



Sapphire Workforce Solutions Ltd supporting your business with practical, compliant people management solutions

Absence Management

A Practical Guide for Line Managers

Why It Matters

Effective absence management helps maintain productivity, supports employee wellbeing, reduces costs, and ensures fair and consistent treatment of employees.

When an Employee Calls in Sick

- ✓ Confirm the reason for absence
- ✓ Establish the likely duration
- ✓ Record the absence accurately
- ✓ Explain reporting requirements
- ✓ Maintain appropriate contact during longer absences
- ✗ Avoid making assumptions or challenging the employee without evidence

Managing Attendance Effectively

Short-Term Absence follow the below process however for **Long-Term** absence reach out to Sapphire Workforce Solutions Ltd for assistance:-

Monitor:

- Frequent absences
- Monday/Friday patterns
- Repeated short-term sickness
- Absences linked to annual leave periods

Return-to-Work Meetings

Hold a brief return-to-work discussion after each absence where possible.

Ask:

- Are you fit to return?
- Is any support required?
- Is there an underlying issue we should be aware of?

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Supporting Your Employees

Absence can be linked to:

- Physical health
- Mental wellbeing
- Stress or workload pressures
- Workplace conflict
- Personal circumstances

Early conversations can help prevent longer-term attendance issues.

UK Employment Law: Key Considerations

 **Equality Act 2010:** Consider whether a health condition may amount to a disability and whether reasonable adjustments are required.

 **Confidentiality:** Medical information must be handled sensitively and shared only on a need to know basis.

 **Consistency:** Apply absence procedures fairly and consistently across all employees.

 **Formal Action:** Where attendance concerns persist, follow your organisation's capability or attendance management procedure.

 **Protected Absence:** Pregnancy-related illness, maternity leave, statutory family leave, and other protected absences may require different treatment.

Manager's Checklist

- ☐ Record absence from Day 1
- ☐ Follow reporting procedures
- ☐ Maintain appropriate contact
- ☐ Conduct a return-to-work meeting
- ☐ Identify patterns and trends
- ☐ Consider wellbeing and support needs
- ☐ Consider reasonable adjustments
- ☐ Keep accurate records
- ☐ Seek HR advice when needed

Common Management Mistakes

-  Ignoring attendance patterns
-  Delaying difficult conversations
-  Failing to conduct return-to-work meetings
-  Inconsistent treatment between employees
-  Poor record keeping
-  Overlooking potential disability considerations

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