**Sickness Absence Management Policy - Short-Term**

**Introduction**

We encourage you to maximise your attendance at work while recognising that you will occasionally be unable to come to work because of ill health.

We understand that there will inevitably be some sickness absences, and we must also pay due regard to our operational needs. If you are persistently absent from work, this can damage efficiency and productivity and burden others.

We aim to strike a reasonable balance between pursuing our operational needs and your genuine need to take time off work because of ill health.

This policy does not form part of your terms and conditions of employment and may be subject to change at the discretion of the management.

**Definitions**

The following definitions are used in this policy:

**"Period of sickness absence"** or **"instance of sickness absence"** means any continuous period of sickness absence, of whatever length, during which you do not work.

**"Short-term sickness absence"** means any sickness lasting 1 to 27 calendar days.

**"Long-term sickness absence"** means any period of sickness lasting 28 calendar days or more.

**"Formal review period"** means a defined period during which you are required to improve your sickness absence levels.

**Scope**

This policy covers short-term sickness absences. We operate a separate [long-term sickness absence](http://www.xperthr.co.uk/policies-and-procedures/long-term-sickness-absence-policy/161159/) policy when your sickness has lasted 28 calendar days or more. Where your absences are being managed under this policy, and you then go off on long-term sickness absence, management of your sickness absence will be switched to our separate policy on long-term sickness absence.

We have other policies to deal with time off work for personal reasons/family reasons/special leave/compassionate leave/medical and dental appointments

If we suspect misconduct, our [disciplinary/resolution policy](http://www.xperthr.co.uk/policies-and-procedures/disciplinary-procedure/16170/) will apply. For example, we may take disciplinary/resolution action if there is evidence that:

* absence is not genuine or not for a reason provided;
* you are undertaking inappropriate activities while off sick, such as carrying out work for another organisation; or
* the correct sickness absence notification has not been followed.

This policy does not apply to contractors, consultants, agency workers or any self-employed individuals working for the organisation.

**Responsibilities**

***Guidelines for line managers***

* take responsibility for managing their employee’s attendance and absence;
* maintain a proper record of each sickness absence by completing an absence record form for employees
* ensure employees complete a [self-certification form](http://www.xperthr.co.uk/letters-and-forms/sickness-absence-self-certification-form/16259/) for sickness absence of 7 calendar days or less and provide medical evidence for sickness absence of more than 7 calendar days;
* conduct a return-to-work meeting each time the employee returns from a period of sickness absence;
* speak to the employee about the absence and the reason for it fairly and factually;
* be supportive towards the employee and, where appropriate, seek to identify ways in which to assist the employee to improve their attendance in the future;
* be alert to patterns of absence, for example, frequent absences on Fridays or Mondays or immediately before or after bank or public holidays;
* try to establish any underlying reasons for frequent absences and, where the underlying cause is identified, take steps to help the employee to manage the cause;
* seek medical advice, if appropriate, to determine whether or not there is any underlying medical cause for the employee’s frequent absences;
* be particularly sensitive when personal or family problems cause absences;
* show a reasonable degree of tolerance and sympathy towards the employee’s sickness absence while at the same time making clear that continuing frequent absences from work are unacceptable;
* check whether or not the employee absences are in any way work-related, for example, as a result of workplace stress;
* bear in mind that we may seek a medical report on an employee, for example, from the employee’s doctor or the organisation's occupational health advisers;
* keep confidential records of all absences, including discussions and medical certificates, and make sure that the documents clearly identify the reasons for the employee’s various absences;
* be aware of the potential for discrimination when managing absence, mainly where the employee’s ill health is related to pregnancy or disability;
* keep in mind our duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people when managing absence; and
* consult with the HR team if unsure about anything or if exceptional circumstances arise, for example, if it appears that the employee may have a disability.

