 4.2.4 Coordinates the delivery of medical and rehabilitation services to disabled employee.
- 4.2.5 Reviews length of disability and the current course of treatment and adjudicates medical evidence.
- 4.2.6 Consults regularly with appropriate health and rehabilitation professionals and claim representatives, as required.
- 4.2.7 Evaluates for medical accommodation in the workplace, if required.
- 4.2.8 Coordinates job demands analysis and compares to medical restrictions/limitations, and facilitates re-entry to the workplace, as required.

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- 4.2.9 Coordinates an approved stay-at-work or return-to-work plan, if appropriate.
- 4.2.10 Provides advice on Employee Health & Wellness policies.
- 4.2.11 Establishes/facilitates and coordinates the return-to-work program in collaboration with the insurance carrier, employee, union and manager, and is the primary contact for the employer, as appropriate.
- 4.2.12 Manages the claims, if appropriate, of employees on Long Term Disability and Sick Leave and may include monitoring and arranging assessments and referrals, facilitating the Duty to Accommodate processes in conjunction with Employee Relations.
- 4.2.13 Maintains the return-to-work program and provides education, as required, to IH staff on disability management processes.
- 4.2.14 Liaises with the employee's physician regarding the employee's limitations and capabilities related to work and alternate employment, and may include an Independent Medical Exam (IME), Functional Capacity Evaluation (FCE), Psychiatric referral, etc., as appropriate.
- 4.2.15 Maintains confidentiality of the employee's personal information throughout the process as per Freedom of Information Privacy Protection Act (FIPPA) guidelines, Collective Bargaining Agreements, and IH Policy [ARO400](#) – Privacy & Management of Confidential Information.
- 4.2.16 Follows Collective Bargaining Agreement language as it relates to the Enhanced Disability Management Program Policy and Procedures.
- 4.2.17 Canvasses job vacancies, retirements, new positions, potential job openings, etc. and identifies options based on employee qualifications and training. Jobs to be reviewed may include jobs outside the bargaining unit and/or across IH.

4.3 Injury Prevention Advisors

- 4.3.1 Analyzes WorkSafeBC safety statistical data to determine trends, and makes recommendations for change to the Corporate Director, Workplace Health & Safety.
- 4.3.2 Provides professional expertise on a consultative basis to the employer on safety issues, as appropriate.
- 4.3.3 Coordinates the safety program.

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- 4.3.4 Supports the Employee Health & Wellness professional, as appropriate, for safety issues.
- 4.3.5 Provides professional expertise on a consultative basis to the employer on occupational related ergonomic issues, as appropriate.
- 4.3.6 Coordinates the ergonomic program.
- 4.3.7 Supports the Employee Health & Wellness professional, as appropriate, for ergonomic issues.

4.4 Employee

- 4.4.1 Follows Policy [AV1100](#) protocols for reporting all occupational illness/injury.
- 4.4.2 Participates in accident investigation process for all occupational related injuries/illnesses.
- 4.4.3 Participates in the mandatory Enhanced Disability Management Program (as per the Collective Bargaining Agreement).
- 4.4.4 Maintains contact with supervisor to facilitate earliest possible safe return-to-work.
- 4.4.5 Maintains good health and safety practices.
- 4.4.6 Immediately reports absences to his/her supervisor/manager as per department procedures.
- 4.4.7 Works with their physician and/or specialist to recover health and return-to-work as soon as medically possible.
- 4.4.8 Obtains necessary medical assessment from an independent medical practitioner upon request of the Employee Health & Wellness professional.
- 4.4.9 Obtains medical clearance to return to work as requested.
- 4.4.10 Works with the disability case manager, manager, physician and rehabilitation personnel to implement the medically approved stay-at-work or return- to-work plan.
- 4.4.11 Uses resources available to prepare for and accept alternative employment when deemed appropriate.

