**Sickness and Ill Health Policy**

**Change History**

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| Issue | Date | Summary of Changes | Initial |
| A | Mar 21 | Revised policy created by Birketts | **ED** |
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**Sickness and Ill Health Policy**

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**1. Introduction**

1.1 This policy sets out our arrangements for sick pay and for reporting and managing sickness absence. It does not form part of your employment contract and we may amend it at any time.

1.2 Abuse of sickness absence, including failing to report sickness absence or falsely claiming sick pay will be treated as misconduct and will be dealt with under our disciplinary procedure.

**2. Certification**

2.1 In the case of absences of no more than seven days, you should use the self-certification process.

2.2 Longer absences must be covered by doctors’ statements stating that you are not fit to work and providing a reason. If absence continues beyond the expiry of a certificate, a further one must be provided.

2.3 If your doctor says that you “may be fit for work” you must inform your manager immediately. We will hold a discussion with you about how to facilitate your return to work, taking in to account your doctor’s advice. If appropriate measures cannot be taken, you will remain on sick leave and we shall set a date for review.

**3. Sickness Pay**

3.1 You may be entitled to Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) if you satisfy the relevant statutory requirements. Qualifying days for SSP are Monday to Friday, or as set out in your employment contract. The rate of SSP is set by the government in April each year. No SSP is payable for the first three consecutive days of absence. It starts on the fourth day of absence and may be payable for up to 28 weeks.

3.2 After completing your probationary period you may be entitled to Company sick pay. Entitlement to Company paid sick leave varies according to your employment contract but, in summary, the provisions are as follows:

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| During the first year of service | One month’s full pay and, after completing four months’ service, two months’ half pay |
| During the second year of service | Two months’ full pay and two months’ half pay |
| During the third year of service | Four months’ full pay and four months’ half pay |
| During fourth and fifth years of service | Five months’ full pay and five months’ half pay |
| After five years’ service | Six months’ full pay and six months’ half pay |

**4. Return to Work**

4.1 After a period of sick leave your manager will hold a return-to-work interview with you. The purposes may include:

* + 1. ensuring you are fit for work and agreeing any actions necessary to facilitate your return;
    2. confirming you have submitted the necessary certificates;
    3. updating you on anything that may have happened during your absence;raising any other concerns regarding your absence record or your return to work.

**5. Managing Long Term or Persistent Absence**

5.1 The following paragraphs set out our procedure for dealing with long-term absence or where your level or frequency of short-term absence has given us cause for concern. The purpose of the procedure is to investigate and discuss the reasons for your absence, whether it is likely to continue or recur, and whether there are any measures that could improve your health and/or attendance. We may decide that medical evidence, or further medical evidence, is required before deciding on a course of action.

5.2 You will be invited to a meeting to discuss your absence. We will notify you in writing of the time, date and place of any meeting, and why it is being held. We will usually give you a week's notice of the meeting. Meeting will be usually be conducted by your line manager and may be attended by a member of the Human Resources department. If you cannot attend at the time specified you should let us know as soon as possible and we will try, within reason, to agree an alternative time.

5.3 If you have a disability, we will consider whether reasonable adjustments may need to be made to the sickness absence meetings procedure, or to your role or working arrangements.

**6. Medical Examinations**

6.1 We may ask you to attend a medical examination by a doctor or occupational health professional or other specialist nominated by us (at our expense). You will be asked to agree that any medical report produced may be disclosed to us and that we may discuss the contents of the report with the specialist and with our advisers. All medical reports will be kept confidential.

**7. Initial Sickness Absence Meeting**

7.1 The purposes of a sickness absence meeting or meetings will be to discuss the reasons for your absence, how long it is likely to continue, whether it is likely to recur, whether to obtain a medical report, and whether there are any measures that could improve your health and/or attendance.

7.2 In cases of long-term absence, we may seek to agree a return-to-work programme, possibly on a phased basis.

In cases of short-term, intermittent absence, we may set a target for improved attendance within a certain timescale.

**8. If Matters Do Not Improve**

8.1 If, after a reasonable time, you have not been able to return to work or if your attendance has not improved within the agreed timescale, we will hold a further meeting or meetings. We will seek to establish whether the situation is likely to change, and may consider redeployment opportunities at that stage. If it is considered unlikely that you will return to work or that your attendance will improve within a short time, we may give you a written warning that you are at risk of dismissal. We may also set a further date for review.

**9. Final Sickness Absence Meeting**

9.1 Where you have been warned that you are at risk of dismissal, and the situation has not changed significantly, we will hold a meeting to consider the possible termination of your employment. Before we make a decision, we will consider any matters you wish to raise and whether there have been any changes since the last meeting.

**10. Appeals**

10.1 You may appeal against the outcome of any stage of this procedure. If you wish to appeal you should set out your appeal in writing stating your grounds of appeal, within 5 days of the date on which the decision was sent or given to you.

10.2 If you are appealing against a decision to dismiss you, we will hold an appeal meeting, normally within two weeks of receiving the appeal. This will be dealt with impartially and, where possible, by a more senior manager who has not previously been involved in the case.

10.3 We will confirm our final decision in writing, usually within one week of the appeal hearing. There is no further right of appeal.

10.4 The date that any dismissal takes effect will not be delayed pending the outcome of an appeal. However, if the appeal is successful, the decision to dismiss will be revoked with no loss of continuity or pay.