**Notification and evidence of sickness absence**

***Reporting absence* - *guidelines for employees on the first day of absence***

* On the first day of sickness absence, you must inform your manager as soon as reasonably practicable that you will not be working because of illness or injury. Preferably, you should notify your manager of non-attendance by telephone before you start work.
* If your manager is unavailable, you should contact the next most appropriate person within the department.
* Notification of sickness absence must be via telephone rather than text, email or social media. In exceptional circumstances where you cannot telephone (for example, because of hospitalisation), another person, such as a friend or relative, can contact us on your behalf.
* continue to notify and keep in touch with your manager while unable to attend work;
* You should provide a clear reason (i.e. the nature of the illness or injury) why you cannot attend work and estimate how long you think the absence will last. You should also be prepared to discuss briefly any consequences of your absence, for example, if a customer’s appointments need to be cancelled or any essential work needs to be covered.
* complete a [self-certification form](http://www.xperthr.co.uk/letters-and-forms/sickness-absence-self-certification-form/16259/) for sickness absence of 7 calendar days or less and provide medical evidence for sickness absence of more than 7 calendar days in the form of a “fit note”;
* attend a return-to-work meeting with your manager each time you return from a period of sickness absence;
* be open with your manager about the reasons for your absence to allow your manager to provide support where possible;
* tell your manager of any extenuating circumstances, for example, personal or family problems or an unmanageable workload;
* bear in mind that we may seek a medical report, for example, from your doctor or occupational health advisers; and
* cooperate with us regarding the possible implementation of any adjustments to job duties, hours or working conditions, particularly those suggested by a healthcare professional.

If you come to work but need to leave during the day because of ill health, you should inform your manager before leaving work. If the manager is unavailable, you should notify the next most appropriate person within the department.

For each subsequent sick day after the first day of absence, you should generally telephone your manager as soon as reasonably practicable in the morning. However, managers should use their discretion and can agree on different arrangements with you, for example, if you are hospitalised.

**Self-certification of sickness absence**

If sickness is for 7 calendar days or less on the first day of your return to work/at a return-to-work meeting, you must obtain, complete and sign a self-certification form, setting out the dates of absence and the nature of the illness or injury.

The line manager should countersign the form; this may be in an electronic HRIS system.

**Statement of fitness for work (fit note)**

While the first 7 calendar days of sickness can be self-certificated, all illnesses that last longer than 7 calendar days require medical evidence. This medical evidence will generally be a fit note, also known as a "statement of fitness for work".

As well as being issued by doctors, nurses, occupational therapists, pharmacists, and physiotherapists who have assessed your fitness for work can also issue fit notes. Fit notes can only be issued on request or via over-the-counter services with an assessment.

If your sickness lasts eight calendar days or more, your line manager must ensure you provide a fit note as soon as possible. A fit note may state that you:

* are "not fit for work", in which case you should remain off work; or
* "may be fit for work" if the healthcare professional's recommendations are followed (for example, a phased return, amended job duties, altered hours of work, or workplace adaptations).

While there is no legal obligation on us to follow the recommendations, line managers should take the recommendations seriously and consider whether or not any of the recommended changes can be accommodated.

**Sick pay**

You are entitled to statutory sick pay (SSP), provided that you follow our usual notification and evidence requirements.

You are entitled to SSP, where you have a period of sickness absence from work of at least four calendar days in a row and 3 "waiting days" (days on which you would usually be required to work) have passed.

Statutory sick pay is payable for up to 28 weeks in any period of sickness absence at a weekly rate set by the Government for the relevant tax year.

[OR

We operate a contractual sick pay scheme that is more generous than statutory sick pay (SSP).

During sickness absence, you will, in any 12 months, receive sick pay from the organisation at your normal rate of pay for a total of [number] weeks. [This will be followed by a further [number] weeks at half of normal pay.]

The organisation reserves the right to withhold or suspend sick pay under its contractual sick pay scheme at its discretion. Circumstances in which contractual sick pay may be withheld include where:

* you have failed to comply with the organisation's sickness absence notification and evidence requirements;
* you refuse to attend a medical examination at the reasonable request of the organisation;
* your incapacity has been caused by participation in dangerous sports or activities or any other occupation you have;
* you make or produce any misleading or untrue statement or document concerning your fitness to work;
* you have given or received notice to terminate your employment; and
* disciplinary proceedings are pending against you.

