

Sickness Absence Procedure

Policy Statement

TC Facilities Management (TCFM) aims to secure the attendance of all colleagues throughout the working week. However, it recognises that a certain level of absence may be necessary due to personal sickness or as a result of personal injury. It is TCFM's policy to offer security of employment during such periods, subject to operational requirements.

Key Terms

Short Term Absence:	Absences of less than three consecutive weeks.
Long Term Absence:	Absences of three consecutive weeks or more.

Notification of Absence Procedure

Colleagues who are away from work due to sickness or accident must conform to the following procedure:

- Colleagues must notify their Manager by telephone at the earliest opportunity, text (SMS) is not accepted, ideally speaking to their line manager and advising them of the reason for the absence together with the expected date for return to work. If these people are not available you must contact their Line Manager instead. You must not leave messages regarding your absence with anyone else.
- For absence of less than 7 calendar days on return to work the employee must complete a self-certification form and give it to their line manager. Line Managers are responsible for keeping records of all absences and reviewing them on a regular basis.
- If you fail to notify your Manager/Supervisor of your absence or fail to follow the procedures as detailed above, including the completion of a self-certificate your absence will normally be treated as Absence without Leave (AWOL) and this may result in the loss of Statutory Sick Pay and could lead to disciplinary action being taken against you.
- If a Colleague is absent for more than one day, but less than 7 days they must keep their line manager informed daily of their progress, and when they are likely to be able to return to work. If a Colleague is unavailable for work through sickness or injury for 7 calendar days in a row, including weekends and holidays, a medical fit note must be obtained from the colleague's doctor. You must obtain and submit to TCFM a medical certificate by no later than the eighth calendar day of your absence. Further medical certificates should then be sent to cover the whole period of your absence.

Medical certificates must:

- Indicate the date on which you may return to work.
- State the period of days/weeks/months for which you are unfit for work
- Colleagues must complete the back of the medical certificate, obtained from your GP or a Hospital and sign it prior to sending it to their Manager/Supervisor. The certificate must cover the entire period of your absence. You should not return to work before the date stated on the certificate unless your GP is willing to write you a letter confirming that you are fully able to return to work.
- Failure to submit a medical certificate for absence lasting 7 calendar days or more will normally result in the loss of Statutory Sick Pay for the entire period of your absence. Failure to follow the procedures as set out above may also result in the withholding of Statutory Sick Pay and may also result in disciplinary action being taken against you.

Communication During Sickness Absence

Your Manager/Supervisor may contact you during your period of sickness absence and you must respond to their communication as soon as reasonably possible. You should maintain contact with your Manager/Supervisor at regular intervals to enable him/ her to make provision for colleagues cover and thereby maintain the quality of service provided by your work team.

Covering your Position During Absence

During your absence it may be necessary to cover your position in order for service to be maintained. This will be on a temporary basis for the period of your absence.

Returning to Work From Absence

You must inform your manager/supervisor when you are fit that you will be returning to work. Upon your return they will conduct a return-to-work meeting with you and this documentation will be held on your file.

Short Term Absence Procedure

If you are frequently absent from work for periods of 7 days or less, we reserve the right to request a medical report from your GP or to arrange an independent medical examination by our appointed doctor. We also reserve the right to investigate the reasons for your absence, and if appropriate, we may request that your attendance record is improved. If your attendance does not improve this may result in disciplinary action being taken against you in line with the following policy:

- Advise the colleague to seek proper medical attention if there is an underlying medical problem.

- Inform the colleague that the persistent short-term absences are unacceptable and put continued employment at risk.
- Give consideration to the problem and possible ways to help resolve them.
- Agree a reasonable period of time over which a colleague's attendance can be assessed. If after the agreed period, the absences have not improved the colleague shall be advised that TCFM has the right to obtain a medical report from the colleague's GP.

Absence Trigger Points

Should your Line Manager notice that your attendance at work needs to be addressed then they will use the following procedure:



Wherever possible, prior to being asked to attend a formal meeting to discuss your sickness absence rate, your Line Manager will collate appropriate information. Such information might include:

- All details of your reasons for absence and length of your absences for the previous period (usually 6 months) – self-certification forms and medical certificates and any other medical/doctors' information (as relevant).
- Information obtained during return-to-work interviews (if relevant). You will then be asked to attend a formal meeting to discuss your attendance at work. At the meeting your manager/supervisor will discuss with you the reasons that you have given for your absences and discuss whether you are able to improve your absence rate to an acceptable level. The level of attendance required will be specified in each instance.
- As an outcome of that meeting, a timescale will usually be set for a further review of absence levels (usually three-monthly meetings on an ongoing basis will be organised or otherwise meetings after each subsequent period of absence which will be combined with the return-to-work interview). The content and outcome of the meeting will be confirmed

to you in writing. This will constitute a first stage warning on the basis of capability/ill health.

