



## UK: Sickness Absence

This policy sets out our procedures for reporting sickness absence and for the management of sickness absence in a fair and consistent way.

We want to ensure that the reasons for sickness absence are understood in each case and investigated where necessary. In addition, where needed and reasonably practicable, measures will be taken to assist those who have been absent due to sickness to return to work.

We may vary the procedures set out in this policy, including any time limits, as appropriate.

### Sickness absence reporting

If you are too unwell to attend work, you must contact your manager as soon as possible by telephone, normally at least 30 minutes before you are due to start work. If your manager is on a different time-zone you should make contact with your local People and Purpose Manager/Partner by phone and contact your manager by email. You should outline the nature of the illness, expected length of absence from work, how your manager may contact you during your absence and any work that requires attention.

For sickness absence up to five working days you should complete a Self-Certification Form, scan and send this to your manager.

For sickness absence of more than five working days you must provide a certificate from your doctor (a "Statement of Fitness for Work") stating that you are not fit for work and the reason(s) why. This should be forwarded to your manager as soon as possible. If your absence continues, further medical certificates must be provided to cover the whole period of absence.

If you become unwell or are injured while at work, you should contact your manager and the Safety team so that arrangements can be made for medical assistance or to accompany you home if necessary.

Managers should ensure that:

- a) Arrangements are made, where necessary, to cover work and to inform colleagues and clients (while maintaining confidentiality as to the nature of the illness).
- b) Any sickness absence that is notified to them is recorded in Workday. Both the employee and Manager have access to enter this as a leave type.
- c) Self-certification and Doctors' certificates are provided to the People and Purpose team without delay.

If your doctor provides a certificate stating that you "may be fit for work" you should inform your manager immediately. We will discuss with you any measures that may be needed to facilitate your return to work, taking account of your doctor's advice. This may take place at a return to work interview or by telephone in advance of your return. If appropriate measures cannot be taken, you will remain on sick leave and we will set a date to review the situation.

Where we are concerned about the reason for absence, or the level of frequent short-term absence, we may require a medical certificate for each absence regardless of duration. In such

circumstances, we will cover any costs incurred in obtaining such medical certificates, for absences of a week or less, on production of a doctor's invoice.

### Entering sick leave dates in Workday

You should enter your sick leave dates in Workday yourself by 'Requesting Time Off' and selecting 'GBR Sick Leave'.

### Disabilities

If you believe that you are affected by a disability or any medical condition which affects your ability to undertake your work, you should inform your manager.

### Keeping in contact during sickness absence

You should expect to be contacted from time to time by your manager or the People and Purpose Department to discuss your wellbeing, expected length of continued absence from work and any of your work that requires attention. Such contact is intended to provide reassurance and will be kept to a reasonable minimum.

If you have any concerns while absent on sick leave, whether about the reason for your absence or your ability to return to work, you should feel free to contact your manager at any time.

### Medical examinations

We may ask you to consent to a medical examination by an Occupational Health Doctor or other medical practitioner (at our expense). The purpose of such an examination is to facilitate us in better understanding your situation so that we can best support you. In this case, you will be asked to agree that any report produced in connection with the examination may be disclosed to us and that we may discuss the contents of the report with our advisers and the relevant doctor.

### Return-to-work interviews

If you have been absent on sick leave for more than three days or on multiple occasions your manager may have a return-to-work interview with you. The purpose of this is to confirm the details of your absence and to give you the opportunity to raise any concerns or questions you may have. Where your doctor has provided a certificate stating that you "may be fit for work" we will usually hold a return-to-work interview to discuss any additional measures that you may need to facilitate your return.

We are committed to helping employees return to work from long-term sickness absence. We will, where appropriate and possible, support returns to work by:

- a) Obtaining medical advice
- b) Making reasonable adjustments to the workplace, working practices and working hours

- c) Considering redeployment
- d) Agreeing a return to work programme with everyone affected

If you are unable to return to work in the longer term, we will consider whether you are entitled to any benefits under your contract or any insurance schemes we operate.

