


NORTHAMPTON POLICE DEPARTMENT		
Administration & Operations Manual		
Policy: Sick & Emergency Leave Management		AOM: P-155
Massachusetts Police Accreditation Standards Referenced:		Issuing Authority <hr/> John D. Cartledge Chief of Police
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I. Introductory Discussion

Sick and emergency leave benefits are important to employees, as well as the department. Sick leave provides the employee with the ability to recuperate when incapacitated by illness or injury without loss of income to themselves or their family. Emergency leave allows an employee to attend to unanticipated emergencies that may arise, which affect themselves or their family.

Sick and emergency leave is beneficial to the department, in that they allow employees to maintain a level of health and state of mind conducive to their being able to carry out the duties and responsibilities of their positions.

However, if sick and emergency leave are not properly managed, they can place a significant financial burden upon the department, as well as adversely affect its efficient operation. When employees use sick or emergency time, they are either replaced by overtime or their positions go unfilled. In the former case, the department’s fiscal resources are depleted. Additionally, replacement on overtime does not lend well to maintaining continuity on a shift or in a bureau. Therefore, the effectiveness of that shift or bureau suffers. When a shift/bureau operates short of personnel, because of an absence, the workload of the absent employee has to be

picked up by the other personnel of the shift/bureau. This, too, reduces the effectiveness of that shift or bureau.

Because of the impact that the cumulative use of sick and emergency leave can have on the financial resources and operational effectiveness of the department, oversight and management procedures are necessary.

II. Policy

The primary responsibility of monitoring and managing sick and emergency leave usage rests with the shift and bureau commanders.

III. Procedures

- A. The Shift/Bureau Commanders shall maintain an individual file for each of their employees in which a copy of all the *Sick Leave Use Reports* for each individual employee is to be retained for the calendar year.
- B. The Shift/Bureau Commanders shall periodically check the employee's electronic sick and emergency leave use records to verify the actual sick and emergency time used by each of their employees.
- C. If it appears that an employee has misused, excessively used, or is tending towards excessive use of sick leave, the Shift/Bureau Commander shall review the sick leave use with the employee.
 1. The Shift/Bureau Commander shall counsel the employee on the importance of minimizing their sick leave usage.
 2. The Shift/Bureau Commander shall document this review and retain this documentation in the employee's file. Additionally, they will provide a copy to the Administrations Division Commander (ADC).
- D. If after counseling, an employee continues misusing or excessively using sick leave, the Shift/Bureau Commander shall provide additional counseling to the employee. Also, the Shift/Bureau Commander shall caution them, that unless they show significant improvement in the conservation of their sick leave usage, they could be required to provide a doctor's note for any sick time used. Documentation of this counseling session shall be made and retained in the employee's file. A copy of this documentation is to be provided to the ADC.
- E. If an employee still fails to adequately conserve their sick leave usage, the Shift/Bureau Commander shall consult with the ADC to determine if that employee should be placed under the requirement to provide a doctor's note for sick leave use, and if so for what duration.
 1. If any employee is to be required to provide a doctor's note for sick leave use, the Shift/Bureau Commander shall provide the employee with a notice in

writing. That notice shall explain the reason for the action, as well as its effective date and duration.

- F. The Shift/Bureau Commander and ADC shall not be precluded from immediately imposing a requirement for a doctor's note when there is cause to believe that an employee has feigned illness or injury, or when the employee has a continuing history of sick leave misuse or excessive use.

IV. Reporting Requirements

- A. On June 30th, the mid-point of the calendar year, each Shift/Bureau Commander shall complete a *Mid-Year Sick & Emergency Leave Use Review* for each of the employees on/in their shift/bureau. The originals of these reports shall be turned into the ADC by the third Tuesday of August. A copy of the employees' individual reports shall be retained in their respective files.
- B. On December 31st, the end of the calendar year, each Shift/Bureau Commander shall complete an *Annual Sick & Emergency Leave Use Review* for each of the employees on/in their shift/bureau. The originals of these reports shall be turned into the ADC by the third Tuesday of January. A copy of the employees' individual reports shall be retained in their respective files.
- C. The Administrations Division Commander (ADC) shall be responsible for reviewing and maintaining the reports received from the Shift/Bureau Commanders. Additionally, that captain shall be responsible for insuring compliance with this policy and for developing the reporting formats.