

Sickness and Absence Policy



(Staff)

1. General Principles

This Sickness and Absence Policy sets out Brundall Parish Council's (BPC) procedures for reporting sickness and absence and for the management of sickness and absence in a fair and consistent way.

Sickness and absence can vary from short intermittent periods of ill-health to a continuous period of long term absence and have a number of different causes (for example, injuries, recurring conditions, or a serious illness requiring lengthy treatment).

BPC wish to ensure that the reasons for sickness absence are understood in each case and investigated where necessary. In addition, where needed and reasonably practicable, measures will be taken to assist those who have been absent by reason of sickness to return to work.

This policy applies to all employees. It does not apply to agency workers, consultants or self-employed contractors.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and we may amend it at any time.

2. Notification of sickness

Any staff member unable to work because of sickness or injury must contact the Clerk or a member of the Staffing Committee giving the reason for non-attendance, by their usual start time on each day of absence.

If they are unable to notify personally due to the nature of the illness, someone else may make contact on their behalf.

It is the staff member's responsibility to ensure BPC are notified. Failure to do so may result in sick pay not being paid and may also result in disciplinary action.

2.1. Certification of Sickness

A self-certification system operates for absences from work due to sickness or injury not exceeding seven days (including weekends and other non-working days). Immediately on your return to work you must complete and return a self-certification form.

For sickness or injury absence exceeding seven days (including weekends and other non working holidays) you must provide us with a Fit note (from your doctor or consultant, sometimes known as a sick note) on your return to work. However, if your absence is ongoing, you are expected to post your Fit note to us upon receipt or alternatively to send us a photograph of both sides of the Fit Note, with the original to follow.

2.2. Long-term absence

Long term absence is generally classified as any continuous absence lasting more than four weeks. The Council may require members of staff to undertake an occupational health assessment to understand how to support a return to work. If the condition qualifies as a disability under the Equality Act 2010 the Council is legally required to make reasonable adjustments to aid a return to work.

If there is no prospect of a return to work the Council will consult with the employee to discuss termination of their contract.

2.3. Sickness occurred whilst on annual leave

An employee who falls sick during the course of annual leave shall be regarded as being on sick leave from the date of a doctor's statement. Where an employee is receiving sick pay under the scheme, sick pay should continue if a public or extra statutory holiday falls during such sickness absence. No substitute public or extra statutory holiday should be given. (Green Book)

2.4. Return to Work

On return to work the employee signs a statement detailing the reasons for absence for all absences up to and including seven days. (Green Book). The line manager will ensure a return-to-work meeting is carried out, regardless of the duration of the leave.

In cases where absence is longer than seven days and a Fit note has been provided, the employee must submit a final statement or fit note from their doctor to resume duties. (Green Book) Any doctors recommendations, including phased returns, will be adhered to.

2.5. Sick Pay

Any sickness absence taken is paid in line with our contractual sick/injury pay scheme (inclusive of SSP) which provides payment during periods of certificated sickness as follows:

- During 1st year of service 1 month's full pay, and 2 months half pay (after 4 months' service)
- During 2nd year of service 2 months full pay, 2 months half pay
- During 3rd year of service 4 months full pay, 4 months half pay
- During 4th & 5th year 5 months full pay, 5 months half pay
- After 5 years' service 6 months full pay, 6 months half pay

Occupational sick pay shall be inclusive of any statutory sick pay due in accordance with applicable legislation. SSP and occupational sick pay are subject to the usual deduction for PAYE, National Insurance, pension contributions etc.

See National Joint Council for Local Government Services. National Agreement on pay and conditions of service for further terms and detail of Sickness Absence. (Green Book).

3. Other Absence

3.1. Jury Service & Public Duties

- Paid leave of absence, up to normal salary, will be granted for employees undertaking jury service or serving on public bodies or undertaking public duties. Where an allowance is claimable for the loss of earnings the employee should claim and pay the allowance to the employing authority. (Green Book)

3.2. Maternity, Parental and Adoption Leave

- All maternity, parental and adoption leave terms and pay are outlined within the National Joint Council for Local Government Services. National Agreement on pay and conditions of service. (Green Book).

