

**Charleston Dorchester Mental Health Center**

**POLICY FOR COMMUNICATION TO CLIENTS AND OUTSIDE AGENCIES WHEN STAFF ARE ON LEAVE**

**When staff members take annual, sick leave, or any other type of leave of absence from the job site, the following protocol must be observed:**

**If out on Sick Leave or any other unplanned leave:**

Staff member is to notify immediate supervisor or alternative supervisor as soon as possible via telephone. Voice mail messages are not an acceptable means of relaying this information.

Supervisor (or alternate supervisor) should notify receptionist and/or administrative supervisor of staff absence each morning and provide information as to who to call to address client/external parties' concerns. (This process includes calling out stationed staff work sites).

The staff taking leave should notify clients as soon as possible about rescheduling appointments in the case of unplanned leave. If staff member is unable to do this, the supervisor (or designee) is responsible for calling to cancel appointments. This responsibility should be determined during the call informing the supervisor of leave.

Scotland Yard or a sign out board is to be used for recording all staff leave. If staff member is on planned leave, he/she will update Scotland Yard in advance of the leave. If on unplanned leave (SL), the supervisor (or designee) notified of the leave will update Scotland Yard to keep administrative staff and team updated.

**Handling calls to the staff on leave in the clinics:**

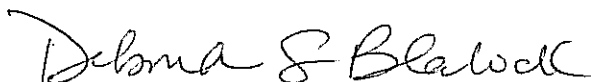
The receptionist should alert the caller of the person's absence and determine whether sending caller to voicemail is appropriate or offering the alternative staff person to take the call.

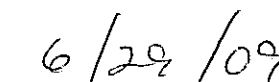
If out for more than 2 days at a time, staff are to leave a voice message on phone to state that they will be out until \_\_\_\_\_ and whom (alternate staff member and telephone number) the client or caller should contact until the staff person returns. The supervisor (or designee) will be responsible for changing voicemail message for staff, if needed.

**Group Wise/Email Responsibilities during Leave:**

If on Leave for more than 2 days - Staff members who use email regularly to carry out Department business are responsible for setting up an auto response to emails alerting customers they are out of the office and provide alternate staff information to assist them. (Supervisor will get assistance from System administrator if needed. Not all staff members have access to computers outside of work).

**Staff out on planned Annual Leave or Official Leave should follow all protocols above that apply.**

  
Deborah S. Blalock, M.Ed., LPCS  
Executive Director

  
Date