

Attendance and Absence Policy

1.0 Introduction

Monitor recognises that personal circumstances or illness may sometimes prevent you from working all of your contractual hours. Absences for genuine reasons will be dealt with sensitively. Poor attendance for other reasons is a disciplinary matter.

2.0 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out what Monitor expects from you in terms of attendance and to inform you as to how Monitor will manage absences, including how Monitor can help you return to work. The procedures are designed to ensure fair and consistent treatment of staff.

Adherence to the policy also enables Monitor to monitor levels of attendance across the organisation.

3.0 Scope

This policy applies equally to full time and part time employees on a permanent or fixed-term contract.

This procedure does not form part of any employee's contract of employment. Monitor may change it from time to time and may depart from it depending on the circumstances of any case.

4.0 Your responsibilities

You must:

- be available for work at the agreed time;
- report any absences by telephone to your line manager by 10 am on the first working day of absence. Sending an email or text or leaving a message with a colleague is not acceptable;

- provide a valid reason for your absence and estimate the likely length of your absence;
- ensure your line manager is fully aware of all outstanding work requiring attention;
- comply with the sickness reporting requirements set out in this policy;
- keep your line manager regularly informed of the situation and of the expected date of your return to work;
- comply with reasonable requests by Monitor for medical examinations and reports;
- where possible, make arrangements to take any leave which may be available to you in the circumstances. Human Resources (HR) can advise you of your options.

If poor attendance is due to illness or a domestic, personal or work-related problem, this will be dealt with sensitively by your line manager. Line managers have authority to excuse you from attending work for genuine reasons in line with Monitor's policies and in consultation with HR as appropriate.

Monitor expects that you will do everything possible to facilitate a speedy return to work. While absent, Monitor would not expect you to undertake any activities inconsistent with your reasons for absence, for example, undertaking work elsewhere or participating in sports, social activities or home improvements.

5.0 Sickness Reporting Requirements

If you are absent for 7 calendar days or less for reasons of sickness, you are required to enter the details into CIPHRNET, Monitor's staff information system and this should be actioned as soon as possible on your return to work.

Absences of more than 7 calendar days or more need to be supported by a medical certificate/s from a GP, now called 'Fit Notes' following a change in the law in April 2010. Please provide a copy of the certificate to HR as soon as possible after the 7th day of absence. You must provide further medical certificates as are necessary to cover the full period of your continued absence.

In cases of suspected non-genuine absences, where there is a concern about the level or reason for absence or where Monitor considers that there is a risk of harm to colleagues and others, you may be required to provide a medical certificate for each absence regardless of duration. In such circumstances,

Monitor will cover any costs in obtaining such medical certificates for absences of less than 7 calendar days on production of a doctor's invoice.

If you fall sick during a period of annual leave, you may be able to reclaim the time as sick leave. Please refer to the Annual Leave Policy for the reporting requirements that apply in those circumstances.

6.0 Entitlement to Contractual Sick Pay

Your entitlement to contractual sick pay is set out in your employment contract. The payments are subject to your compliance with the sickness reporting procedures.

7.0 Disability

If you consider that your sickness absence results from a disability or any medical condition which affects your ability to undertake work, you should inform your line manager as soon as possible so that Monitor can consider the reasonable adjustments that could be made to provide you with support when you attend at work and/or assist you in returning to work.

8.0 Long Term or Persistent Sickness Absences

As a guide, Monitor considers continuous absences of 6 weeks or more to be long term and short term absences of 6 occasions or more in a rolling 12 month period to be 'persistent'. Sickness issues must be dealt with in a timely manner using a consistent and pro-active approach that will improve attendance.

Dealing with long term or persistent sickness absences will depend on the circumstances in each case. Line managers will remain in contact with you during your absence/s to discuss your well being and the expected length of absence. You should keep your line manager regularly informed of the situation and of any work which requires attention. If you have any work related concerns whilst on sick leave, you should feel free to contact Monitor at any time.

If it appears that more formal action is necessary, Monitor may take the following steps:

- Investigate to determine the cause of the absence/s;
- Request medical examinations (see further below);
- Refer you to an occupational health services provider;
- Holding meetings with you to discuss, as appropriate:

- how you are feeling;
- the medical evidence gathered;
- the impact on the business and your colleagues;
- your attendance record;
- your expected return to work;
- the likelihood of further absences;
- any assistance that Monitor might be able to offer you to enable a successful return to work.

