



ABSENCE PROCEDURE AND RULES

General

Employees must ensure that any time off (other than in the case of sickness) is authorized in advance by the Care Manager. Employees will be asked to attend a back to work interview with the Care Manager following each absence period.

Every employee who has been absent (other than those authorized in advance) will be interviewed by management immediately upon return to work. The reasons for the employee's absence will be discussed and the completed Absence Form will be considered. Management must decide whether to authorize the absence or not. The onus is on the employee to satisfy management that there was a genuine medical reason for the absence.

Medical and Dental Appointments

Employees are requested to arrange any medical or dental appointments outside working hours. Where this is not possible, employees must obtain permission from management before taking any time off and appointments should be arranged for first thing in the morning or last thing at night to minimise any disruptions to the Company.

Absence Due to Sickness

Employees are required to notify the Company as soon as possible of their sickness absence and the reasons for it. They should do this personally by telephone at the earliest opportunity and by no later than one hour before their normal start time on the first day of the absence.

It is essential that employees keep the Company updated on the circumstances of the absence and of its estimated duration.

Where the absence lasts for seven calendar days or fewer, the employee must complete an Absence Form immediately upon return to work.

Where an employee's absence lasts more than seven calendar days a Medical Certificate completed by a medical practitioner must be forwarded to management to cover the absence. The employee is required to complete an Absence Form on the first day back at work.

The Company will monitor each employee's attendance at work so that any unacceptable levels of absenteeism may be addressed.

Access to Medical Reports

From time to time it may be necessary for the Company to obtain a medical report from an employee's doctor in order to gather further information about the employee's medical condition and its probable effect on the employee's future attendance at work or the ability to do his or her job.

Employees have certain rights under the Access to Medical Reports Act 1988. Should the Company find it necessary to obtain a medical report concerning an employee's fitness for work or any other relevant matter the employee will be asked for his or her written consent? At the time of the request for consent the employee will be advised of his or her rights under the Act.

Statutory Rights to Time Off

Employees have the right to request time off work in the following circumstances:

Time off to Receive Antenatal care

Pregnant employees are entitled to take reasonable time off with pay during working hours to receive antenatal care. The Company may require an employee who wishes to take time off for this purpose to provide medical certification of her pregnancy and an appointment card, with the exception of the first appointment.

Time off for Public Duties

An employee is entitled to ask for time off work for specified public duties. There is no statutory right to be paid for this time off. The permitted amount of time off is that which is reasonable in the circumstances.

The public positions for which there is a right to time off are as follows:

- Justice of the Peace;
- Members of a local authority, e.g., local councilors;
- Members of a statutory tribunal;
- Members of a police authority;
- Prison visitors;
- Members of health bodies, e.g., NHS trusts, health authorities, etc.
- Members of education bodies, e.g., managing or governing bodies of local authority educational establishments, grant maintained schools, etc.; and
- Members of the Environmental Agency or the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency.

Time off in Redundancy Situations

Employees under notice of dismissal for redundancy and who will have at least two years' service on the date that notice expires, are entitled to a reasonable amount of paid time off to look for other work or to make arrangements for their retraining.

Other Authorized Time Off

Jury Service

Employees are entitled to time off work for jury service. Employees should notify management immediately on receipt of the jury summons, giving full details.

Employees will not normally be paid for this time off, and are advised to claim the expenses to which they are entitled from the Court. These will normally include compensation for loss of earnings.

Time off for Religious Observance

Employees should make any requests for time off for religious observance to their line manager as early as possible. Although employees have no legal or contractual right to religious leave or time off to pray, the Company will consider all such requests sympathetically.

Time off for religious observance must be taken from the employee's rest periods or annual holiday entitlement. Alternatively, at the Company's discretion, the employee may work additional hours in lieu of the time taken off.

If the employee wishes to take the time off as annual holiday, he or she should make the request in accordance with the Company's annual holiday procedures. For the avoidance of doubt, the Company's rules relating to annual holiday will apply.