



ATTENDANCE MANAGEMENT PRESENTATION

April 2019



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INTRODUCTION

- This presentation is aimed at line managers who manage absence and outlines the main changes to the attendance management policy and procedure
- Please ensure you have a copy of the new policy, procedure and guidance to refer to as you go through these slides
- At the end of this presentation you should have the confidence to know how to deal with sickness absences under this policy and procedure
- The purpose of the policy & procedure is not to question if the individual has been genuinely sick but to address the volume of absence once it becomes an issue.
- It is a tool to improve attendance not to punish.
- The policy & procedure only provides a framework - it cannot cover every scenario that you will come across –if you are unsure what to do access support through your line manager, People Services, OHU & trade unions/staff associations



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Summary of changes

- Introduction of Attendance Support Meetings (ASM's) – an informal supportive step to attempt to address attendance issues at an early stage & without recourse to the formal process
- Trigger points for formal action have been amended
- No action as an outcome of a formal stage 1 meeting has been removed and replaced with 'conduct further ASM'
- Informal & formal action can be triggered in various ways
- Unauthorised absences can count as an absence for triggering purposes
- If individual becomes sick whilst on leave, as long as they have followed the correct notification procedures, their leave will be reimbursed with no requirement to produce a fit note (a fit note will be required if the sickness was not reported as per procedure)
- Introduction of disability related leave for treatment and appointments where these cannot be taken outside of working hours



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Summary of changes

- Where someone goes sick whilst at work this will now only be counted as a full day's absence if less than half of their shift/contracted hours were completed
- Inclusion of the effects of treatment for gender reassignment in the list of situations where formal intervention is not automatically invoked
- A new managers' guide to support the policy and procedure
- The timeframe to submit an appeal has changed from 5 to 7 working days to be in line with police regulations and our own internal performance procedures.
- For police staff the option to progress to a stage 3 meeting (potential dismissal) at an earlier point (i.e. without needing to hold a stage 1 and 2 meeting) in certain circumstances.



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What has remained the same?

- Sick pay arrangements
- Reporting sickness procedure
- Contact during absence – home visit after 14 calendar days sickness
- Return to work interviews
- Continuation of a 3 stage formal process with the format of the meetings remaining the same
- Formal action not invoked/continued when medical retirement is being considered, terminal illness, reasonable adjustments not been put in place, pregnancy related absence and disability related absence (please refer to slide 17 for further information on disability related absences)

Attendance Management Policy & procedure

- As a line manager you have key role to play in managing attendance & can be the most influential
- Whilst we have a policy and procedure in place to ensure everyone know what is expected of them and we manage absence fairly & consistently this does not necessarily mean treating everyone the same – we need to consider individual circumstances
- Policy is based on the principle that all absence reported as sickness is genuine – any suspected false claims should be referred to PSD & dealt with as a misconduct issue
- Policy does not apply to those on probation (refer to probationary procedure)
- Policy has a system of informal & formal meetings which are triggered in various ways – can eventually lead to dismissal for either long or short tem absence or a combination of both
- Advice should be sought from People Services Advisor if sickness absence is disability related – formal action can take place where appropriate

Why have the changes been made

- Overall aim is to improve our attendance levels – our target is 3.7% we have been consistently above this target (over 4%) in the past two years.
 - The reason for the main changes is to have an approach to sickness absence management which has a greater emphasis on early intervention that is more supportive and less punitive.
 - To support individuals to make the required improvement in attendance without needing to progress to the formal process.
 - To allow both short and long term sickness to be included in trigger points rather than treated separately.
 - To be more supportive for those who are on long term sick as ASM will take place before formal stage 1 meeting.
 - To empower managers to determine the required level of improvement when issuing WIN/FWIN based on the individual's circumstances.
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Transition from old to new policy & procedure

- New policy & procedure implementation date May 2019
- No formal action will start until ASM has been completed e.g. if person has triggered formal stage 1 under old policy then an ASM will take place instead
- If formal action has already started under old policy e.g. they have been issued a WIN/FWIN– this will remain in place until it expires – should the targets set in the WIN been breached or improvement not maintained the next stage will be triggered & the formal meeting will then be held in accordance with the new policy and procedure
- If unsure how to proceed please contact your People Services Advisor.



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Return to work interviews

- After all periods of absence, irrespective of duration an individual's return to work must always be acknowledged and a return to work interview conducted.
- They are one of the most effective interventions in managing sickness absence.
- They provide an opportunity to engage in a conversation with an individual about any underlying issues which may be contributing to the absence.
- Identifying relevant support – counselling, TRIM, OH referral
- The return to work interview can improve attendance without the need for further action.