Then you will normally be entitled to receive SSP when contractual sick pay is withheld or suspended. However, we can withhold or suspend SSP if it is not satisfied that you are ill and no evidence of sickness is provided.

You will be given written notice if their SSP or contractual sick pay is being withheld or suspended.]

Sick pay under our company scheme is subject to the usual deductions for PAYE, national insurance, pension contributions, etc.

Payments under our company scheme will only be calculated by reference to your basic salary. Any payments made under the scheme include any entitlement to SSP for the same period of absence.]

If you are pregnant, you have the statutory right not to be unreasonably refused paid time off work for antenatal appointments where a registered medical practitioner, midwife or nurse has recommended your attendance. Paid time off in such circumstances will automatically be granted, although you should endeavour to arrange appointments outside working hours. Nevertheless, you should give reasonable notice of the date and time of the appointment to their line manager where possible, and the line manager will still have the right to request confirmation of your second appointment and any subsequent appointments.

A prospective father, or partner of a pregnant woman, has the statutory right to take unpaid time off to attend up to two antenatal appointments.

**Return to work**

***Actions required by you, your line manager***

Upon returning to work following a sickness absence, your line manager should check your absence record. This is to check whether or not the need for formal action is required.

Your line manager should check absences 12 months prior to the date of your return to work. For example, if you return to work on 1 April, your line manager should look at the period from 1 April the previous year to 31 March.

Your line manager should bear in mind that special considerations apply to absences related to pregnancy and disability.

When checking your absence record, your line manager should also review whether or not your absences have been frequent, regular or repeated. Your line manager should be alert to the possibility of any pattern, for example, frequent absences on Fridays or Mondays or immediately before or after bank or public holidays. However, your line manager should remain open-minded and not jump to any hasty conclusions about your absences.

Your line manager should invite you to an informal return-to-work meeting each time you return from a sickness absence.

**Return-to-work meetings**

Your line manager will arrange to meet informally on your first day back at work after any sickness absence.

If this is not possible on your first day back (for example, for operational reasons or because the manager not being available), the informal meeting should take place as soon as reasonably practicable.

The return-to-work meeting should take place privately, and all discussions between you and your line manager should be private and confidential.

***Your line manager should:***

* welcome you back to work;
* explain to you that the purpose of return-to-work meetings is to manage and monitor your absence and attendance to identify any problem areas and offer support where appropriate;
* inform you that your absence will be recorded;
* ask you about the reasons for your absence, ensuring that the question is asked in a supportive way without any suggestion that you are "to blame" for the absence;
* ask you whether or not you have consulted a healthcare professional or attended a hospital;
* if your sickness has been for 7 calendar days or less, ask you to complete a self-certification form for the sickness absence and sign it in front of the manager, who should then countersign the form
* if your sickness lasts for 8 calendar days or more, ensure that you provide a fit note, and
* inform you if you have hit a threshold and the consequences of having done so.

**Updating your absence record**

Your line manager will update your absence on the relevant system. This should record the dates of your absence and the reasons for the absence (i.e. the nature of the illness or injury that has led to your absence). It is very important that the manager completes this each time you return to work so that the organisation can keep track of your pattern of absence.

**Special cases**

**Pregnancy-related absences**

If you are absent from work because of pregnancy-related ill health, you must abide by our absence reporting procedure. For example, you are subject to the usual notification and evidence requirements and can be asked to attend a return-to-work meeting when returning to work.

However, any sickness absence for a pregnancy-related reason should not be included when checking to see if formal action under the organisation's absence management procedure has been reached.

If your manager doubts your absence is pregnancy-related, they must seek professional advice.

**Disability-related absences**

Where you give as the reason for absence an underlying health issue that could amount to a disability under the Equality Act 2010, your manager must seek professional advice. This includes where you state that you are suffering from stress.

Your manager should remember that we are under a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled employees. The legal definition of a "disability" is wide, and managers should seek further guidance. Where the absence is wholly or partly for a disability-related reason, the thresholds referred to in this policy may need to be modified to take proper account of your disability. Other adjustments to the procedures set out in this policy may need to be made. If your manager doubts your absence is related to disability, they must seek professional advice.