3.3. Maternity Support Leave

- Maternity support leave of 5 days with pay shall be granted to the child's father or the partner or nominated carer of an expectant mother at or around the time of birth. A nominated carer is the person nominated by the mother to assist in the care of the child and to provide support to the mother at or around the time of the birth. (Green Book)

3.4. Training & Study Leave

- The Council will provide ongoing training, as identified, to support employees in their roles, and contribute towards the strategic objectives of the council.
- Employees attending or undertaking required training, are entitled to payment of normal earnings; all prescribed fees and other relevant expenses arising. (Green Book)

- Employees are also entitled to paid leave for the purpose of sitting for required examinations. (Green Book)
- When attending training courses outside of contracted daily hours, part-time employees should be paid on the same basis as full-time employees. (Green Book)

3.5. Medical & Dental Appointments

- Necessary paid time off will be granted for the purpose of cancer screening. (Green Book)
- Wherever possible, employees should try to arrange medical and dental appointments outside of normal working hours, where this is not possible or in an emergency, reasonable paid time off will be granted to attend medical or dental appointments.

3.6. Compassionate Leave

- Up to 3 days' compassionate leave with pay can be granted in order to help the employee to cope with the death or serious illness of a member of their immediate family. This includes:
 - Husband, wife, or partner;
 - Mother or father;
 - Child, including any adopted child; and
 - Sister or brother
 A further day may be granted for attending the funeral.
- All applications for Compassionate Leave must be made to the Parish Clerk and Chairman of the Staffing Committee for determination.
- In exceptional circumstances, the Parish Clerk in conjunction with the Chairman of the Council and the Staffing Committee will consider granting a maximum of a further seven days' unpaid compassionate leave in any one year.

3.7. Time Off for Dependants

- Under the Employment Rights Act 1996, all employees (regardless of their length of service) have the right to take a reasonable amount of unpaid time off work without notice in order to deal with particular unexpected emergencies affecting their dependant.
A dependant is:
 - a. A spouse
 - b. A civil partner
 - c. A child
 - d. A parent
 - e. A person who lives with the employee other than as his or her employee, tenant, lodger, or boarder
 - f. Any other person who would reasonably rely on the employee for assistance if he or she fell ill or was injured or assaulted, or who would rely on the employee to make arrangements for the provision of care in the event of illness or injury; or
 - g. In relation to the disruption or termination of care for a dependant or any other person who reasonably relies on the employee to make arrangements for the provision of care.
- Under this provision, an employee is entitled to take time off work:
 - Where a dependant falls ill, gives birth, or is injured or assaulted
 - To provide assistance following the death of a dependant
 - Where there has been an unexpected disruption to, or termination of, the arrangements for the care of a dependant; and
 - To deal with an emergency relating to a child of the employee that occurs unexpectedly at the child's school.
- Although there is no requirement to give notice the employee must, as soon as possible, tell their line manager the reason for their absence and how long they expect to be away from work.

3.8. Requests for unpaid Leave

- There are certain situations in which an employee could request unpaid leave, this can be granted at the discretion of the line manager and staffing committee. During this time the employee retains their position and benefits, as long as they return on the agreed return to work date.
- Unpaid leave can also be granted, at the discretion agreement of the line manager and staffing committee, in an emergency, circumstance or situation, which is not covered within this policy or the green book.

4. Monitoring Absence

- 4.1. All Absences will be recorded on employees' timesheets and monitored by line managers.
- 4.2. A meeting will be arranged to discuss an employees absence if there is persistent absence such as, but not limited to:
 - Three occasions, or ten working days or more, absence in a rolling 3 month period.
 - Clear patterns of absence (e.g Friday and/or Mondays only)
- 4.3. Persistent absence will be treated as a disciplinary matter and will be dealt with as per the Disciplinary Procedure in the Employment Policy.
- 4.4. Due regard will be taken of the Equality Act, in relation to disability and pregnancy to ensure that employees are not placed at a disadvantage as a result of any protected characteristics.

See National Joint Council for Local Government Services. National Agreement on pay and conditions of service for further terms and detail of Other Absence. (Green Book).