

Standby Service and Call-Out Duty

Original Implementation Date:		Approved by:	
Date of Last Revision:	March 31, 2022	Approved by:	Caroline Blair-Smith, A/CAO John MacPherson, A/DCAO
Effective Date of Last Revision:	June 26, 2022	Approved by:	Caroline Blair-Smith, A/CAO John MacPherson, A/DCAO

1 – Policy Name

Standby Service and Call-Out Duty

2 – Purpose

Halifax Regional Municipality acknowledges that there may be times when it is appropriate or necessary to assign employees to standby service or call-out duty to ensure that service delivery is maintained and/or respond to urgent situations. In such cases, employees assigned to standby service must be appropriately compensated and service requirements must be in compliance with the *Nova Scotia Labour Standards Code*.

3 – Objectives

The objectives of this Policy are:

- To ensure Municipal Business Units develop fair compensation practices for employees on standby service and call-out duty.
- To support consistent application of standby service and call-out duty procedures.

4 – Scope

This Policy applies to all non-union employees.

5 – Definitions

In the context of this document:

Standby service means the assignment of an employee to ensure availability to meet operational requirements outside of their regular working hours.

Standby pay means compensation paid to an employee who has completed standby service as defined in this Policy.

Call-out duty means a situation where an employee has been called back in before their next scheduled shift.

Call-out pay means compensation paid to an employee who has completed call-out duty as defined in this Policy.

6 – Roles and Responsibilities

Executive Directors

Executive Directors are responsible for:

- Approving the use of standby service schedules as a practice within the business unit or specific divisions.
- Ensuring proper administration of this Policy and delegating approval authority to directors/managers/supervisors as appropriate.
- Developing an appropriate compensation structure to reflect operational requirements and reviewing and amending the compensation structure as needed.

Directors/Managers/Supervisors

Directors/Managers/Supervisors, with delegated authority from the Executive Director, are responsible for:

- Preparing standby lists appropriate to the department needs, notifying employees of the standby rotation and posting lists as necessary.
- Ensuring effective and efficient use of other municipal practices/policies regarding hours of work to maximize staff resources.
- Ensuring fair and appropriate distribution of standby service among qualified employees where appropriate.
- Assigning employees as necessary for standby service to respond to urgent situations.
- Advising employees of any changes to the standby list, approving exchanges of standby duties, and scheduling coverage in cases of illness, as appropriate.
- Establishing reasonable response times with respect to a call-out duty.
- Ensuring the proper enforcement of municipal policies which may prevent an employee from accepting call-out duty or standby service, particularly the Substance Misuse Prevention Policy.
- Maintaining documentation and records relevant to departmental standby needs.
- Ensuring that payroll documentation properly records an employee's standby and/or call-out service.
- In the case of Supervisors, securing prior approval from their Director/Manager for scheduled standby service.

Employees

Employees are responsible for:

- Ensuring they are aware of their standby schedule, and that they are available to respond to a call-out within a reasonable time as established by their director/manager/supervisor.
- Ensuring that they are accessible and able at all times to respond to a call-out when assigned to standby service.
- Finding a replacement, obtaining approval of their immediate supervisor and ensuring that standby coverage is maintained when:
 - the standby service schedule falls during the employee's vacation.
 - the employee exchanges their scheduled standby service.
- Complying with all municipal policies, particularly in relation to the Substance Misuse Prevention Policy, ensuring they report 'fit for work'.

Human Resources

Human Resources is responsible for:

- Supporting leaders to resolve conflicts/issues arising with respect to standby service and call-out duty.
- Ensuring appropriate interpretation of and compliance with the procedures outlined in this Policy, related policies and legislation.
- Supporting business units in developing and monitoring standby and call-out compensation as appropriate.

7 – Policy Regulations

- A. Where individual business units require employees to be on a formal standby service or call-out duty arrangement, Executive Directors will:
 1. Develop an appropriate compensation structure to reflect operational requirements. This may include supplementary compensation, time in lieu, or a base salary designed to reflect the stand-by requirement.
 2. Review and amend the compensation structure as appropriate.
- B. All compensation structures must be approved by Human Resources, Total Rewards.
- C. Employees assigned to standby service or call-out duty must be:
 1. Accessible by determined communications channels (e.g., telephone, email, etc.)
 2. Able to report/respond to work within a reasonable and acceptable time as established by the business unit director/manager/supervisor.

8 – Repeal

Standby Service

9 – Effective Date

June 26, 2022

10 – Related Policies and Practices

Substance Misuse Prevention Policy

11 – Policy Review

Review every 2 years.

12 – Contact

Human Resources Business Partner

13 – Attachments

Nova Scotia Labour Standards - <https://novascotia.ca/lae/employmentrights/>