**INSERT LOGO**

**Absence Management Policy and Procedure**

**Status of Policy**: Non-contractual (other than entitlement to sick pay which is a contractual term)

**Policy applies to:** Employees of the PCC of [Insert Name of Parish]

**Review Date:** INSERT

1. **Introduction**

The intention of this policy is to set reasonable standards of attendance, whilst recognising the health and wellbeing needs of employees, and to apply a process which will seek to minimise employee sickness absence levels within a supportive employment environment.

It is important that a consistent approach is adopted and a balance struck between providing support to the employee and recognising individual circumstances whilst ultimately securing their return to work and improving attendance generally.  The PCC of [Insert Name of Parish] (hereafter referred to as the PCC) is reasonable and sensitive in cases of sickness absence, but also conscious of the fact that poor attendance at work can contribute to reduced efficiency and can disrupt the quality of service and team spirit.

**2. Purpose**

This policy sets out the PCC’s approach to managing sickness absence and the key principles and procedure to be applied so that the following aims are met:

* the promotion of employees’ health, safety and welfare;
* the efficient use of resources;
* the identification of changes necessary in working practices or environment;
* the compliance with relevant employment legislation e.g. sections of the Equality Act 2010 relating to disability, Employment Statutory Code of Practice;
* to support full attendance by staff who are fit to work;
* to set out the process to follow when staff hit the agreed trigger points for sickness absence, and support Managers to manage sickness absence effectively.

**3**. **Reporting sickness absence**

All employees have a responsibility to attend work regularly and to take reasonable steps to maintain a lifestyle which allows them to fulfil their duties under their contract of employment. However, it is recognised that staff may need to be absent through illness on occasion. Where this occurs, the following process should be followed:

A member of staff, who is ill and unable to attend work, will need to telephone their line manager as soon as possible, and in any event, no later than [insert requirement e.g. 9.30 a.m. on the first day of sickness absence], to let the [insert –e.g. manager] know:

* that they are unwell, and unable to attend work
* the nature of their illness (e.g. back pain, flu symptoms etc.) Simply saying “sick” or “unwell” does not provide enough information for the manager to be able to appropriately support the member of staff.
* how long they anticipate that they may need to be away (or if this is unknown, when they will call again with further information)
* whether, and when, they expect to see a doctor

In certain circumstances (such as where an employee has been ill in the night and wishes to sleep at the time when they would be expected to call) a text message sent by an employee to [insert e.g. their manager] will be sufficient to advise that they will not be in work due to ill health. However, in such situations a text message must be received prior to the start of the working day and the employee must also call [insert e.g. their manager] providing the information cited in the bullet points above by the end of the working day.

If the line manager is not available then the member of staff should contact [insert e.g. their Manager’s nominated deputy, or in their absence the most senior Manager] who will advise the [insert e.g. line manager]. [Insert e.g. The line manager] or another appropriate person will call the member of staff back to talk to them and to offer support while they are unwell. The [nsert e.g. manager] will also agree with the member of staff when they will next speak together so that the member of staff can update the [insert e.g. manager] on how they are, and any advice their doctor has given them.

It is essential that the member of staff calls to advise that they are unwell and will not be at work. The PCC has a duty of care to ensure the wellbeing and safety of staff. If a member of staff does not call in then the [insert e.g.. line manager] (or another appropriate person, if the [insert e.g. line manager] is not available) will attempt to make contact with the employee and may need to contact the identified next-of-kin to make sure that the employee is safe.

In exceptional circumstances (e.g. when hospitalised) an employee may nominate someone else to make contact with their [insert e.g. line manager].

**4. Keeping in Touch**

Employees are required to maintain contact with their [insert e.g. line manager] during any period of absence. Furthermore, in order to ensure the appropriate support is provided to employees during periods of absence managers are responsible for maintaining regular contact with employees.

As each sickness absence cases differs it is not appropriate to be prescriptive about how often contact should be made. However, as a guide, it is anticipated that, when sickness absence exceeds 3 days that employees will contact their manager on a weekly basis. Discussions about arrangements for keeping in touch should be held on the first day of absence when an employee reports in.

If the employee knows their date of return to work, they must inform their line manager and confirm the date of return prior to returning to work. If the employee is able to return to work sooner than previously indicated, then they should obtain a ‘fit note’ from their Doctor confirming the date from which they are fit to work and inform their manager as soon as possible.

Conversely, if an employee is unable to return to work as expected, they should inform their manager, and send the manager a new fit note from their doctor.