**Sickness absence and annual leave**

**Sickness during holiday**

If you fall sick or are injured while on holiday, we will allow you to transfer to sick leave and take a replacement holiday later. This policy is subject to the following strict conditions:

* The total period of your absence must be fully certificated by a qualified medical practitioner, which exceeds 7 calendar days.
* You must contact us (by telephone) as soon as you know there will be a period of sickness during a holiday.
* You must submit a written request 10 days after returning to work to determine how much of the holiday period was affected by sickness and the amount of leave you wish to take at another time.
* Where you are overseas when you fall ill or are injured, the evidence must still be produced that you were sick through a medical certificate.

Where you fulfil all of the above conditions, the organisation will grant you the same number of days' replacement holiday leave as the number of days lost due to sickness or injury.

If you are ill or are injured before the start of a period of planned holiday and are consequently unable to take the holiday, the organisation will agree to you postponing the holiday dates to another mutually agreed time.

Any period of sickness absence will then be treated in accordance with our normal policy on sickness absence. You must submit a written request to postpone the planned holiday, and this must be accompanied by medical evidence confirming that you are unfit, or are likely to be unfit, to take the holiday.

**Holiday during sick leave**

If you are absent on sick leave, you will continue to accrue your holiday entitlement. You can take this later if you do not take your holiday entitlement due to being on sick leave.

You may apply to take your holiday entitlement while on sick leave. The holiday dates must be approved in accordance with the procedure set out in our holiday policy.

**Medical advice**

**Occupational health referrals**

At various stages of managing your sickness absence, we recommend obtaining advice from an occupational health adviser on your fitness for work.

Examples of when we might refer to occupational health include to:

* seek a medical report on you;
* establish when you might be able to return to work;
* ask for guidance on your condition, for example, if there is a possibility that you are disabled or ambiguity as to the exact nature of the condition; and
* if you are disabled, discuss any adjustments that could be made to accommodate your disability.

We will treat personal data collected in accordance with our [data protection policy](http://www.xperthr.co.uk/policies-and-procedures/data-protection-policy/162690/) [on processing special categories of personal data](http://www.xperthr.co.uk/policies-and-procedures/processing-special-category-personal-data-and-criminal-records-data-policy/163520/). Information about how your data is used and the basis for processing your data will be provided in the organisation's [privacy notice](http://www.xperthr.co.uk/letters-and-forms/employee-privacy-notice/162693/). Where we rely on our legitimate interests as the legal ground for processing your data, you can object to the processing.

**Report from a medical practitioner who has been responsible for your clinical care**

Where a report from your medical practitioner is necessary, you will be fully informed of your rights under the Access to Medical Reports Act 1988. Your permission will be sought for the report to be obtained.

Your permission will be sought to contact the medical practitioner on the relevant [consent form](http://www.xperthr.co.uk/letters-and-forms/form-for-employee-to-consent-to-employer-applying-to-medical-professional-for-medical-report/16265/).

You have the right to access the report before we see it. If you wish to see the report, you should inform us of this so we can inform the medical practitioner. You will then have 21 days to contact the medical practitioner to see the report. If you do not contact the medical practitioner within this period, the medical practitioner can pass the report on to us.

When requesting a report, we will provide the medical practitioner with as much information as possible on the role and explain why the report is being sought. We will provide the medical practitioner with the following:

* a copy of your signed form consenting to the request to seek a medical report;
* confirmation that you are aware of their rights under the Access to Medical Reports Act 1988; and
* details of the major features of your job.

We will ask the medical practitioner to identify the following:

* the nature of your illness or injury;
* whether or not any underlying medical conditions explain your pattern of absences; and
* what reasonable adjustments could be made to working conditions or work premises to facilitate a return to work?

Where you refuse permission for us to contact your medical practitioner, we will explain the reasons behind the request and inform you that a decision relating to your employment may be made without access to medical reports. The same procedure will be followed where you delay in giving your consent.