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Attendance support meetings (ASM)

- Purpose to discuss with the individual any issues or potential support to improve attendance or support a return to work
- An informal ASM is triggered by:
 - **2 or more occasions of absence within a rolling 12 month period or any period of absence 10 or more calendar days**
 - cause for concern e.g. pattern of absence/identified trend
 - as appropriate to the circumstances e.g. can be used as a tool to enable a person to remain at work & prevent absence where issues in health have been identified
 - at the request of an individual



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Attendance Support Meetings

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- To be held at the return to work interview or at the 14 day home visit if not returned to work
 - Complete the ASM meeting notes form
 - Consider if an Attendance Support Plan is required (template form should be completed)
 - No entitlement to be accompanied at ASM but requests will be considered
 - Identify any underlying issues
 - Refer to OHU if necessary
 - Carry out DSE assessment & inform facilities of any equipment required for it to be ordered in good time
 - Review ASP (within 3 month period)
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Formal stage 1

- Stage 1 is triggered by:
3 or more occasions of absence within a rolling 12 month period and/or inability to achieve the requirements of an ASP and/or any pattern of absence that gives cause for concern
 - The 10 calendar days in a rolling 12 month period has been removed as this is the trigger point now for an ASM
 - Outcome of a stage one meeting is either to issue a WIN or to conduct an ASM. If a WIN is not issued you need to provide robust rationale for not issuing a WIN – genuine sickness, not the fault of the individual are not valid reasons – failure of the Force to implement reasonable adjustments in timely manner, manager not following procedure could be reasons for not issuing a WIN. If in doubt please discuss with your People Services Advisors.
 - Please exercise caution about categorising illnesses as being more valid than others – broken leg versus depression.
 - The target in WIN needs to be set by the chair of meeting – the 2 occasions in 6 month period has been removed as a trigger point to progress to stage 2 & 3 –the target set should be appropriate to the individual's circumstances. Please speak to your People Services Advisor for guidance on this
 - The format of the meeting is as per previous procedure
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Formal stage 2 & 3

- Stage 2 & 3 is triggered if:
The individual has been unable to make sufficient and sustained improvement in their attendance
- In determining if sufficient & sustained improved has been made refer to the WIN/FWIN issued - has the target set been breached?
- Have they had further absences since the end of the target period but before the end of the WIN validity period (12 month period since its issue)?
- Have we provided any support agreed?
- Have they engaged with the support offered – attended OHU appointments, accessed counselling etc.?
- Outcome of stage two and three meeting is as per the previous policy – FWIN, extension of stage 1 WIN (stage 2), dismissal, extension of FWIN, redeployment (stage 3).



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Long term sick

- Keep in regular contact – this will increase the likelihood of the individual returning to work sooner rather than later
- Discuss options for returning for work – any support, reasonable adjustments
- Keep them informed of what is happening at work & their sick pay arrangements
- Develop a getting back to work programme within ASM/ASP but progress to formal stages if return to work has not been achieved
- However where no prospects of a return to work in the foreseeable future explore ill health retirement but bear in mind dismissal (stage 3 meeting) may be the only option as a final resort after all other options have been taken into account



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Part day absences

- Under the previous policy a part day absence was treated as a full day's absence
- Going forward if a person does less than half their shift/working hours (less than 3 hours 48 mins if flexi-worker) this will be treated as a full day's absence
- If half or more of their shift/working hours is worked this will not count as an absence for triggering* or sick pay purposes
- However in order to be able to report on part day absences please record this on DMS (please refer to DMS Manager Guide – Sickness on intranet to find out how to do this) – this WILL NOT be recorded on an individual's Oracle record
- It will not be expected that lost time will be made up. However if the circumstances are such that it is felt the time should be made up it will be at your discretion whether the time should be made up

*if an individual is continually leaving as sick after half or more of their shift is worked then this is considered as a pattern of absence and an ASM should take place.

Disability related leave

- When deciding whether to approve paid leave or not consider what is reasonable and appropriate for the individual whilst also taking into account the department and provision of services to the public
- If the leave is to be paid then the manager can record this in the individual's DMS record –selecting disability-related leave as the reason code.
- If annual leave, flexi-time and TOIL etc. is not an option and the leave is therefore to be unpaid then G895 Request for Discretionary & Public Duties Leave form needs to be completed & submitted to MFSS via service request for pay to be deducted.



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Please refer to the intranet for all template documents– go to People Services – Frequently Asked Questions – Attendance Management



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People Services Advisors contact list

- County – Charlotte Taylor ext. /David Lawley ext. 3112318
- City – Nahira Khan ext. 3106803
- Contact Management – Bal Dosanjh ext. 3114158
- Public Protection, Operational Support & Intelligence – Louise Rontree ext. 3109340
- SOC, EMSOU, Archive & Exhibits - Kiren Akhtar ext. 3106331
Emma Cross ext. 3111197
- Corporate Services – Jasvir Ginda ext. 3108933
Kulveen Goindi ext. 3114298