

Improve productivity and reduce costs by managing absence

Tips and Guides for Managers

Managing Absence correctly is important for both the Employee and the Employer; it can have a big impact on staff morale and productivity as well as cost.

It may not always be an employee's fault if they are sick, or taking time off to look after a dependent from time to time, but it's important to recognise that it is their **RESPONSIBILITY**. It's important that employees understand the impact and consequences of frequent or prolonged absence.

Although there are legal issues that you need to bear in mind there are a few simple key points to ensure you manage absence correctly.

Have a Clear Absence Policy and Procedure

- Ensure it outlines the procedures and expectations and is in line with best practice
- This allows you to take action if the employee doesn't follow the procedure

Accurately Record Absence

- The reasons for absence may be important when making decisions about taking action
- The Equality Act 2010 ensures protection for employees around disability and pregnancy. Taking action against an employee in these circumstances could lead to claims of discrimination under the Act.
- It can be helpful to look at the whole absence history and explore patterns
- Consider conducting Return to Work Interviews following every absence to explore, understand and address reasons for absence

Be Consistent and Take Action When Necessary

- You may need to write to the employee's GP or seek help from Occupational Health where there are underlying problems. Be aware that under the Medical Reports Act, you need the employee's consent to do this.
- Should persistent, unrelated short terms absences lead to potential dismissal, ensure you follow your disciplinary procedure to reduce the risk of unfair dismissal or discrimination claims.

How can we help? ...

- We provide advice and support
- Write letters and provide template forms
- Develop your Absence Policy and Procedure
- Provide training on Managing Absence Effectively