

# Attendance Policy and Sickness Absence Reporting Procedure

## Introduction

Safehands Recruitment aims to encourage all its employees to maximise their attendance at work. However, it is recognised that a certain level of absence from work is inevitable for a variety of reasons, including sickness.

While Safehands Recruitment understands that there will inevitably be some absence among employees, it must also pay due regard to its business needs. If an employee is frequently absent from work or is absent for a lengthy period (for whatever reasons), this can damage efficiency and productivity, and place an additional burden of work on the employee's colleagues. By implementing this policy/procedure, Safehands Recruitment aims to strike a reasonable balance between the pursuit of its business needs and the genuine needs of employees to be absent from work because of sickness or for family, domestic or other reasons. The key aim of the policy/procedure is to encourage reliable attendance among all employees, so that a dependable staffing base can be established to meet the Safehands Recruitment's needs.

All employee absences will be counted for the purpose of this policy/procedure except approved holidays, family leave periods (e.g. maternity leave), approved compassionate or special leave, pregnancy-related absences, absences resulting from a workplace accident, and (unless it is justifiable to include them) absences that are related to an employee's disability.

The application of this attendance policy/procedure does not imply that an employee is doing, or has done, anything wrong. The procedure is a means of managing attendance, and should not be confused with the disciplinary procedure.

## Procedure

Managers responsible for staff are expected to manage and control their employees' attendance.

This procedure has three stages and involves the application of absence "trigger points". It also involves the allocation of responsibility to individual line managers to interview any employee whose level of absence has reached a defined trigger point and, depending on the circumstances, issue a warning about unsatisfactory attendance.

Stage 1 of the procedure is activated at or after:

- 10 working days' absence in any 12-month period; or
- Three separate occasions of absence in any 6-month period.

The result of an employee reaching stage 1 of the attendance procedure will be an attendance review meeting with the line manager, which will normally result in a first written warning for unsatisfactory attendance.

Stage 2 of the procedure is activated if at any time during the following 12 months the employee has:

- 10 working days' absence in total; or
- three separate occasions of absence within 6-month period.

The result of reaching stage 2 will be an attendance review meeting with the line manager, which will normally result in a final written warning.

Stage 3 of the procedure involves a repeat of the stage 2 trigger points. Reaching stage 3 of the procedure will normally result in the employee's dismissal, unless there are mitigating factors making it reasonable for the employer to decide not to dismiss.

Where an employee has triggered stage 1 of the attendance procedure, but his/her level of attendance improves so that it falls below the relevant trigger point during the following 12 months, the employee will be removed from the procedure.

Where the attendance level of an employee who has reached stage 2 of the procedure falls below the trigger point for the next period, he/she will automatically revert to the previous stage of the procedure for the following 12 months.

Directors may, in appropriate circumstances, use their discretion to discount certain absences (for example on compassionate grounds), and not issue a first or second written warning where stage 1 or 2 of the procedure has been triggered. However, an attendance review meeting should still take place in these circumstances. If an exception is to be made, the reason for it should be discussed and clearly recorded. Similarly, Safehands Recruitment may decide not to dismiss an employee who has reached stage 3 of the procedure if there are special circumstances justifying this course of action. Again, a record should be made of the reasons for the decision.

Whenever a trigger point is activated, the manager should take the following actions:

- Check the employee's absence record to gain an accurate assessment of the number of days' absence that he/she has had and the number of separate occasions on which he/she has been absent.
- Write to the employee inviting him/her to a formal attendance review meeting, enclosing a statement summarising the employee's periods of absence during the relevant defined time period, and advising him/her of the right to be accompanied by a fellow worker or trade union official at the meeting and of the possible outcomes of the meeting.
- Notify the HR department that an attendance review meeting is being set up with the employee. A member of HR department may elect to be present at the meeting.

- At the meeting, invite the employee to explain the reasons for his/her absences, and give him/her the opportunity to put forward any mitigating factors.
- Ensure that the employee understands the requirements of the attendance procedure, the reasons why the procedure is in place, the stage that he/she has reached in the procedure, and the possible consequences of a continuing unsatisfactory level of attendance.
- Enquire whether there is anything that the manager can do to facilitate an improvement in the employee's level of attendance.
- Keep a record of the key points discussed at the meeting and the outcome.
- After a stage 1 or stage 2 meeting, issue a written warning for unsatisfactory attendance, unless the circumstances merit a different approach.
- If the meeting was a stage 3 meeting, the matter should be referred to The Board of Directors who will, in conjunction with the line manager, consider whether or not the employee should be dismissed.

