

WARWICK DISTRICT COUNCIL

ATTENDANCE MANAGEMENT POLICY

Attendance Management Policy

1. Purpose

- The purpose of this policy is to set out the framework within which sickness absence will be addressed. The Council will promote high levels of attendance at work which will in turn lead to better levels of service provision.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees, with the exception of:

- those employed under JNC for Chief Officers or JNC Chief Executive Conditions, where other arrangements apply; and
- Employees whose absence is considered unacceptable whilst still on Probation. These matters will be addressed under the Council's Probationary policy.

3. Key principles

This policy is in accordance with legislative requirements and ACAS guidance.

- The policy will enable sickness absence issues to be addressed in a fair and consistent manner so that employees can achieve and maintain a satisfactory level of attendance at work.
- The Council will provide appropriate support for employees who are absent due to sickness.
- Long term sickness absence will be managed and supported in accordance with the Council's Capability Policy.
- Abuse of the sickness scheme will be dealt with under the Council's Disciplinary Policy.
- Employees have a right to be accompanied at formal meetings, by a work colleague or trade union representative
- Employees will be given a minimum of 7 calendar days notice, in writing, of all formal meetings held under this policy.
- Reasonable adjustments will be considered for employees where relevant, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.
- A supportive involvement in the Health & Welfare of employees will be maintained.

- All attendance management matters will be treated confidentiality. A record of all meetings and outcomes will be placed on personal files.
- Managers should review absences when the triggers have been reached (pro rata for part-time staff).

4. Roles and responsibilities

- Employees have a responsibility for their own attendance at work.
- Line managers have responsibility for managing the attendance of their employees.
- HR will provide advice and guidance as appropriate.
- Where required HR will accompany the Manager from stage 2 of the policy onwards.
- Manager and employee guidance supplement this policy.

5. Sickness Reporting

- Employees have a responsibility to report their sickness absence as set out below.
 - Day 1 - Employee reports absence to manager in line within agreed timescales.
 - Day 3 - Employee updates manager on nature/ duration of the absence.
 - Day 8 - Employee provides a medical certificate and agrees contact arrangements during absence.
- Where an employee fails to comply with these timescales managers should contact the employee to discuss the absence.
- Failure to supply a doctors certificate could result in sick pay being stopped

6. Return to work discussion

- Return to work discussions will be carried out by the manager or a nominated representative, normally within 2 working days of an employee returning to work regardless of the length of absence.
- The discussion will be “face to face” wherever possible. Where this is not practicable, the discussion may take place via telephone.
- After the meeting the return to work documentation will be completed.
- Consideration should be given as to whether a review meeting is appropriate as detailed below.

7. Sickness Trigger Points

Short Term Absence Trigger

5 or more occasions in any rolling 12 month period or
10 or more days in any rolling 12 months.

- Managers will make a record of all discussions, meetings and actions taken, ensure they are placed on the personal file and give a copy to the employee.
- Employees who have reached the above triggers will be invited to an informal meeting.

8. Managing Attendance

Should an employee reach the trigger points above, the following stages will come into effect. A high level summary is shown below.

Informal Stage	Timescale / Objective	Action	Outcome
Informal attendance monitoring, such as Return to Work Meetings / Informal long term absence reviews	Up to a 6 month period	Meeting with employee. Set triggers for short term: Less than 3 periods in 6 months, or Any absence exceeding 10 days	Discussions to understand underlying reasons for absences and what help can be given for improving attendance and the well-being of the employee. Where trigger points have been reached a formal Stage 1 meeting will be arranged.
Stage 1 Meeting	Start of formal process	Formal meeting arranged to review overall attendance record.	Subject to circumstances a First Written Warning will be issued in the form of an Improvement Notice (see Annex A). The plan must include individual trigger points and actions that both the employee and the Council can undertake to improve attendance. The employee is notified of the right of appeal against the issuing of the First Written Warning.
Stage 1 Review	Up to 6 months	Attendance is monitored	At the end of 6 months or when trigger points have been

Period		and RTWI's carried out over the review period	reached a formal evaluation meeting is held. When attendance has achieved an acceptable level the procedure ends, if it has exceeded targets set the Stage 1 a formal Stage 2 meeting will be arranged.
Stage 2 Meeting		Formal meeting held to review attendance in Stage 1 review period.	Subject to circumstances a Final Written Warning will be issued in the form of an Improvement Notice (see Annex A). The plan must include individual trigger points and actions that both the employee and the Council can undertake to improve attendance. The employee is notified of the right of appeal against the issuing of the final written warning.
Stage 2 Review Period	Up to a further 6 months	Attendance is monitored and RTWI's carried out over the review period.	At the end of 6 months or when trigger points have been reached a second formal evaluation meeting is held. When attendance has achieved an acceptable level the procedure ends. If it has exceeded targets set at Stage 2 Meeting, a Stage 3 formal attendance management hearing will be arranged.
Stage 3		Formal attendance Management hearing	Formal meeting arranged to review overall attendance record. Full consideration given to attendance history. Outcomes will include 1. Consideration of further support and/or a further Improvement Notice and period of monitoring; or 2. Dismissal. The employee is notified of right of appeal against the dismissal.
Stage 4		Appeal	Appeal heard. Possible outcomes include upholding original decision or moving back to Stage 1 and a further Improvement Notice.

9. Appeal

The employee has a right of appeal in accordance with the councils Appeals policy.

Annex A - Example of an Improvement Notice

Example notice of first written warning or final written warning

Dear Date.....

You attended an ill health capability interview on I am writing to inform you of your written warning/final written warning.*

This warning will be placed in your personal file but will be disregarded for disciplinary purposes after a period of 12 months, provided your attendance reaches a satisfactory level.

a) The nature of the unsatisfactory attendance was:

e.g. 3 absences totalling 11 days from 17 May 2010 to 8 October 2010

*17 May – 20 May 4 days Headache Self Certified
21 July – 23 July 3 days Headache Self Certified
4 October – 7 October 4 days 'Flu' Self Certified*

b) The attendance improvement expected and agreed actions are:

e.g. to have less than 3 periods of absence in the next 6 month period, or any absence (s) exceeding 10 days.

It is also agreed that you will see your Optician, within the next 2 weeks, to have your eyes tested as you feel that your eyesight may be causing you to have headaches.

I have agreed to refer you again to the Occupational Health Service concerning your episodes of 'flu'.

c) The timescale within which the improvement is required is:

e.g. From the date of this letter to the 28 April 2011. A further review will be triggered in six months or earlier if there are 3 periods of absence, or any absence (s) exceeding 10 days

d) The likely consequence of further deterioration in attendance or insufficient improvement is a final written warning and/or dismissal

You have the right to appeal against this decision in writing to me within five days of receiving this disciplinary decision.

Yours sincerely

Signed Manager

** The wording should be amended as appropriate*

