

CORPORATE POLICY, STANDARDS and PROCEDURE

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<u>POLICY TITLE</u> REDUCING CONSECUTIVE SHIFTS TO MINIMIZE FATIGUE, ERRORS AND INJURIES		<u>NUMBER</u> 5829
<u>AUTHORIZATION</u> Vice President, People and Organization Development	<u>DATE APPROVED</u> November, 2013	<u>DATE(S) REVISED / REVIEWED</u> March 2020 (temporary)

DATE(S) REVISED / REVIEWED SUMMARY

Version	Date	Comments / Changes
1.0	November 2013	Initial Policy Released
2.0	December 2014	Changes made to the current wording around mixed (extended and regular) shift lengths and 6 day rotations.
3.0	March 2020	Temporary revision to policy.

INTENT / PURPOSE

The “Reducing Consecutive Shifts to Minimize Fatigue, Errors and Injuries” Policy (the “Policy”) is intended to improve quality care through increased patient safety by reducing levels of staff fatigue associated with working too many consecutive shifts including overtime. This Policy outlines organizational and individual responsibilities for reducing staff fatigue. This Policy is intended for those who are scheduled by or who work for Fraser Health.

POLICY

This Policy applies to all Fraser Health staff and staff scheduled by Fraser Health (including management/ management support, unionized employees, both regular and casual) but does not apply to physicians, residents, students and volunteers.

DEFINITIONS

“Fatigue” – an overwhelming, debilitating and sustained sense of exhaustion that decreases one’s ability to carry out daily activities including the ability to work effectively and function at one’s usual level in family or social roles.

“Shift Length” – the total length of the shift including unpaid breaks.

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Temporary Revision (effective March 25, 2020)

For all critical care areas (ICU, Critical Care, High Acuity, and Emergency Departments, the policy statement regarding limitations on the number of consecutive shifts an employee may work has been suspended.

All employees, in all areas, are still required to limit the number of hours worked per day to a maximum of sixteen (16) hours per day, and no more than seventy (70) hours per week.

All responsibilities remain the same.

POLICY STATEMENT

Fraser Health will enforce policies and practices to limit the impact of staff fatigue on both staff and patient safety. These include:

- Staff will not work more than 5 consecutive extended shifts where the shift length is greater than 8 hours without a day off **(to a maximum of 70 worked hours)**.
- Staff shall not work more than 7 consecutive shifts where the shift length is 8 hours or less without a day off **(to a maximum of 70 worked hours)**.
- Staff shall not work more than 6 consecutive shifts where it is a combination of extended and non-extended hours without a day off **(to a maximum of 70 worked hours)**.
- Staff will not work more than 16 hours in a 24 hour period.
- Hours worked anywhere within Fraser Health are included in the calculation of work hours.
- Efforts will be made to minimize the number of changes between shifts to allow for adaption of circadian rhythm and to provide for adequate rest and recuperation between shifts.
- Shift exchanges/swaps are also governed by this policy and should not be approved if they result in a schedule that would exceed the limits listed above.

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RESPONSIBILITIES

The Leader/Manager is responsible for:

- Facilitating healthy work schedules for staff and for establishing staffing policies and processes that maintain safe staffing levels for quality care.
- Recognizing the rights and obligations of staff to decline an assignment if impaired by fatigue.
- Promoting work schedules that provide for adequate rest and recuperation between scheduled shifts.
- Collaborating with their staff to establish shift duration and shift rotations that meet the Collective Agreement provision.
- Denying request for shift exchanges that would exceed the maximum consecutive shift limits described in this Policy.

Fraser Health staff are responsible for:

- Arriving at work adequately rested and prepared for duty.
- Recognizing personal limits and declining requests to do overtime if fatigued.
- Planning mitigation strategies to prevent fatigue include a personal commitment to work-life balance, healthy nutrition and regular exercise.
- Reviewing their work schedules and not submitting requests for shift exchanges that would result in their schedule exceeding the maximum consecutive shifts/hours for either employee.

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PROCEDURES

Leaders, Managers, Supervisors, partnering with Staffing Services and Human Resources, will establish, in collaboration with staff and union representatives the following:

- Shift schedules that meet the Policy and Collective Agreement requirements; and
- Opportunities to discuss with their staff, shift schedules that decrease the impact of fatigue.

Operational and Staffing Office Managers will establish a process to prevent employees being scheduled to work shifts or hours that would exceed the maximum consecutive shift limits described in this Policy. This would include operational leaders, or delegates, checking employee schedules before approving shift swap requests.

EXCEPTIONS

During disasters, emergencies or other exceptional circumstances, this Policy may be waived with the approval of the Leader/Director or Administrator On-Call.

RELATED POLICIES

Fraser Health's [Workplace Health and Safety - Policy](#)