

Official Statement of Policy regarding Paid Time Off (PTO)

Unfortunately, "Paid Time Off" (PTO) got turned into "paid vacation time" in the minds of some employees in 2008-2009. I apologize for my role in that misunderstanding by not correcting it sooner or more definitively. In 2008 and 2009, when I mistakenly thought it was fiscally responsible, I was extremely liberal in my authorization of PTO (more than 200 hours) but that liberalism contributed to the severe fiscal crisis that occurred in 2009. We are rapidly recovering from the mistakes of the past. Certainly, I have to implement policies and procedures that will not perpetuate those mistakes, and the need to be more conservative in the payment of PTO is a key part of the IBC recovery plan.

PTO has never been described in any official IBC document as "earned" time, or "vacation" time. Paid Time Off was created as a benefit that staff could receive to replace work time lost through illness or inclement weather, or some other calamity beyond their control, to be paid to the best of my ability. Although it was never supposed to be "earned" time, eligibility for access to the PTO benefit depended upon the accumulation of paid work time without disciplinary action. On those terms, the Paid Time Off benefit will continue to exist. I realize that some people were paid in the past year "as if" they were earning vacation time, and I apologize for the administrative blunders that created the misconception in these peoples' minds that PTO was "earned vacation time" that they were entitled to be paid for. Certainly, not all staff had that misconception.

Whenever a child's BSC is planning to take some unpaid time off in the future, they should arrange for another BSC to cover all of their BSC hours during that time so that there is **never** a loss of BSC service to the children. The replacement BSC should also provide consultative (in-vivo) supervision to the TSS providers who depend upon it, so that all TSS providers get the supervision they require while the "regular" BSC is absent. Some parents don't understand the **necessity** of having a replacement BSC provider in their child's life during the "regular" BSC's absence. They don't understand the role that a BSC provider is *supposed* to be playing in their child's life. We have to explain it to them, clearly and unequivocally. A replacement BSC is not an *option*; it is a requirement of our treatment program.

Likewise, if a TSS provider is planning to take some unpaid time off in the future, they should arrange for another TSS to cover all of their TSS hours during that time, so there is **never** a loss of TSS service to the children. Some parents don't understand the **necessity** of having a replacement TSS provider in their child's life during the "regular" TSS's absence. They don't understand the role that a TSS provider is *supposed* to be playing in their child's life. We have to explain it to them, clearly and unequivocally. A replacement TSS provider is not an *option*; it is a requirement of our treatment program.

I will continue to review all requests for Paid Time Off on a case-by-case basis but I do not expect that there will be any further authorizations for Paid Time Off **except in response to medical, weather, or personal emergencies that are beyond an employee's control**. If you have any questions about this, please let me know (especially if you've received conflicting information in the past).

Steve Kossor
Executive Director
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There are no obstacles, only hurdles of varying heights. None is so great that it cannot be overcome, gotten around or gone under. Even mountains disintegrate with time.

Policy regarding temporary replacement of BSC and TSS providers during planned absences

Whenever a child's BSC is planning to take a week or more of unpaid time off in the future, they must arrange for another BSC to cover all of their BSC hours during that time so that there is **never** a loss of BSC service to any child. The replacement BSC is also needed to provide consultative (in-vivo) supervision to the TSS providers who depend upon it, so that all TSS providers get the supervision they require while the "regular" BSC is absent.

Likewise, if a child's TSS provider is planning to take a week or more unpaid time off in the future, they must arrange for another TSS to cover all of their TSS hours during that time, so there is **never** a loss of TSS service to any child.

This requirement for a replacement BSC or TSS provider exists for several reasons. Some are:

1. The replacement provider is "a second set of eyes and ears" who can detect situations that the regular provider may have become accustomed to, or may have been overlooking.
2. The replacement provider will have a slightly different skill set than the regular provider, and may be able to offer insights and recommendations that the regular provider hadn't considered.
3. The replacement provider will take a fresh look at the child's situation and is likely to suggest new interventions or perspective that might not have occurred to the regular provider.
4. The replacement provider can detect errors in program design and implementation that the regular provider might have overlooked or hasn't implemented yet, but were prescribed some time ago.
5. The replacement provider can check to be sure that the regular provider is delivering services fully in accordance with IBC policies and procedures, especially regarding punctuality and time lines.
6. The replacement provider can confirm that the regular provider has been doing exactly what has been required, at the right times, and in the right places to assure excellent service delivery.
7. The replacement provider can confirm the accuracy of a parent's understanding, or clear up misunderstandings, that the regular provider may have given.
8. Any possible adverse effects of a temporary replacement provider are mitigated entirely if the replacement provider adopts a completely observational and data collection role, rather than an interactive role with the child. This is not only a permissible practice, but is an established "best practice" for Quality Assurance for short periods of time in any child's treatment plan.

For all of the preceding Quality Assurance reasons, a replacement BSC and TSS provider must be assigned to every child's case during any planned absence of an existing BSC or TSS provider. This policy is not negotiable; it is an absolute requirement for all of the Behavioral Health Rehabilitation Services (BHRS) Treatment Programs supervised by Psychologists of the Network for Behavior Change. Questions or concerns about this policy should be forwarded to the Director of The Network for Behavior Change, Steven Kossor, at sakossor@ibc-pa.org or 610-524-8701 x 13.