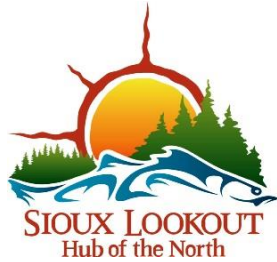


Fitness for Duty Policy



The Municipality of Sioux Lookout Human Resources Policy

Section:	Personnel		
Policy No:	2026-HR-20	Date:	July 8, 2026
Approved by:	CAO	Repeal:	

Purpose

- Set clear expectations that employees report to work able to perform their duties safely.
- Provide a consistent process for addressing fitness-for-duty concerns, including requests for medical information.
- Support a safe and timely return to work following illness, injury, or leave.
- Ensure compliance with the Ontario Human Rights Code, the Occupational Health and Safety Act, and the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act.

Policy Statement

The Municipality of Sioux Lookout is committed to a safe, healthy, and productive workplace. Employees are expected to report to work fit for duty: able to safely and effectively perform their assigned job functions. Fitness for duty may be affected by illness, injury, fatigue, medication, mental health, or other medical conditions.

This policy sets out general expectations for fitness for duty, the circumstances in which the Municipality may request medical information or an independent medical examination, and the process for returning to work following an illness, injury, or leave. Matters specific to alcohol, cannabis, and other substance use are addressed under the Substance Use and Impairment Policy, and the monitoring and management of employee absences is addressed under the Attendance Management Policy and Program; both should be read together with this policy.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees of the Municipality, regardless of position or work location. The same standard for fitness for duty applies across the organization; nothing in this policy creates a different standard for any specific role or department.

Definitions

Term	Meaning
Fit for Duty	Able to safely and effectively perform the essential duties of one's position, without limitation caused by illness, injury, fatigue, medication, or other medical condition that has not been disclosed or accommodated.
Functional Abilities Information	Information from a treating health care practitioner describing what an employee can and cannot safely do at work, including restrictions and limitations, without requiring disclosure of a specific diagnosis.
Independent Medical Examination (IME)	An assessment by a health care practitioner selected by the Municipality, requested where the Municipality cannot reasonably obtain the information it needs from the employee's own treating practitioner.
Return to Work	The process of an employee resuming their pre-leave position, or suitable modified or alternative work, following an absence due to illness, injury, or leave.
Suitable Work	Work that is safe, within the employee's functional abilities, available, and as close as reasonably possible to the employee's regular duties and earnings.

General Provisions

Employee Expectations

- Employees must report to work fit for duty and must notify their supervisor as soon as possible if illness, injury, fatigue, medication, or any other condition may affect their ability to safely perform their job.
- Employees must not perform safety-sensitive tasks, operate municipal vehicles or equipment, or remain on duty if they are not fit to do so safely.
- An employee who believes they are not fit for duty should remove themselves from the task and notify their supervisor immediately.

Removal from Duty and Pay Status

- Where a supervisor removes an employee from duty due to a fitness-for-duty concern while the matter is reviewed, including while medical information or an IME is being obtained, the employee will be placed on paid administrative leave in accordance with the Administrative Leave Policy, unless the circumstances meet the criteria for unpaid administrative leave set out in that policy.

Requests for Medical Information

- Where the Municipality has a reasonable basis to question an employee's fitness for duty, including an observed safety concern or a concern identified through the Attendance Management Policy and Program, it may request functional abilities information from the employee's treating health care practitioner.
- Requests for medical information will be limited to what is reasonably necessary to assess fitness for duty or accommodation needs, such as restrictions, limitations, and expected duration. The Municipality will not request a specific diagnosis but may inquire about the general nature of an illness or disability.
- All medical information will be kept confidential and used only for purposes related to fitness for duty, accommodation, and return to work.
- Once an employee has submitted the requested medical information, the Municipality will respond within ten (10) working days. If a decision on fitness for duty or accommodation is not yet available at that time, the Municipality will provide the employee with an update on the status of the review.

