

Appendix 4 – Sickness Absence Guide for Employees

How Do I Report my Sickness Absence?

If you become unwell and are unable to come to work, you must notify your line manager as soon as possible, generally within one hour of your normal start time. If you work to rotas and/or with early or late shifts, contact should be made before the beginning of your shift. You should not wait until your next scheduled work day to inform your manager of sickness absence. Normally, you should phone where possible, but other methods may be used if agreed by your manager. If your own line manager is unavailable, you should contact another manager in your area or your own manager's line manager.

Please note that your service may have their own agreed local procedures for reporting absences (for example a central number to call), and you should ensure you follow the arrangements relevant to your service area. Your manager will inform you of any service-specific arrangements.

It is not normally acceptable for someone else to call and report your absence, unless there are exceptional circumstances, for example an emergency admittance to hospital, or where this has been agreed in advance with your manager as a reasonable adjustment where you have a disability.

You should tell the manager the reason that you are sick and how long you expect to be absent for (if known). You should also let them know about any work that may need to be covered while you are absent, but only if you are well enough to do this.

Depending on how long you are likely to be absent for, you should also agree with your manager when and how you will update them on your absence.

When do I need a Fit Note?

If you will be absent for more than 7 calendar days, you must provide a Fit Note from your GP or a registered medical professional. You must send the Fit Note to your line manager on the 8th day of absence or as soon as possible after this.

You must also send copies of any subsequent Fit Notes to your line manager and these must cover the entire sickness period (i.e. with no gaps between dates).

If I am absent long term, how often should I / my manager make contact?

You should agree with your manager how often contact will be, who will instigate contact and what method you will use (i.e. by phone, MS Teams, etc). It is important to keep to these arrangements as much as possible as your manager will understandably be concerned if they are unable to contact you and may need to take further steps to be reassured about your wellbeing.

What do I do if I am ready to return to work?

You should let your manager know what your planned return to work date is and if you require any support to return. If you have been off long term, this may require further discussion and a planned approach, with support arrangements in place, either temporarily or permanently.

Regardless of how long you have been off work, you will be asked to attend a return to work meeting, either on your first day back or soon after, to discuss your absence, any support required and any next steps under the policy.