

BRIEF: OPS Attendance Support Management Program

On April 1, 2015, the OPS Employer will be replacing the existing Attendance Management Policy (AMP) with the new Attendance Support Management Program (ASMP). The ASMP had been a pilot project for OPSEU staff in select ministries since 2008. The Employer is now implementing the ASMP across the entire OPS for all bargaining units including AMAPCEO.

The program purportedly seeks to reduce and manage non-culpable and innocent absenteeism and to achieve and maintain regular and productive attendance. Non-culpable and innocent absences occur due to an employee's involuntary condition. Once an employee exceeds the attendance threshold of 7 absences within a 12 month period, they are automatically registered into Level 1 of the ASMP. An employee will progress through the other three levels of the program if they continue to exceed the thresholds without any improvement.

An employee placed into Level 1 can exit the program if they are able to show that a health condition, injury, WSIB insured injury, or disability (as defined in the [Human Rights Code](#)) is causing some or all of the absences.

Unlike other recent OPS policy initiatives, AMAPCEO did not have any input in the development of the ASMP and only received disclosure on the new policy and program in February. Our feedback was not officially sought until early March. AMAPCEO has voiced its strong opposition to the unilateral imposition of this program on AMAPCEO-represented employees at two recent ACERC meetings and has provided both written and verbal feedback on the program documents.

Some of these concerns include:

- No rationale for the ASMP as there is no evidence that innocent absenteeism is a problem in the AMAPCEO bargaining unit;
- The overall punitive nature of the ASMP, with the ability to discipline and terminate employees for non-culpable absenteeism at Level 4 of the program;
- The very low threshold of 7 absences for placement into each level of the program;
- The likelihood of sick employees reporting to work to avoid being placed into the program; and
- The removal of management discretion to determine whether an employee should be placed into Level 1 of the program.

In our opinion, the ASMP unfairly targets sick employees and will lead to low morale and stress in the workplace, especially for some of our most vulnerable members. AMAPCEO will continue to raise our concerns with the implementation of this program both at our AMERCs and at ACERC.