

### Managing Sickness Absence

Absence management is arguably one of the greatest challenges for any employer due to its sensitive nature, however, it is an essential area of people management that requires a consistent process to be applied.

Successful absence management is reliant on strong procedures being implemented in the workplace. Below are some tips to help you successfully manage sickness absence.

#### Short Term Absence:

- ✓ Implement a sickness policy outlining notification and certification requirements, details of sick pay scheme (if applicable) and an indication of how the company will approach attendance issues (e.g. disciplinary procedure for absence)
- ✓ Conduct regular and consistent Return to Work Interviews in order to accurately maintain absence records and to act as a deterrent for non-attendance for non-genuine reasons
- ✓ Make employees aware when their absence is falling below the required standard and if all else fails commence disciplinary action in line with the company sickness policy

#### Long Term Absence:

- ✓ Maintain regular contact with absent employee to ensure you stay up to date with their prognosis and potential return to work dates.
- ✓ If your contract of employment allows, obtain medical evidence to help you determine the potential timescale for the absence and/or to determine whether any reasonable adjustments might be required
- ✓ Consider reasonable adjustments where necessary. These reasonable adjustments can be a short-term or a long-term measure but remember there is no requirement to "create" a job for the employee
- ✓ Plan for their return. If their prognosis is reasonable work with them to create a plan to allow them to return to work successfully. Map out goals for the coming weeks/months and organise regular review times. The ISME Back to Work Template is a helpful resource to help you plan for their return.

Source: Various

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