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4.5 Manager/Supervisor

- 4.5.1 Refer their ill/injured employees to the Employee Health & Wellness Program for Early Intervention and Disability Case Management within one day for occupational absence, after five consecutive shifts for non-occupational absence or when their employee is struggling to attend work and/or to perform their job duties due to a medical condition.
- 4.5.2 Maintains regular contact with ill/injured employee during their absence offering encouragement and support.
- 4.5.3 Conducts accident investigations for all occupational related injuries.
- 4.5.4 Participates in the stay-at-work or return-to-work program.
- 4.5.5 Ensures all safety prevention training is provided, when indicated.
- 4.5.6 Ensures accident investigations are completed with recommendations to ensure a safe work environment.
- 4.5.7 Closely follows the employee's recovery to job readiness and supports the Employee Health & Wellness Program.
- 4.5.8 Informs payroll/scheduling promptly of actions that affect employee's pay.
- 4.5.9 Maintains good employee relations throughout the absence.
- 4.5.10 Maintains confidentiality of information on a need-to-know basis.
- 4.5.11 Knowledgeable of the Duty to Accommodate process.
- 4.5.12 Supports accommodation of disabilities to the point of Undue Hardship.
- 4.5.13 Follows the Collective Bargaining Agreement language and Terms & Conditions of Employment for Executive & Non-Contract Staff.
- 4.5.14 Where appropriate, works with employees, on an individual basis, with recognition and acceptance of the individual differences on supporting return-to-work.

4.6 Enhanced Disability Management Program Rep/Steward (Union)

- 4.6.1 Supports employee throughout health-related absences.
- 4.6.2 Participates in the return-to-work program.

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- 4.6.3 Follows the Collective Bargaining Agreement language as per the Enhanced Disability Management Program Policy and Procedures.

4.7 Employee Relations

- 4.7.1 Consults with all parties where job modification or alternate job placement is indicated to address accommodation issues.
- 4.7.2 Reviews and signs off on the official accommodation agreement once the Duty to Accommodate has been finalized with copies sent to the union, manager, Employee Health & Wellness Advisor, and employee.
- 4.7.3 Provides advice on Collective Bargaining Agreement interpretation.
- 4.7.4 Involvement with performance issues if linked to a disability.

4.8 External Service Provider

- 4.8.1 Shares pertinent information in a timely and regular manner with Employee Health & Wellness professional for optimum outcomes.
- 4.8.2 Communication with injured / ill employees must reflect Interior Health's approach to return-to-work and Employee Health & Wellness practices as per the Worker's Compensation Act, Enhanced Disability Management Program Policy and Procedures, BC Human Rights Code, Canadian Human Rights Act.

4.9 Benefits

- 4.9.1 Assists employees who have been off work for medical reasons with a Long Term Disability application at the appropriate time, as per the employee's Collective Bargaining Agreement for contract staff, and as and Terms & Conditions of Employment for Executive & Non-Contract Staff.
- 4.9.2 Advises employee of employment options and status at the end of the Long Term Disability 'own occupation' period when a Long Term Disability claim is closed via a letter from the provider.
- 4.9.3 Instructs employee to follow-up with their department manager to receive advice on their employment options if the Long Term Disability claim closes prior to the two-year end date, and if the employee has not yet returned to work. Ensures manager is aware of the referral.

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4.10 Payroll

- 4.10.1 Generates changes to the employee's pay from information generated from the manager or Employee Relations.
- 4.10.2 Ensures correct payments of Sick Leave, Long Term Disability & WorkSafeBC pay.
- 4.10.3 Ensures correct payment and reporting of rehabilitative employment earnings to the Long Term Disability plan.

5.0 REFERENCES

- [BC Human Rights Code – RSBC 1996 Chapter 210](#)
- [Canadian Centre for Occupational Health & Safety CCOHS](#)
- [Canadian Human Rights Act](#)
- Dianne E.G. Dyck, Disability Management Theory, Strategy & Industry Practice, Fourth Edition, LexisNexis 2009
- [Employee Health & Wellness \[IH\] - Home \(sharepoint.com\)](#)
- [Enhanced Disability Management Program Resources](#)
- Enhanced Disability Management Policy & Procedures between Nurses Bargaining Association & HEABC January 2011
- Enhanced Disability Management Policy & Procedures between Facilities Bargaining Association & HEABC February 2014
- Enhanced Disability Management Policy & Procedures between Health Science Professionals Bargaining Association & HEABC April 2011
- Enhanced Disability Management Policy & Procedures between Community Bargaining Association & HEABC March 2014
- [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#)
- [Health Benefit Trust](#)
- [Health Employers Association of BC: Health & Safety – EDMP](#)
- [Policy IH AV1100 – Employee Incident Reporting & Investigation](#)
- [Policy IH AR0400 – Privacy & Management of Confidential Information](#)
- [Terms & Conditions of Employment for Executive & Non-Contract Staff](#)
- [Workers Compensation Act - WorkSafeBC](#)

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