**5. Certification of sickness**

Appropriate certification should be provided to cover the entire sickness absence period, as follows:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Length of Absence** | **Type of Certification** | **When to submit** | **Who to submit to** | **Location** |
| 7 Calendar Days or fewer | Self- Certificate | As soon as is reasonably practicable or immediately on return to duty | e.g. Immediate Line Manager | Appendix 1 |
| More than 7 Calendar Days | Medical or GP Certificate | As soon as reasonably practicable and within 72 hours of expiry date of last certificate. | e.g. Immediate Line Manager | From the GP practice or hospital |

* In exceptional circumstances, employees may be required to produce a medical certificate before the eighth day of sickness absence. If this is the case, any charge for obtaining a certificate will be reimbursed by the PCC .
* A medical certificate should be dated from when the doctor saw the employee or had a telephone consultation with them, **or** considered a report from another doctor or registered healthcare professional. The date on the certificate should not be earlier than this. Backdated medical certificates will not be accepted as valid, except where there are extreme mitigating circumstances which meant that the employee was unable to obtain a certificate.

**6.  Sickness Pay**

Sick pay entitlements are as set out individual employment contracts and are dependent on an employee’s start date with [name of Church}

Insert details of sick pay as appropriate – for example DBF applies the following:

For employees appointed to their current role **prior** to 1 December 2009 (Protected element)

During absence through sickness or injury, employees will be entitled to receive their normal pay (inclusive of statutory sick pay, if any) for three working months in any twelve-month period. Thereafter, there is a permanent health insurance scheme which, subject to medical certificate and Insurance Company acceptance will provide half pay for up to three years.

For employees appointed to their current role **after** 1 December 2009

First 12 months of employment 1 month’s full pay and 1 month’s half pay

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Upon completion of 12 months | 3 months’ full pay and 3 months’ half pay |

After exhausting any entitlement to sick pay, employees will enter a no-pay situation.

**7. The ‘Return to Work’ Interview**

Following each absence from work due to sickness, the employee should be seen by his/her manager and a return to work form completed (Appendix 2).   This is an essential part of absence management and can be as informal or as formal as the circumstances dictate.  This return to work discussion will allow managers to gather all the relevant facts on the individual’s sickness absence; ascertain what support may be needed and ensure the individual is aware of the impact of their absence. It is important that proper preparation is made and that the interview is conducted fairly and consistently. The return to work meeting will always include:

* **Welcome Back** - It is always appropriate to welcome an employee back to work following any period of absence.  This will give the manager an opportunity to tell individuals that they were missed and that the PCC values their work and their contribution to the Church.
* **Enquire About Health** - the line manager has a duty of care to ensure that employees are fit to work and should gently explore the reason for absence and whether the absence is work related.  (It should be recognised that sickness absence can sometimes be a disguise for other things i.e. unhappy in job, harassment, personal difficulties etc.).  Identify what steps the individual has taken to get well and, if necessary, what additional support he/she might need to ensure that the health problem has been resolved. It is particularly important to show care and concern during this exploratory stage of the interview and assurance should be provided as necessary.
* **Consequences and Observations** – The employee should be advised whether they have triggered the short term absence process (section 3 under ‘Absence Procedure’’). If relevant the manager should also bring to the individual’s attention any apparent patterns of absence. The manager will need to establish whether the employee should then be invited to a formal absence meeting, and the possible courses of future action which could be taken within the policy should be explained ((section 3 under ‘Absence Procedure’’).

If there is sufficient cause for concern it may be necessary to explore the possibility of obtaining medical advice from occupational health (advice can be given via the Diocese HR department) in order to ensure the individual’s wellbeing and fitness to attend work. The line manager should use this opportunity to explore ways in which they can help the employee to improve their health and attendance.

**8. Health appointments during work time**

There is no automatic right to paid time off for pre-planned appointments such as for the doctor, dentist or hospital. Employees are asked to arrange these appointments outside working hours, wherever possible. Where this is not possible the member of staff will need to speak to their manager, who has the discretion to decide how to address this - for example staff may be able to make the time up or use time owed in lieu as an alternative to booking leave or taking unpaid time off.

The exceptions to this are:

(a) Antenatal appointments (see the PCC’s Maternity Policy) which confirms that agreed time off to attend ante-natal appointments will be on full pay and employees will not be required to make up the time when they are not at work. In addition, partners of pregnant women are also entitled to unpaid time off to attend up to two ante-natal appointments.

(b) Adoption appointments (see the PCC’s Adoption Policy) - the primary adopter will be able to take paid time off for up to 5 adoption appointments. The secondary adopter will be entitled to take unpaid time off for up to 2 appointments.

1. **Unauthorised Absence**

Failure to follow the reporting procedure (section 3) and/or failure to provide appropriate certification (section 5) to cover the entire period of absence may lead to the absence being classed as unauthorised, pay being suspended and disciplinary action being taken in line with the PCC’s Disciplinary policy.