Independent Medical Examinations

- Where the information provided by the employee's treating practitioner is insufficient, unclear, or there is a reasonable and good faith basis to question its adequacy or reliability, the Municipality may request that the employee attend an independent medical examination (IME). Before requiring an employee to attend an IME, the Municipality will first consider whether the information needed could reasonably be obtained by requesting clarification from the employee's own treating practitioner.
- Where an IME is required, the Municipality will select and pay for the examination, will limit the questions asked of the examiner to those relevant to fitness for duty and accommodation, and will not provide the examiner with information that could compromise the examiner's objectivity.
- Where the Municipality requests any medical examination, assessment, or note from an employee, including an IME, functional abilities assessment, or return-to-work clearance, the Municipality will reimburse the employee for any associated fee upon submission of a receipt.
- An employee who has concerns about a requested IME, including the scope of questions or choice of examiner, may raise those concerns with Human Resources before the examination takes place.
- A request for an IME is not disciplinary in nature. Refusal to attend a reasonably requested IME without a valid reason may delay accommodation or return-to-work planning and may be addressed through this policy and applicable disciplinary processes.
- Repeated or ongoing fitness-for-duty concerns will be addressed individually based on their underlying cause. Where the concern relates to a disability, the matter will continue to be addressed under this policy and, where applicable, the Accessibility for

Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA); where it relates to alcohol, cannabis, or other substance use, it will be addressed under the Substance Use and Impairment Policy; and where it relates to conduct unrelated to a disability or substance use, it may be addressed through the Municipality's progressive discipline process.

Accommodation

- Where an employee's fitness for duty is affected by a disability, the Municipality will accommodate the employee up to the point of undue hardship, in accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code. Accommodation will be assessed on an individualized basis in consultation with the employee and, where appropriate, their treating practitioner.

Return to Work

- Employees returning to work following an illness, injury, or leave must provide the Municipality with functional abilities information confirming they are fit to return, with or without modified duties.
- Where an employee is not yet able to perform their full pre-leave duties, the Municipality will work with the employee to identify suitable work that is safe, productive, within the employee's functional abilities, and as close as possible to their regular duties and earnings.
- Where an absence results from a workplace injury or illness, the Municipality will meet its return-to-work and re-employment obligations under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, including staying in contact with the employee during their recovery, cooperating with the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board, and offering suitable work where available.
- Employees are expected to cooperate in the return-to-work process, including by providing requested functional abilities information, participating in the development of a return-to-work plan, and notifying the Municipality of any changes in their medical condition or functional abilities.

Confidentiality

- All information collected under this policy will be handled in accordance with applicable privacy laws and disclosed only to those who require it to administer fitness for duty, accommodation, or return-to-work obligations.
- Individuals who report, to their supervisor, their suspicions of another person being not fit for duty may do so in confidence, and the reporting individual's information and identity will be kept confidential to the extent possible.

Substance Use

- Fitness-for-duty concerns related to alcohol, cannabis, or other substance use, including testing, disclosure, and accommodation in safety-sensitive positions, are addressed under the Substance Use and Impairment Policy.

Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Employer	Administer this policy consistently, request medical information or an IME only where reasonably necessary, support accommodation and return-to-work planning, and keep all medical information confidential.
Supervisors	Monitor for fitness-for-duty concerns within their work areas, remove an employee from duty where there is a reasonable belief the employee is not fit to safely perform their work, and report concerns to Human Resources.
Employees	Report to work fit for duty, notify their supervisor of any condition that may affect their ability to safely perform their job, provide requested medical information in a timely manner, and cooperate in accommodation and return-to-work planning.
Human Resources	Provide guidance on this policy, coordinate requests for medical information and IMEs, and lead return-to-work and accommodation planning in consultation with the employee, their supervisor, and their treating practitioner where appropriate.

References

- Ontario Human Rights Code
- Occupational Health and Safety Act (Ontario)
- Workplace Safety and Insurance Act (Ontario)
- Employment Standards Act, 2000 (Ontario)
- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)
- Substance Use and Impairment Policy (Municipality of Sioux Lookout)
- Attendance Management Policy and Program (Municipality of Sioux Lookout)
- Administrative Leave Policy (Municipality of Sioux Lookout)

Review and Revision

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years or sooner if provincial legislation changes