



Hamilton

# INFORMATION REPORT

<b>TO:</b>	Chair & Members Audit, Finance and Administration Committee
<b>COMMITTEE DATE:</b>	March 26, 2018
<b>SUBJECT/REPORT NO:</b>	Attendance Support Program Relaunch (HUR18007) (City Wide)
<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b>	City Wide
<b>PREPARED BY:</b>	Rob Burwash 905-546-2424 Ext. 2655
<b>SUBMITTED BY:</b>	Lora Fontana Executive Director Human Resources & Organizational Development
<b>SIGNATURE:</b>	

## Council Direction:

Not applicable

## Information:

The current Attendance Support Program (ASP) has been in place for many years. In order to ensure that the ASP is administered in a fair and objective fashion, attendance monitoring is based on triggering factors that include 4 occurrences or 7 days of absence (for any reason), within a twelve month period. Once triggered, meetings are held with employees that are intended to be supportive in nature and are focused on exploring how to improve an employee's attendance. Additional meetings are held with an employee with each subsequent trigger, progressing through a series of levels, until such time that an employee's attendance improves or further action is taken.

Despite the ASP's supportive and comprehensive nature, both employees and Managers have expressed dissatisfaction and frustration with the management of absences that are often times well within the acceptable parameters of the program. Additionally, there is often a feeling that these meetings are disciplinary, rather than the supportive nature that is intended.

Most significantly, this approach generates a very large number of meetings that are arguably unnecessary, as they do not generate any new information or provide for outcomes that will ultimately improve an employee's attendance. Generally speaking, there are approximately 1500 employees in the ASP at any point in time in a given year.

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All stakeholders, including management, employees and their union representative do not place any significant value on these meetings and ultimately, their purpose is no longer effective.

The current ASP continues to be largely ineffective given the lack of progress made in management's ability to appropriately address absenteeism as well as the inordinate amount of time taken to manage absences that are generally known and accepted. The ASP has been a long standing program that has become prone to manipulation and misuse, resulting in disengaged and critical users.

The proposed Attendance Management Program (AMP) will not incorporate any trigger levels and will focus on "unexplained" and high levels of employee absenteeism. Given the smaller number of employees identified in the new AMP, management will have greater opportunity to focus on more problematic absenteeism areas within specific work groups. Unlike the current AMP, wherein all known and approved absences are included, such absences will now be excluded. The focus of the new program will be on the absences where the reason is not known in advance. This would include short notice sick absences, personal emergency days, etc. The program will monitor both the amount and the patterns of absences. Enhancements have also been made to the City's ability to electronically monitor and report on the associated data in a more accurate and timely manner. This narrowed focus will result in the identification of situations that are more likely to result in improved attendance.

Communication and training on the new AMP will be commencing in April of this year, with a strong focus on training in May and June. It is anticipated that the new AMP will be launched on July 2, 2018, with the first reports being generated and issued to management on July 16, 2018. Further enhancements and improvements to the program will be applied over time as familiarity and competence builds. Staff will continue to provide Council with regular updates on absenteeism levels as well as progress reports on the new Attendance Management Program.

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