**10. Sickness and Annual Leave**

If an employee is sick during a period of annual leave the holiday entitlement will only be reimbursed (i.e. reclassified as sick leave, leaving the planned annual leave to be taken at a different time) upon production of a medical ‘fit note’ certificate to cover the period of sickness. Employees will not be similarly reimbursed if they are sick during Bank Holidays.

Employees will continue to accrue annual leave during sickness leave at the normal rate e.g. 28 days p.a. (pro rata for part time staff). There is no entitlement to accrue Bank Holiday hours during periods of sick leave. Where staff have not been able to take their full leave entitlement in any given leave year due to long term sickness absence, they are entitled to carry forward a maximum of 20 days' leave to be taken during the next leave year. No payment will be made for any untaken leave.

If an employee wishes to take annual leave during a period of long term sickness, they must request this by the normal mechanisms for requesting annual leave.

Leave carried forward to a subsequent leave year should be taken as soon as possible and could be used to additionally support a phased return to work.

1. **Working Whilst Sick**

All employees are reminded that whilst absent from work, they should not engage in any other form of employment without notifying their Line Manager. Dependent upon the reason for illness, it may be that certain work could be undertaken, however, the PCC would not expect work to be undertaken that is similar in nature to that for which they are ordinarily employed. Engaging in paid work of such a nature, without permission, could be considered a fraudulent act and may be subject to investigation and result in disciplinary, civil or criminal proceedings.

1. **Cosmetic Procedures**

Employees who choose to undergo cosmetic procedures, where there is no medical reason for the procedure, must take annual leave or unpaid leave for their absence. Any requests for annual leave or unpaid leave must be made in accordance with the normal protocols.

**13. Occupational Health**

The line manager may refer a member of staff to the Occupational Health Service so that the manager and employee can get expert advice on how an employee can best be helped to manage any sickness episode(s). Where a referral is made, the manager will need to make sure that they are asking questions which will help them to make decisions about how to support the member of staff to return to work safely and to be able to sustain their attendance. Consideration can be given to asking some or all of the following questions (depending on the individual circumstances):

* *In your opinion, is XXX’s condition an underlying one which might, or should, be considered to be a disability under the terms of the Equality Act 2010.*
* *Do you anticipate that XXX will be fully medically fit to carry out the full range of his/her duties outlined in the job description by his/her due return date of XXX?  If not, when do you anticipate that s/he will be fully fit to do so?*
* *Are there any reasonable adjustments to the existing work tasks, patterns or environment which should to be considered and which would help facilitate XXX’s safe and full return to work and to sustain regular attendance?   For example, would a reduction in hours, or a variation to the working pattern, or a change of working base constitute a reasonable adjustment and support XXX in her/his safe return to work.*
* *If so, are these suggested reasonable adjustments short- or long-term?  (Please give an indication of the timescales).*
* *Is there further requirement for medical support or intervention?*
* *Is XXX’s health problem likely to recur and/or affect future attendance?*
* *If you do not consider that XXX will be fit to carry out the full range of his/her duties within a reasonable time frame (the manager may wish to cite a timeframe) then are there other duties or responsibilities which s/he would be fit to undertake, and if so, what are these?*
* *Are there any other steps which we could consider, at the current time, to support XXX.*

**14. Counselling [insert this section where this is appropriate and available]**

The [organisation] also operates the provision of a Counselling Service through an external provider. This service is available to support employees who would benefit from the service. The manager can be contacted for further information on this.

**15. Recording and Monitoring**

To ensure that this guidance for managing absence is applied effectively, it is essential that sound monitoring procedures exist. It is a manager’s responsibility to ensure that all sickness information is forwarded to the person who manages HR records This should include the number of days absent, the reason for the absence and the correct certification of absence (section 5). It is the responsibility of the line manager to establish at the ‘return to work’ interview (section 7) if the current period of absence triggers the short term absence process.  Whilst it is important to adopt a consistent approach, each case must be considered individually, depending on the circumstances, before any action is taken.

**16. Entitlement to Representation**

All employees are entitled to be represented by a trade union representative, or accompanied by a friend or colleague not acting in a legal capacity, during any formal stage meeting (see Managing Absence Procedure section 3 and 5).

This must be made clear to the employee in each letter inviting him/her to attend any formal meeting called by the manager.

It is the employee’s responsibility to organise this representation and meetings will not be re-arranged more than once due to non-representation.

