FOR ACTION: Light Duty Assignment Policies, 4180 and 3180

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board approve Policies 4180 and 3180, Light Duty Assignment.

Background Information

As the corporation continues to look for ways to manage and contain costs, Administration in conjunction with the Safety Committee has been looking at ways to control expenses associated with employees being off work due to an injury or illness and specifically, Workers’ Compensation insurance costs.

The objective of the Light Duty Assignment program is to return MCCSC employees to safe and productive work as soon as medically possible following an injury or illness. Newly developed Policy and Guidelines 4180 and 4180AG and 3180 and 3180AG are attached. The policies are identical for support and certified staff and apply to eligible MCCSC employees who experience injuries or illnesses that are both work and non-work related.

Departments in coordination with the Human Resources Department are obligated to attempt in good faith to provide a meaningful temporary work assignment which corresponds with the employee’s knowledge, skills and physical capabilities within the limitations specified by the employee’s physician.

Early return to work following an injury or illness is beneficial to both MCCSC and the affected employee. Those benefits include, among others:

Benefit to Employees:
- Employees will remain active and productive
- Employees experience less disruption to their personal and professional lives
- Pre-injury/illness benefits will be maintained
- Contact and support from co-workers will be maintained
- Employees will experience a smoother transition back to regular duty

Benefit to MCCSC:
- Employee productivity is maintained
- Expenses for hiring, training and/or replacing the injured employee’s position are reduced
- Workers’ Compensation costs, if applicable, are reduced when injured employees safely return to work (reduction in lost time from work because compensation is paid to an employee beginning on the 8th calendar day if the employee is off work for a period of time)

These policies were presented for discussion at the Board meeting on May 25, 2010 and are included at this time for approval.
LIGHT-DUTY ASSIGNMENT

The Monroe County Community School Corporation does not have permanent light-duty positions. However, in the event an employee is able to return to work following an injury, disability or other medical leave of absence before he or she is otherwise able to perform the essential functions of the employee’s regular position, the Corporation may offer a temporary light-duty assignment. By definition, such assignments are temporary in nature and are not intended to create a permanent position. Accordingly, employees may only perform such temporary assignments for the lesser of the following periods:

A. the employee’s ability to return to his or her regular position (with or without reasonable accommodation);

B. the time necessary to complete the temporary assignment; or

C. three (3) months*

If an employee is unable to return to his or her regular position after three months, such employee may request to be placed in any vacant position for which he or she is qualified, with or without reasonable accommodation, consistent with any restrictions imposed by the employee’s doctor. If no such position is available, the employee will be returned to a medical leave of absence. The nature and availability of temporary work assignments will generally fluctuate and will be determined based on the needs and discretion of the School Corporation. Employees will be assigned any available temporary work on a first-come, first-serve basis, however work-related injuries will take precedence over non-work related injuries.

*In the instance where the treating physician states that the restrictions will end within 30 days from the expiration of the initial 90-day period, an extension may be approved for a maximum of 30 days to the 90-day allotment. The only other exception is in the case of a work-related injury where an employee has a Temporary Partial Disability. In this instance, the corporation will re-evaluate the employee’s status every 30 days to determine the appropriate extension of the light duty assignment.

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