

Top Tips for Absence Management



Introduce a robust Sickness Absence Management Policy to ensure fairness and consistency when managing absence. This will enable you to manage the impact of absence on the service you provide and reduce the risk of a tribunal claim.



Include absence trigger points within your policy to ensure a fair approach for managing short term absences.



Ensure all managers are trained and keep records of training.



Make employment offers subject to the satisfactory completion of a health questionnaire and always follow up if a member of staff declares a condition which may impact their ability to perform their role.



Ask staff to complete a health questionnaire annually, so that you can take steps to support them and hopefully avoid exacerbating a health issue and reduce the possibility that they may go off sick.



Always carry out return to work interviews, this will help you spot patterns of absence and pick up on any underlying health issues.

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You can issue warnings for poor attendance, but tread with caution as disciplinary sanctions can be discriminatory if the absence is linked to a disability.



Employers have a legal obligation to explore reasonable adjustments for staff who are affected by a disability.



If a member of staff appears to be struggling with health issues, but still coming into work, hold a welfare meeting with a view to asking for their consent to write to their doctor for a medical report or refer them to Occupational Health.



If staff have a physical or mental health condition or a disability, encourage them to contact Access to Work, as they may be eligible for a grant to help pay for practical support. The aim of Access to Work is to help individuals get into employment or stay in work.



Don't ignore signs of work-related stress, employers have a legal duty to protect their staff by carrying out a Stress Risk Assessment. Spotting the signs early on will enable you to take steps to reduce the staff member going off sick.

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