### Unauthorised absence

Should you fail to notify us of your absence as outlined above, it will be treated as unauthorised. Cases of unauthorised absence may be dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure.

If you do not report for work and have not telephoned your manager or local contact, we will try to contact you, by telephone and in writing if necessary. This should not be treated as a substitute for reporting sickness absence.

### Sick pay

Company sick pay of up to 13 weeks' at 100% of basic salary followed by 13 weeks at 75% of basic salary in a rolling 52-week period will be paid, provided that you comply with both the sickness absence reporting procedure and any requests made under this policy and your contract of employment. If you do not, we reserve the right to withhold payment of Company sick pay. Any Company sick pay paid to an employee is inclusive of any statutory sick pay (SSP) that may be due for the same period. Your Qualifying days for SSP purposes are Monday to Friday.

If a period of sickness absence is or appears to be occasioned by actionable negligence, nuisance or breach of any statutory duty on the part of a third party, in respect of which damages are or may be recoverable, you must immediately notify the People and Purpose Department of that fact and of any claim, compromise, settlement or judgment made or awarded in connection with it and all relevant particulars that we may reasonably require. If we require you to do so, you must cooperate in any related legal proceedings and refund to us that part of any damages or compensation you recover that relates to lost earnings for the period of sickness absence as we may reasonably determine, less any costs you incurred in connection with the recovery of such damages or compensation, provided that the amount to be refunded to us shall not exceed the total amount we paid to you in respect of the period of sickness absence.

If you are absent from work continuously for 26 weeks due to illness, you may be entitled to receive further payment under our Group Income Protection Scheme (further details available on Workspace). Participation is subject to: the terms of our insurance policy with the relevant insurance provider, as amended from time to time; you satisfying the normal underwriting requirements of the relevant insurer provider, and being accepted at normal rates of premium; and our right to amend, alter, vary or cease to provide, without compensation, the benefit at any time. Any pay-out is subject to claim acceptance by our insurer. For the avoidance of doubt if the insurer refuses for any reason to provide insurance benefit to you, we shall not be liable to provide any replacement benefit of any kind, or to pay any compensation in lieu of such benefit.

### Pension contributions during sickness absence

The following sets out our intentions as to pension contributions during sickness absence. This is always subject to the express provisions of your own particular pension arrangements.

While in receipt of company sick pay (i.e. during the first 26 weeks of absence) any employee funded pension contributions will continue to be funded by you, based on the actual pay you are receiving (i.e. when your salary drops to 75% of basic salary, the level of your employee funded pension contribution will drop in line with that reduction). We will also maintain employer funded pension contributions based on the actual pay you are receiving.

After 26 weeks of absence, you may be entitled to receive pension contributions under our Group Income Protection Scheme. Please speak to the People & Purpose Department for more information.

If you are in receipt of tapered annual allowance or lifetime allowance salary supplements these will continue to be paid while you are still in receipt of company sick pay. Supplements will be reduced in line with the actual pay you are receiving.

### Sickness Absence Meetings Procedure

We may apply this procedure whenever we consider it necessary, including, for example, if you:

- a) Have been absent due to illness on a number of occasions;
- b) Have discussed matters at a return-to-work interview that require investigation; and/or
- c) Have been absent for more than five days.

Unless it is impractical to do so, we will give you written notice of the date, time and place of a sickness absence meeting and we will advise why the meeting is being called. We will put any concerns about your sickness absence and the basis for those concerns in writing and allow you time to consider these.

A meeting will be conducted by your line manager and may be attended by a member of the People and Purpose Department. You may bring a colleague or trade union representative to the meeting. Their details must be given to the manager conducting the meeting in good time before it takes place. Your companion may make representations, ask questions, and sum up your position, but will not be allowed to answer questions on your behalf. You may confer privately with your companion at any time during a meeting.

