



Sickness and Absence Procedures

DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this procedure, the following definitions apply.

Absence – non attendance at work, whether certificated or non-certificated

Short term – a period of absence between 1 day and 2 working weeks.

Long term – a period of absence of 2 working weeks or more.

REPORTING ABSENCE

Notification

If you feel unwell whilst at work and are unable to continue working then you must notify the Service Manager and ask to be excused. All other absences (excluding arranged leave) must be reported as soon as possible and no later than one hour before start time.

The earlier the notification is provided to Pillar Kincardine the easier it is to arrange cover and minimise disruption. You should call or text the Service Manager on 07912577139; or (in the absence of the Service Manager) the office on 01569767222.

When you call you should state your reason for absence and expected duration of absence. If the absence is of a personal nature you need only give brief details. The Service Manager will check with you if there is any information they need about your current work. If you do not contact the Service Manager by the required time the Service Manager will attempt to contact you at home.

Thereafter you or your representative should call the Service Manager or (in the absence of the Service Manager) the office every day you are scheduled to work (short term absence) or at the beginning of every working week or other agreed interval (long term absence).

It is your responsibility to notify Pillar Kincardine of any impending or anticipated absence and you are expected to telephone personally or arrange for someone to call on your behalf. Failure to report an absence or to follow any of the above procedures may result in absence being treated as unauthorised, and as such you may be subject to formal disciplinary action.

Certification

For sickness absences of 1 working week (7 calendar days) or less a self certificate (available from the Office Manager) needs to be completed and returned to the Service Manager on the first day you return to work. Sickness absences lasting more than 1 working week require a medical certificate; these and any further consecutive certificates should be returned to the Service Manager.

If you are admitted to a hospital or similar institution, you should forward the medical certificate issued to you by Hospital staff to Pillar Kincardine for the attention of the Service Manager.

It is your responsibility to submit these forms fully completed and on time. The forms will be kept on file and will be used to monitor absence reasons and frequency, and may also be referred to during any formal meetings regarding attendance.

For long-term absences you are expected, if required to do so, to agree to be examined by a Doctor nominated by Pillar Kincardine. We may also ask your consent to consult your General Practitioner for a medical report, but will do so in writing. Procedures under the Medical Reports Act 1998 will be strictly adhered to.

Failure to agree to a reasonable request to attend a Doctor nominated by Pillar Kincardine may lead ultimately to termination of employment; and knowingly to provide Pillar Kincardine with false information for any absence may make you ineligible for Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) and/or company sick pay, and liable to be subject to formal disciplinary action.

RETURN TO WORK

If your absence is covered by a medical certificate (Statement of Fitness for Work) then you must be signed 'fit for work' or 'may be fit for work' prior to returning to work. Failure to provide such a statement will mean that you cannot yet return to work.

If the General Practitioner advises on the Statement of Fitness for Work that you 'may be fit for work' we will discuss with you ways of helping you get back to work. This might mean talking about a phased return to work or amended duties. If it is not possible to provide the support you feel you need to return to work – for example, by making the necessary workplace adjustments – then the Statement will be used in the same way as if the General Practitioner advised that you were 'not fit for work'.

On return to work you will be invited to discuss your absence with the Service Manager, who will determine whether Pillar Kincardine can offer any further support or assistance and explain how your work has been re-organised during your absence. A brief note of the return to work (RTW) interview will be retained in your personnel file in a standardised format (see Annexure).

SHORT TERM ABSENCE

If you have frequent short term absences, or reach one of the absence 'trigger points' set out at the end of this document, you will be asked to meet with the Service Manager to discuss

- your rate of absence and possible causes
- potential solutions and any assistance that can be given
- possible referral to discover if there is an underlying medical reason for your absences
- the improvement expected from you within an agreed timescale
- what will happen if there is no improvement

At every stage you will be encouraged to improve your attendance; however, if this does not reach a satisfactory standard after an agreed period it may lead to Pillar Kincardine taking disciplinary action up to and including termination of your employment.

LONG TERM ABSENCE

Any long term illness is a source of anxiety and Pillar Kincardine believes that consultation at an early stage will help to make the situation clear and remove any uncertainty.

You will be expected to maintain an agreed (eg once-weekly) frequency of communication (this may entail updates on wellbeing and recovery or updates on cover for work and duties while absent) with the Service Manager during your period of absence. If after 12 weeks you have not returned to work, and after

consultation have indicated that there is no immediate or anticipated date for returning to work, the Service Manager will take one or more of the following courses of action:

- agree with you a date for further consultation; and/or
- decide whether reasonable adjustments to the job can be made; and/or
- inform you that Pillar Kincardine wishes to seek medical guidance from your General Practitioner.

