

Flowchart for Managing Absenteeism and Sickness

Adopted by Ruskington Parish Council on 18 April 2024
Min ref: 8.2., page 25-2024 (in conjunction with the Sickness Policy)
For review in April 2025.

Managing sickness and attendance can present significant management problems for the Council. Ruskington Parish Council (RPC) is committed to supporting all its Employees with health challenges. This includes conducting detailed and discrete investigations, with the Employee's cooperation, into what adjustments RPC can provide to help accommodate people with health issues.

However, unnecessary and unmerited absenteeism, unrelated to long term health issues, causes disruption, affects staff ratios and damages morale. RPC may also need to address unacceptable and unexplained absenteeism through Formal Disciplinary action.

Overall Strategy

Advice from organisations such as ACAS and the DWP is:

- 1 Objectively assess and measure Employees' levels of attendance.
- 2 Conduct a reasonable investigation into those Employees whose absenteeism stands out, usually as above the average for the workforce.
- 3 Have a formal procedure to address the problem.



Objectively assess and measure employees' levels of attendance

It is the Council's intention to investigate all absenteeism which exceeds 9 days in a rolling twelve-month period. In addition, Employees whose health is a cause for concern will also be investigated.



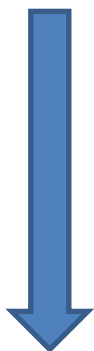


Investigate those Employees whose absenteeism stands out

Employees whose sickness exceeds the 9 day threshold will attend a "Return to Work" interview, after the period of absence which took them over 9 days in a twelve month period.

The purpose of this interview is to discuss:

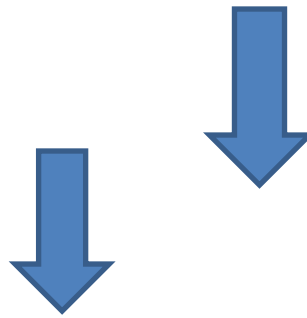
- 1 What difficulties the Employee is suffering. Do they have a health issue? Are personal circumstances the cause of the issue? Alternatively are there no good reasons for the number of absences?
- 2 If the Employee informs their Manager that they do have a genuine physical or mental health issue affecting their ability to work, RPC will seek professional medical advice, and ask the Employee for their consent to request a medical report.



If the Employee says they do have a health issue – RPC will ask for their consent to get a Doctor's report. A report can come from the Employee's own GP, or a Doctor or accredited health care professional selected by the Council. The purpose of this report would be to answer questions such as:

- What is the diagnosis and is the problem likely to last for a period of twelve or more months?
- Does it affect their ability to do their job?
- What reasonable support and assistance can the Council provide to help them attend work?
- What is the long-term prognosis, with regards their ability to do their job?

If the Employee doesn't have any health issues - but their absenteeism figures don't improve, management can take formal disciplinary action, based on the Employee's unacceptable attendance. This can include Formal / Final Written Warnings, and ultimately Dismissal



If the doctor, or accredited health-care professional, confirms that the Employee does have a genuine health challenge -
RPC will use the medical report to investigate how to make reasonable adjustments to help accommodate the Employee at work.

This would typically involve conducting a follow up meeting with the Employee after receiving the Doctor's report. The purpose of this meeting would be to investigate the following options:

- Alternative work which the Employee is able to do.
- Adapting the Employee's job to remove areas which are not compatible with their health.
- Adjusting the Employee's working environment to help them attend work.

If the adjustments involve reducing hours of work, position within the Council, or some other action which would justify reducing the Employee's terms and conditions of employment, the medical advice must be followed as soon as possible, if it is reasonable for the Council to accommodate this change.

The Employee's terms and conditions such as pay, would be adjusted to match the new post following a notice period of one week for every year of employment with the



If, following a detailed investigation involving medical advice, and potentially outside agencies such as Access to Work and the Job Centre's Disability Employment Adviser, that:

- There are no adjustments that can be made to accommodate the Employee
- The costs and / or disruption required to accommodate the Employee are unreasonable, and not realistically possible for the Council to comply with.

RPC may consider terminating the Employee's contract on capability grounds.