You must take all reasonable steps to attend a meeting. Failure to do so without good reason may be treated as misconduct. If you or your companion are unable to attend a meeting at the time specified you should immediately inform your manager.

A meeting may be adjourned if your line manager is awaiting receipt of information, needs to gather any further information or give consideration to matters discussed at a previous meeting.

Confirmation of any decisions made at a meeting, the reasons for it, and of the right to appeal will be given to you within 7 days of a sickness absence meeting (unless this time scale is not practicable, in which case it will be provided as soon as practicable).

If at any time it is considered that you have taken or are taking sickness absence when you are not unwell, the matter may be referred to be dealt with under the disciplinary action procedure.

### **Stage 1: First Sickness Absence Meeting**

The purpose of a first sickness absence meeting may include:

- a) Discussing the reasons for the absence.
- b) Where you are on long-term sickness absence, determining how long the absence is likely to last.
- c) Where you have been absent on a number of occasions, determining the likelihood of further absences.
- d) Considering whether medical advice is required.
- e) Considering what, if any, measures might improve your health and/or attendance.
- f) Agreeing a way forward, action that will be taken and a timescale for review and/or a further meeting under the sickness absence procedure.

### **Stage 2: Further Sickness Absence Meeting(s)**

Depending on the matters discussed at the first stage of the sickness absence procedure, a further meeting or meetings may be necessary.

The purpose of further meetings may include:

- a) Discussing the reasons for and the impact of your ongoing absence(s).
- b) Where you are on long-term sickness absence, discussing how long your absence is likely to last.
- c) Where you have been absent on a number of occasions, discussing the likelihood of further absences.
- d) If it has not been obtained, considering whether medical advice is required. If it has been obtained, considering the advice that has been given and whether further advice is required.
- e) Considering your ability to return to/remain in your job in view both of your capabilities and our business needs and any adjustments that can reasonably be made to your job to enable you to do so.
- f) Considering possible redeployment opportunities and whether any adjustments can reasonably be made to assist in redeploying you.

- g) Where you are able to return from long-term sick leave, whether to your job or a redeployed job, agreeing a return-to-work programme.
- h) If it is considered that you are unlikely to be able to return to work from long-term absence, whether there are any benefits for which you should be considered.
- i) Agreeing a way forward, action that will be taken and a timescale for review and/or a further meeting(s). This may, depending on steps we have already taken, include warning you that you are at risk of dismissal.

### Stage 3: Final Sickness Absence Meeting

Where you have been warned that you are at risk of dismissal, we may invite you to a meeting under this third stage of the sickness absence procedure.

The purposes of the meeting will be:

- a) To review the meetings that have taken place and matters discussed with you.
- b) Where you remain on long-term sickness absence, to consider whether there have been any changes since the last meeting under stage two of the procedure, either as regards your possible return to work or opportunities for return or redeployment.
- c) To consider any further matters that you wish to raise.
- d) To consider whether there is a reasonable likelihood of you returning to work or achieving the desired level of attendance in a reasonable time.
- e) To consider the possible termination of your employment.

Termination will normally be with full notice or payment in lieu of notice.

Nothing in this sickness absence policy shall constrain or prevent us from terminating your employment notwithstanding that you are or may be entitled to receive sick pay or benefit payments under any Group Income Protection policy or scheme from time to time in force.

### Appeals

You may appeal against the outcome of any stage of this procedure and you may bring a companion to an appeal meeting.

An appeal should be made in writing to the VP People, International & Operations within 7 days of the date on which the decision was sent to you. You must state your full grounds of appeal.

An appeal meeting will be held. Where practicable this will be held by a manager senior to the individual who held the sickness absence meeting. The outcome of the appeal meeting will be a final decision, and will be confirmed in writing. There will be no further right of appeal.

The date that any dismissal takes effect will not be delayed pending the outcome of an appeal. However, if the appeal is successful, the decision to dismiss will be revoked with no loss of continuity or pay.

This policy only applies to employees and does not apply to agency workers or the self-employed. This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and we may amend it at any time.

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