If you feel the report needs to be more accurate or correct, ask the medical practitioner to amend it. If the medical practitioner disagrees with you and does not alter the report, you may attach a statement to the report to reflect your views.

Alternatively, having seen the report, you may request that access to the report be withheld from us. You will be informed that a decision relating to employment may be made without access to medical reports.

**Report from a medical practitioner who has not been responsible for your clinical care**

The Access to Medical Reports Act 1988 only applies where we seek a medical report from a medical practitioner who has not been responsible for your clinical care, typically its chosen specialist or occupational health adviser.

In these circumstances, we will explain in writing what information it seeks on your health and how it will be used. The letter should explain the following:

* that we intend to obtain a medical report and why we wish to do so;
* from whom the report will be obtained;
* what we will do with the report;
* how we will treat personal data collected when obtaining the medical report; and
* your right to object to the processing of their personal data.

We will write to the medical practitioner to request the report. The letter should explain to the medical practitioner why we are requesting the report and ask any specific questions the practitioner wishes to answer.

Where you object to the processing of their personal data when the organisation is seeking to obtain a medical report to which the Access to Medical Reports Act 1988 does not apply, we will explain to you the reasons behind the request and inform you that a decision relating to your employment may be made without the benefit of access to medical reports.

**Sickness absence management process**

Your line manager will review your absences alongside the thresholds and decide what action needs to be taken to manage your sickness absence record. These are set out below. When applying these thresholds, the special rules for pregnancy and disability must always be considered.

The stages set out below are guidelines only.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 64 – 124 | 1st Threshold | Informal discussion | could be part of Return to Work Meeting |
| 125 – 399 | 2nd Threshold | 1st Formal Meeting | potential outcome of a written warning |
| 400 – 699 | 3rd Threshold | 2nd Formal Meeting | potential outcome of a final written warning |
| > 700 | 4th Threshold | FinalFormal Meeting | dismissal potential outcome |

**Informal Meeting**

* an informal meeting will take place when the Bradford Factor score reaches between 64 – 124. This may take place as part of the return to work meeting when the absences have reached the 1st threshold. However, the line manager may arrange a separate documented meeting to have a more in-depth conversation if the circumstances are more complex
* make clear to you that the meeting aims to find ways to improve your attendance;
* allow you to share your views;
* try to establish any underlying reasons for your poor attendance level, for example, a health issue or personal problems;
* gather as much information as possible on any underlying reasons identified without putting undue pressure on you to reveal more information than you want;
* discuss and agree on any steps that can be put in place to help you to improve your attendance;
* if there is an underlying health problem, encourage you to book an appointment with a healthcare professional if this has not already been done;
* remind you of the support that is available to you, and
* explain that if the Bradford Factor score increases to the next threshold, this may lead to a first formal meeting, as detailed below.

**First Formal Meeting**

The threshold for a First Formal Meeting under Sickness Absence Management Policy is;

* **125 - 399 Bradford Factor Score**

When you reach the second threshold, your line manager will invite you in writing to a First Formal Meeting under Sickness Absence Management Policy.

In advance of the meeting, the line manager should provide the documents relevant to the meeting, including:

* your absence record form;
* any letters previously sent to you about your absence levels; Informal outcome meeting and
* any other medical evidence, such as occupational health reports, if applicable.

The written invitation to First Formal Meeting under Sickness Absence Management Policy should give you at least 3 days’ notice of the meeting. The letter should advise who will be present and that a fellow worker or trade union official can accompany you.

The letter should explain to you that the purpose of the meeting is to review your unsatisfactory attendance level.

The letter should warn you that a possible outcome of the meeting is that you may be given a written warning.

**First Formal Meeting**

Your line manager will chair the First Formal Meeting under Sickness Absence Management Policy. The line manager may be accompanied by HR/another manager.

