

SHORT TERM SICKNESS ABSENCE POLICY

While appreciating that there will inevitably be some short-term sickness absence amongst our employees, the efficiency of our operational and business needs is of vital importance. If you are frequently and persistently absent from work, this can damage our efficiency and productivity as well as placing an additional burden of work on your colleagues. Accordingly, if you are absent from work, you will be required to comply with the following rules:

- notify your Area Manager if you are ill or unable to attend work for any other reason. Notification should be made no later than four hours before your shift start time. Notification should be made in person (unless there are exceptional circumstances for not doing so) by telephone. Text messaging will not be acceptable. You should explain the reason/s that you are unable to attend work and give an estimate of how long the absence will last.
- notify your Area Manager, by telephone, no later than midday on the working day before the day on which you intend to return to work. This will allow us to stand down any arrangements we have made to cover your absence. Should you fail to notify us of your intended return to work in the required manner, we may send you home without pay if we have made alternative arrangements for your duties to be covered.
- if you have been suffering from an infectious or contagious illness you should not report for work without obtaining clearance from your doctor to do so. If you are in any doubt about this matter, you should notify us and consult your doctor.
- attend a return-to-work interview with your Area Manager on your return to work to discuss your absence. We shall discuss the reasons for your absence including any personal problems which may be having a detrimental effect on your attendance record, failure to follow our notification procedures, fitness to resume your normal duties, general attendance record, and, if appropriate, an agreed timescale during which your general attendance can be assessed.
- complete and submit a self-certification form on return to work for all periods of sickness absence of up to one working week. If you are absent from work for longer than seven days your absence must be covered by a doctor's fit note certificate. Your first certificate should be submitted on the eighth calendar day of your absence, and you must submit any further certificates on the day on which your previous certificate expires.
- provide a doctor's certificate or "fit note" for a period of sickness absence of seven days or less if specifically requested to do so by us. In these circumstances, we will reimburse you for the cost of obtaining a private certificate on submission to us of a receipt.
- agree on request to be interviewed and/or examined by an occupational doctor nominated by us and to authorise the release to us of any medical report instructed by us. We will meet all costs associated with any such examination and/or medical report.
- cooperate with regard to the possible implementation of any adjustments to job duties, hours or working conditions, resulting from recommendations made by your doctor. For the avoidance of doubt, the advice on a "fit note" is not binding on us and whilst we respect such advice and will consider it carefully, we reserve the right not to follow it.

LONG TERM SICKNESS ABSENCE POLICY

While very sympathetic to long-term absences amongst our employees, we have to be attentive to our operational and business needs at all times. Accordingly, during any long-term absence we shall assess and review periodically with you your capability to carry out your normal job. This process could ultimately result in a termination of your employment. In these circumstances we will:

- review your absence record to assess whether or not it justifies dismissal.
- fully consult with you and establish your own views and opinions with regard to your health; obtain up-to-date medical advice.
- consider any reasonable adjustments that could be made to facilitate your return to work.
- advise you in writing as soon as it is established that termination of employment has become a possibility.
- meet with you to discuss the options and to consider your views on continuing employment; consider whether there are any other jobs that you could do prior to taking any decision on whether or not to dismiss.
- allow a right of appeal against any decision to dismiss you on grounds of long-term ill health.
- arrange a further meeting with you to determine any appeal.

CONTACT DURING ABSENCES

During any period of sickness absence, whether short or long term, we reserve the right to contact you in order to be made aware of your current state of health and/or to arrange a medical welfare meeting.

MEDICAL RECORDS AND REPORTS

As mentioned above, we may consider it necessary to request details regarding your health from a medical practitioner.

When this is the case, you will be fully informed of your rights under the Access to Medical Reports Act 1988 and/or the General Data Protection Regulations and your permission will be sought for the report to be obtained.

If you have any queries on your rights under the Access to Medical Reports Act 1988 and/or the General Data Protection Regulations or the procedure to be followed, you should contact your Area Manager.

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

We will provide the medical practitioner with:

- your signed consent to the request for a medical report.
- confirmation that you are aware of your rights under the Access to Medical Reports Act 1988 and/or the General Data Protection Regulations.
- details of the major features of your job and information on your absence.

We will ask the medical practitioner to identify:

- the nature of your illness.
- when, if ever, you are likely to be fully fit to resume your normal duties.
- any alternative duties you may be fit to undertake and when you are likely to be fit to undertake such duties.
- any reasonable adjustments which could be made to your working conditions or work premises which would facilitate a return to work; and
- the likelihood of recurrence of the illness once you have returned to work.

If you refuse us permission, or delay consent to contact your medical practitioner, we may have to make a decision without the benefit of access to medical records.

If we wish to take action following the report, we shall do so only after consultation with you and full and careful consideration of all the facts provided.

SICK PAY

If you are absent from work due to sickness or injury for four days or more, we will pay statutory sick pay provided you are eligible in terms of the current SSP regulations and have complied with all relevant rules relating to sickness absence and notification.