If you cannot return to your original post and suitable alternative employment is not available or appropriate, dismissal through lack of capability may be considered. Pillar Kincardine will however at all times look positively for an alternative to dismissal.

MONITORING OF ABSENCE

All absences are recorded in the personnel system and your personal file, and monitored by the Service Manager

MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS

Pillar Kincardine acknowledges that time off work may have to be requested at short notice to attend a medical appointment. You are expected to make every effort to arrange these appointments outwith working hours, and where this cannot be arranged to disrupt the working schedule as little as possible, for example by making them early or late in the working day.

Whenever possible you should give advance notice to the Service Manager, and provide evidence if required to do so, of any appointment made during working hours. Where attendance for a medical or hospital appointment necessitates a complete day's absence from work, this will be treated as sick leave and the procedure for self certification should be followed.

ABSENCE FOR PUBLIC DUTIES

Where you are required or entitled on a discretionary basis to take time off from work to carry out public duties such as Jury Service, Children's Panel, etc you should discuss with the Service Manager how best to accommodate any resulting absences.

ABSENCE FOR UNION OFFICIALS

If you are an official of an independent trade union which is recognised by Pillar Kincardine you will be allowed reasonable time off with pay during working hours to carry out union duties (including consulting with or receiving information from Pillar Kincardine) and/or to undertake training for approved union duties.

Pillar Kincardine will also give reasonable unpaid leave to officials who attend certain trade union activities e.g. union conference.

ABSENCE FOR FAMILY-RELATED (OR SIMILAR) PURPOSES

Pillar Kincardine policies such as Adoption Leave, Dependants Leave, Discretionary and Compassionate Leave, Maternity Leave, Parental Leave and Paternity Leave set out the circumstances in which other kinds of leave of absence can be applied for. They can be found on the Pillar Kincardine website at www.pillarkincardine.co.uk.

COMPANY SICK PAY SCHEME

Details of the Pillar Kincardine Company Sick Pay Scheme are set out in the Staff Handbook. If there has been no period of absence in the previous year, any company sick pay entitlement that the employee has accrued will be calculated in accordance with the scheme. At the start of a period of absence, any absence in the previous year will be deducted from any entitlement the employee has at the date of the current period of absence.

TIMEKEEPING

All employees are required to observe the start and finish times on their terms and conditions of employment. If you expect to be late for work you must contact the Service Manager as soon as possible to advise when you will start work.

Persistent lateness will not be tolerated by Pillar Kincardine and will in the first instance lead to a formal meeting with the Service Manager; if it continues formal disciplinary action will be taken.

TRIGGER POINTS

Trigger points are agreed levels of sickness absence which, when reached, will trigger management action. They are used to remind Service Managers that the amount of sick leave being taken may be a problem and that it should be addressed.

Where someone is approaching a trigger point, it may be an early indication of a problem and the Service Manager will informally discuss your attendance record with you, including reminding you of the standards expected and of the support available to help your attendance improve, including early interventions.

TRIGGER POINT	MANAGEMENT ACTION
3 or more self-certified absences in a 4 months period	Formal Return to Work Discussion with the Service Manager and formal attendance review meeting
Persistent 5 days per absence (self-certified) in a 12 months period	Formal Return to Work Discussion with the Service Manager and formal attendance review meeting
3 or more periods of absence in excess of 10 working days in a 12 months period	Formal Return to Work Discussion with the Service Manager and formal attendance review meeting
Sickness patterns/trends that cause managerial concern, for example Mondays and Fridays or key holidays (such as school holidays)	Formal Return to Work Discussion with the Service Manager and formal attendance review meeting

MEETINGS WITH MANAGEMENT

You are entitled to be accompanied at all meetings by either a workplace colleague or an accredited trade union representative.

DISCUSSION NOTES	
How are you now and are you able to carry out normal hours and duties?	
What was the possible cause of your sickness absence and what action have you taken to avoid any future occurrence?	
Did you consult a General Practitioner? Are you receiving any treatment/ medication? How does it affect you or your performance?	
Is there anything else the employee would like to raise, which might affect their recovery or the likelihood of this illness reoccurring?	
Do you feel that there is anything Pillar Kincardine can do to support you or to prevent the absence re-occurring?	
<u>Discussion regarding:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • any concerns • cover for work while absent • update • further review necessary • trigger points 	
<u>Action Plan:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjustment to workplace/ working hours/ duties 	
<u>Action taken:</u> Review by (date):	