## **Sick Pay**

Provided employees are eligible to receive company sick pay and comply with the Company's sick pay requirements they will be paid Company sick pay for a maximum of 5 days. It will be at the discretion of the Directors if any additional sick pay is to be paid.

The Company reserves the right to withhold Company sick pay where employees fail to comply with the proper notification requirements. Entitlement to company sick pay is at the discretion of the company.

The Company reserves the right to withhold payment of Company sick pay if the Company reasonably considers an employee is abusing the Company sick pay scheme.

Company sick pay shall mean the employee's normal basic rate of pay.

The Company reserves the right to require employees to undergo a medical examination at any time (at the Company's expense) by a doctor or doctors appointed by the Company or other medical advisor. Failure to attend such prearranged appointments may lead to disciplinary action being invoked.

Sick pay will not be paid during the first 6 months probation period

## **Sickness Absence Reporting Procedure**

### **1 Sick leave**

1.1 It is important that staff observe the following procedures in order to ensure that appropriate sick pay is received and without delay.

1.2 Staff should contact their line manager or the Human Resources Department if they have any queries relating to sickness allowances or to the notification

procedure. Queries about actual payments received should be addressed to the payroll department.

## **2 What should staff do if absent from work?**

2.1 Staff members must notify their line manager in the event of being absent from work due to illness, so that appropriate cover for work can be organised. The notification procedure is as follows:

### First day of absence

2.2 The immediate line manager or HR department should be contacted as early as possible but normally no later than one hour after the normal start time. Employees should contact their line manager by telephone only, email or text is not acceptable.

The information required is:

- (i) the reason for the absence;
- (ii) the date the illness commenced, including annual leave, weekends and bank holidays;
- (iii) the likely duration of the illness.

Line Managers are responsible for updating PEOPLE HR system. If they don't have access, HR and Payroll department can update on their behalf.

2.3 If the line manager is not available when the member of staff telephones the workplace, a message should be left with another suitable person in HR or Payroll department.

### Fourth day of sickness

2.4 The line manager should be contacted again by telephone, to confirm that the absence is continuing.

### Sickness of eight days or more

2.5 If sickness continues beyond seven calendar days (including Saturdays and Sundays and any days the member of staff would not normally be at work), staff must obtain a certificate from their doctor or hospital on the eighth day and send it to their line manager immediately. The line manager will forward it to the Human Resources Department, normally within 24 hours of receipt, where entitlement to pay is decided.

2.6 Further certificates must be supplied, as necessary, to cover, continuously, any further periods of sickness. It is important that staff keep their line manager informed of the anticipated length of the absence.

2.7 Staff members must continue to supply the Human Resources Department with medical certificates, even after sick pay allowances have ceased. If medical certificates are required by the Benefits Agency, staff should forward the original certificate to the Human Resources Department where a copy will be made and verified. The original certificate will then be returned to the member of staff.

## **3 Sickness during annual leave**

3.1 If sickness commences during, or covers a period of previously booked, annual leave, staff should inform their manager as soon as possible. If the period of annual

leave is covered by a doctor's certificate, staff will normally be able to reclaim lost days of annual leave.

#### **4 Returning to work and self-certification**

4.1 On returning to work the staff must notify their Line Manager. If their Line Manager is not available, please notify HR or Payroll department

4.2 Line Managers are required to conduct an interview and complete the Return to Work Interview form (RTW). Original RTW form to be returned to HR department within 3 days of returning to work so PEOPLE HR can be updated for Payroll department. Original form will be placed on staff HR file for future reference. Sick pay may be held up until this has been completed. The return to work interview will identify any support measures which Line Managers need to be put in place for staff.

#### Procedure if not eligible for SSP

4.3 If eligibility for SSP is exhausted, or staff are otherwise excluded from entitlement to SSP, Payroll department will issue them with form SSP1 giving details of the reason(s) for the exclusion and will return any doctor's certificates which cover the period from the date of the exclusion onwards.

**2017-2018** Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) payments:  
£89.35 per week up to 28 weeks