- Should the required improvement not occur over the set period, you will be invited to attend a further formal meeting - the outcome of which may be a second stage warning on grounds of capability/ill health.
- All warnings given for reasons of capability/ill health will remain on records as follows:
 - First stage 6 months
 - Second stage 12 months

Meetings

At every formal meeting regarding short-term absence, you have the right to be accompanied by a fellow colleague or an accredited trade union representative. At least 24 hours written notice will be given of any formal meeting to discuss short-term absence so that you can prepare for the meeting.

Doctors Report

If appropriate a doctor's report may be requested prior to any or all of these meetings.

Right of Appeal

After a warning has been given or any dismissal on grounds of capability, you have the right of appeal. Any appeal should be put in writing and submitted to the HR Department within five working days of the warning/dismissal being confirmed in writing.

Appropriate Level of Absence

In deciding what an acceptable level of absence might be, your Manager/Supervisor will make reference to any available information within TCFM that is considered relevant. For example:

- The reasons given on medical certificates and self-certification forms for absence.
- Your length of service.
- Your absence record prior to the period being discussed.
- TCFM's average level of absence (an average relating to short term absences).

Absence Which is not Sickness Related

In appropriate circumstances, absence which is not sickness related may be included in discussions on persistent short-term absenteeism. This would not however include holiday absences.

Long Term Absence Procedure

This policy applies if you are absent from work as a result of sickness or injury for three consecutive weeks or more.

Medical welfare visit

TCFM will arrange a welfare visit normally held by your line manager and a Company witness to act as a note taker. The meeting will normally take place at your place of work however if you are not well enough to attend arrangements can be made to attend your home. The purpose of this visit is to offer support, find out how you are feeling/coping, assess the likelihood of whether you will be coming back to work in the near future and ascertain what (if anything) TCFM may need to do to facilitate your return to work.

Medical Examination Report

TCFM may request a GP report or may arrange for an independent medical examination by TCFM's appointed doctor. This examination will seek for example, to establish your future capability to perform your role and the likelihood of requiring more time off sick/continuing light duties. If you refuse to see TCFM's appointed medical advisor or to allow TCFM to approach your GP for a report TCFM will have no alternative but to base any decisions regarding your suitability for your role on their layman's knowledge.

Consideration of Temporary Light Duties or Medical Suspension

To facilitate an early return to work or to full health, every consideration will be given as to whether light duties are available and suitable on a temporary basis. If nothing is available or suitable, then TCFM may require you to stay off work until you are fully fit to return to your duties. If lighter duties are undertaken, this may also incur an adjustment to salary as appropriate.

Consideration of Suitable Alternative Work

After a significant period of absence or period of light duties, as an alternative to dismissing you on grounds of ill health/capability, every effort will be made to consider whether:

- There is any suitable (permanent) alternative work – this may incur an adjustment to salary as appropriate to the alternative position.
- Any changes can be made to work equipment or the work environment to enable you to continue working.
- The tasks involved in your job can be changed in order to accommodate you.

Dismissal on Grounds of Ill Health

Further to the findings of a medical report and/or having given due consideration to whether there is suitable alternative work, TCFM reserves the right to dismiss you on grounds of ill health.

Work Related Stress

TCFM knows that at times work can become stressful (either on a temporary or permanent basis) and at certain times in our lives, we are less able to tolerate stress levels that previously we would have been able to cope with.

With this in mind if you ever consider that your job is providing you with undue stress, you must speak with your manager/supervisor and discuss ways of addressing the situation. TCFM wants to help anyone who feels that they are suffering from stress, but cannot do this unless you make someone aware of the problem.

If the actions that TCFM takes to reduce the levels of stress that you are experiencing fail, then it may be appropriate to discuss a change of job and/or duties on either a temporary or permanent basis. Any change of duties on a permanent basis would result in an appropriate adjustment in pay to the rate for the new position.

Mark O'Dwyer
CEO

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Related Policies

- Capability.
- Disciplinary.

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v.1	27 th February 2026	Richard Grafham	Mark O'Dwyer