HR will inform you of the specific procedural steps and timescales that will apply in your particular case and will consult with you in advance. The meeting may take place at your home if that would suit you.

These steps do not prevent Monitor from taking action under the Discipline Policy if it appears at any time that this is the appropriate course of action in Monitor's reasonable opinion. Ultimately you may be dismissed for poor attendance even in cases of genuine illness (please see the section below titled Discipline and Dismissal).

9.0 Medical Examinations

Monitor may, at any time, seek your permission to write to your GP for a medical report (in accordance with section 3 of the Access to Medical Reports Act 1988) if there are concerns about your health and your related ability to attend at work safely or do your job effectively.

You may also be required during or after any period of illness to undergo a medical examination by a doctor of Monitor's choice. The purpose of this is to obtain an accurate and independent assessment of your condition and to obtain advice as to your continued ability to work at Monitor, with or without adjustments. The cost of the examination will be borne by Monitor. You will be asked to authorise the doctor to disclose the results of the examination to Monitor and to discuss any matters arising from the examination with Monitor.

Before any action is taken, HR will consult you and seek your consent. If you refuse to consent to a request for a medical report or to attend an examination, your line manager will decide on the appropriate course of action from the information available.

10.0 Discipline and Dismissal

Unauthorised absences, meaning absences which are not reported or absences which Monitor considers are not supported by genuine reasons, may lead Monitor to take disciplinary action under the Discipline Policy. Your attendance record will be taken into account for the purposes of deciding whether to invoke

the disciplinary process. Ultimately, you may be dismissed for unauthorised or non-genuine absence.

A failure to comply with the notification requirements may, in addition to affecting your contractual entitlement to sick pay as explained above, also lead to disciplinary action being taken against you. Please note that submission of self-certifications or GP's certificates do not prevent Monitor from taking action under the Discipline Policy if Monitor considers that there are reasons for doing so.

If your ill health makes you incapable of doing your job despite Monitor's efforts to assist you, you could be dismissed from your job. A dismissal will normally be with full notice or payment in lieu of notice. A dismissal decision will not be taken until Monitor has:

- notified you in writing of the possibility of dismissal and explained our concerns about your sickness absence;
- investigated the matter; and
- met with you to discuss the following issues:
 - the medical evidence as to the nature of your illness and the likely length of your absence;
 - the likelihood of the illness recurring or other illness arising;
 - Monitor's business needs;
 - the impact of the absence on your colleagues;
 - your length of service;
 - the possibility of alternative employment for you;
 - the assistance Monitor can offer you in order to facilitate a return to work; and
 - the various options for ending your employment e.g. ill health retirement.

You will be informed of the meeting in advance. You may bring any information (medical or otherwise) which may be of assistance in deciding the appropriate course of action. You have the right to be accompanied by a colleague or trade union representative at any meeting where your dismissal is being contemplated. HR will inform you as to what you need to do to exercise this right and the rights of your companion when attending the meeting.

After the meeting, Monitor will write to you to set out its decision and the reasons for it. If the decision is to dismiss, this must be taken and approved by a member of Monitor's executive team.

If you are unhappy with the outcome, you may appeal the decision and you will be informed as to the procedures at the relevant time. The decision on appeal is

final and there is no further right of appeal within Monitor.

11.0 Returning to Work

Monitor is committed to managing absence with a view to getting its employees back to work as soon as possible. Monitor will therefore aim to provide you with any appropriate assistance you may require including by way of reasonable adjustments, phased return or redeployment and will consider any suggestions made by your GP as expressed in a Fit Note. A flexible return to work may be available to you. Please see Monitor's Work Life Balance Policy for more information about flexible working.

Your line manager will meet with you on each occasion after a period of absence. In addition, you may be asked to attend a formal return-to-work interview with HR if your absence has been lengthy. A return-to-work interview gives us the opportunity to confirm the correct reason for and number of days of your absence. It also gives you the opportunity to raise any concerns or questions you may have on your return to work, and to bring any matters that you consider relevant to Monitor's attention.

Queries

Any queries relating to this policy should be addressed to the Director of Human Resources and Corporate Services.

This policy is for guidance only and does not form part of your contract of employment. It has been in operation since August 2004 and was last updated in September 2011.

DECLARATION:

I have read and understood Monitor's Attendance and Absence Policy and agree to abide by its principles.

Signature.....

Date.....

Print Name.....

PLEASE RETURN TO HUMAN RESOURCES