At the meeting, the line manager will:

* explain to you that the purpose of the meeting is to discuss your unsatisfactory attendance in the previous 12 months;
* make clear to you that the meeting aims to find ways to improve your attendance;
* allow you to share your views;
* try to establish any underlying reasons for your poor attendance level, for example, a health issue or personal problems;
* gather as much information as possible on any underlying reasons identified without putting undue pressure on you to reveal more information than you want;
* discuss and agree on any steps that can be put in place to help you to improve your attendance;
* if there is an underlying health problem, encourage you to book an appointment with a healthcare professional if this has not already been done;
* remind you of the support that is available to you, and
* after a short adjournment, inform you of the outcome of the meeting and state that the outcome will be confirmed in writing to them within 3 days.

**First Formal Meeting Outcome**

After the meeting, your line manager will set out in writing what has been decided as a result of the First Formal Meeting under the Sickness Absence Management Policy; for example, if a written warning is being issued and you have been placed on a formal review period or if the decision is that no further action will be taken.

The letter should state the length of the warning; typically, this will be 6 months depending on circumstances, and this could be up to 12 months.

The letter, provided within 3 days of the meeting, should include details of any steps or targets agreed upon to help you improve your attendance and any support the organisation provides.

The letter should warn you that the consequences of reaching the **next threshold of 400 – 699** during the formal review period would move to the Second Formal Meeting under Sickness Absence Management Policy.

The letter should give you the right to appeal against the warning

If the decision is that no further action will be taken, the letter should inform you of this and explain the decision.

**First Formal Meeting Improvement**

No further action will be taken if your sickness absence levels improve during the formal review period. The manager should write to you explaining that they have completed the formal review period.

If your sickness absence reaches the next threshold during the formal review period, you will move to the Second Formal Meeting under Sickness Absence Management Policy.

**Second Formal Meeting**

The threshold for a Second Formal Meeting under Sickness Absence Management Policy is;

* **400 - 699 Bradford Factor Score**

When you reach this threshold, your line manager will invite you in writing to Second Formal Meeting under Sickness Absence Management Policy. In advance of the meeting, the line manager should provide the documents relevant to the meeting, including:

* your absence record form;
* any letters previously sent to you about your absence levels; Informal outcome meeting and
* any other medical evidence, such as occupational health reports, if applicable.

The written invitation to the Second Formal Meeting under Sickness Absence Management Policy should give you at least 3 days’ notice of the meeting. The letter should advise who will be present and that a fellow worker or trade union official can accompany you.

The letter should explain to you that the purpose of the meeting is to review your unsatisfactory attendance level.

The letter should warn you that a possible outcome of the meeting is that you may be given a final written warning.

**Second Formal Meeting**

In the Second Formal Meeting under Sickness Absence Management Policy, your line manager will chair a formal review meeting. Your manager may be accompanied by HR/another manager.

At the meeting, the manager will:

* explain to you that the purpose of the meeting is to discuss your continued unsatisfactory attendance;
* make clear to you that the aim of the meeting remains to find ways to improve their attendance;
* allow you to share your views;
* try to establish any underlying reasons for your poor attendance level, for example, a health issue or personal problems;
* gather as much further information as possible on any underlying reasons identified without putting undue pressure on you to reveal more information than you want;
* discuss and agree on any additional steps or targets that can be put in place to help you to improve their attendance;
* if there is an underlying health problem, encourage you to book an appointment with a healthcare professional if this has not already been done;
* remind you of the support that is available to you, and
* inform you of the possible outcomes of the meeting and that the outcome will be confirmed in writing to them within 3 days.

**Second Formal Meeting Outcome**

After the meeting, your manager will set out in writing what has been decided as a result of the Second Formal Meeting under the Sickness Absence Management Policy; for example, if a warning is being issued and you have been placed on a formal review period or if the decision is that no further action will be taken. The letter should state the length of the warning; typically, this will be 12 months. The 12-month period begins on the day after the warning is issued.

The letter, which should be provided within 3 days of the meeting, should include details of any additional steps or targets agreed upon to help you improve your attendance and any support the organisation provides.

The letter should warn you that the consequences of reaching the **next threshold of 700 +** during the formal review period would move to Final Formal Meeting under Sickness Absence Management Policy.

The letter should give you the right to appeal against the warning

If the decision is that no further action will be taken, the letter should inform you of this and explain the decision.

**Second Formal Meeting Improvement**

If your sickness absence levels improve in a rolling 12-month period), no further action will be taken. The manager should write to you explaining that they have completed the formal review period.

If, during the formal review period, sickness absence reaches 700+, you will be moved to Final Formal Meeting under Sickness Absence Management Policy.

**Final Formal Meeting**

The threshold for a Final Formal Meeting under Sickness Absence Management Policy is as follows;

* **700+ Bradford Factor Score**

When you reach this threshold, your line manager will invite you in writing to a Final Formal Meeting under Sickness Absence Management Policy. In advance of the meeting, your line manager should provide the documents relevant to the meeting, including:

* your absence record form;
* any letters previously sent to you about your absence levels; Informal outcome meeting and
* any other medical evidence, such as occupational health reports, if applicable.

The written invitation to Final Formal Meeting under Sickness Absence Management Policy should give you at least 3 days’ notice of the meeting. The letter should advise who will be present and that a fellow worker or trade union official can accompany you.

The letter should explain to you that the purpose of the meeting is to review your unsatisfactory attendance level.

The letter should warn you that a possible outcome of the meeting is that you may be dismissed from your position.

**Final Formal Meeting Invitation**

On reaching the final threshold, a senior manager will invite you in writing to a stage 3 short-term sickness absence final meeting.

A more senior manager will chair the meeting and may be accompanied by a HR Partner or/another senior manager. In advance of the meeting, your line manager will provide the senior manager with the documents relevant to your case, including:

* Your absence record form;
* any letters previously sent to you about your absence levels, particularly the letter setting out the outcome of the stage 2 short-term sickness absence formal review meeting; and
* any other medical evidence, such as occupational health reports.

The written invitation to the stage 3 short-term sickness absence formal review meeting should give you at least 3 days notice of the meeting. The letter should advise who will be present and that a fellow worker or trade union official can accompany you.

The letter should explain to you that the purpose of the meeting is to review your continued unsatisfactory attendance level while in the final review period.

The letter should warn you that a possible outcome of the meeting is that you may be dismissed by reason of capability.

**Final Formal Meeting**

A senior manager will chair the Final Formal Meeting under Sickness Absence Management Policy; HR /or another senior manager may also be present.

At the meeting, the manager will:

* explain to you that the purpose of the meeting is to discuss your continued unsatisfactory attendance;
* allow you to share their views;
* try to establish any underlying reasons for your poor attendance level, for example, a health issue or personal problems;
* gather as much further information as possible on any underlying reasons identified without putting undue pressure on you to reveal more information than they want;
* discuss and agree on any additional steps or targets that can be put in place to help you to improve their attendance;
* if there is an underlying health problem, we may refer you to occupational health or encourage you to book an appointment with a healthcare professional if this has not already been done;
* remind you of the support that is available to you,
* inform you of the possible outcomes of the meeting and that these will be confirmed in writing to them within 3 days.

**Final Formal Meeting Outcome**

Within 3 days of the meeting, the manager will write the outcome of the Final Formal Meeting under the Sickness Absence Management Policy.

The outcome of the meeting could be:

* a decision to take no further action;
* an offer to make adjustments to your work;
* redeployment with your agreement; or
* a decision to dismiss you.

You will have a right of appeal. You should be informed of your right of appeal in the outcome letter.

**Appeal**

If you are given a warning or are dismissed under this procedure, you have the right of appeal. The appeal should be sent in writing and set out the grounds on which you believe the decision was flawed or unfair.

You should lodge your appeal within 3 days of receiving written confirmation of the sanction imposed on you.

An appeal hearing will be convened within a reasonable period after the appeal is lodged. The appeal hearing will be chaired by a more senior manager than the manager who made the decision being appealed, who may be accompanied by a HR Manager/another senior manager.

You will be entitled to be accompanied by a fellow you or a trade union official.

The outcome of the appeal will be confirmed to you in writing, explaining the grounds on which the decision was reached. The outcome of the appeal will be final.