**Managing Absence Procedure**

**[Please note the triggers below are those applied by DBF – other organisations may have different triggers which should be inserted below, as appropriate]**

1. **Introduction**

This procedure outlines the process to be followed in cases of both short and long-term sickness absence, and details the trigger points arising from sickness absence which may result in action under the PCC’s Absence Management Policy and Procedure.

It is important to remember, that where a member of staff “triggers” a stage under this policy because of a pattern of ill health, that this is not in any way considered to be the fault of the individual or a disciplinary issue – rather it is the case that, because of ill health the member of staff is unable to meet their contract. Therefore, any action taken is based on capability due to ill health.

1. **Regular Attendance**

An employee is considered to be attending regularly in terms of short-term absence if, in a 12-month rolling period from the start date of the final absence, he/she has had fewer than 4 episodes of sickness, and has a Bradford Factor (see below) score of below 150.

Short term sickness is classified as any sickness episode of less than 4 weeks in duration.

1. **Managing Short Term Absence**

Trigger points giving rise to action under the Absence Management Policy can be met either through:

1. reaching a specific number of absence episodes, **or**
2. a specific Bradford Factor Score (see 3.2)

whichever comes first.

Managers will review whether an employee has triggered the Absence Policy at each return to work interview.

**3.1 Calculating a Bradford Score**

When calculating a Bradford score, two things need to be measured:

* The number of spells of sickness absence which a person has taken in a rolling 12 month period. This will include all spells of sickness in that period whether long (4 weeks or more) or short term (fewer than 4 weeks).
* The number of days/hours of sickness absence which a person has taken in a rolling 12 month period. This should only include the days/hours of short-term absence (e.g. a period of absence of fewer than 4 weeks).

**For example,** if a person has been on sick leave four times between 30 April 2016 and 29 April 2017, in the following pattern:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date of Sickness** | **Diagnosis** | **For purpose of Bradford Score - number of spells in rolling 12 month period** | **For purpose of Bradford Score – number of days/hours in rolling 12 month period** |
| 2 May – 31 May | Operation and recovery (30 days) | 1 | 0 (this is long term sickness of over 4 weeks so it is not included for Bradford score) |
| 5 & 6 July | Cold (2 days) | 2 | 2 days (14 hours) |
| 3 & 4 September | Stomach bug (2 days) | 3 | 4 days (28 hours) |
| 23 – 28 March | Virus (6 days) | 4 | 10 days (70 hours) |

The Bradford Score is then calculated over a rolling 12 months using the following formula:

**S x S x D**

S = number of **spells** of absence in a rolling 52 weeks taken by an individual

D = D is the total number of **days** of absence over a rolling 52 weeks taken by an individual NB this may also be calculated in **hours** by dividing the number of hours absence in a rolling 52 week period, by 7 (standard working day). Where staff don’t work a standard 7 hour day, 5 days a week, it is recommended that the managers calculate the score in hours.

**For example** – the member of staff who has been on sick leave four times between 30 April 2016 and 30 April 2017, in the pattern described above would have their Bradford score calculated like this:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date of Sickness** | **Diagnosis** | **Cumulative number of spells in rolling 12 month period** | **Cumulative number of days/hours in rolling 12 month period** | **Bradford Score** |
| 2 May – 31 May | Operation and recovery (30 days) | 1 | 0 (this is long term sickness of over 4 weeks so it is not included for Bradford score) | 1 x 1 x 0 = 0 |
| 5 & 6 July | Cold (2 days) | 2 | 2 days (14 hours) | 2 x 2 x 2 = 8 |
| 4 & 5 September | Stomach bug (2 days) | 3 | 4 days (28 hours) | 3 x 3 x 4 = 36 |
| 23 – 28 March | Virus (6 days) | 4 | 10 days (70 hours) | 4 x 4 x 10 = 160 |

Therefore, this person’s Bradford score, when they returned from sickness absence on 29March would be 160:

4 (spells) x 4 (spells) x 10 (days) = 160

**3.2 Trigger Points**

The number of absences and the Bradford Factor score are calculated over a rolling 12 months taking into account the cumulative total of number of days/hours absent and the cumulative total number of episodes.

The table below describes the trigger points for an employee working full-time. Part time workers’ points must be pro-rated. (Please refer to the Appendix 3 in order to calculate these scores for part-time staff).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Trigger | Policy stage |
| Fewer than 150 Bradford Factor points and fewer than 4 absences in a rolling 12 months | Regular Attender |
| 150 or more Bradford Factor points or 4 absences in a rolling 12 months | Informal Improvement Plan |
| 350 or more Bradford Factor points or 2 further absences within 6 months of the informal improvement plan | Stage 1 Improvement Plan |
| 500 or more Bradford Factor points or 2 further absences within 6 months of the Stage 1 improvement plan | Stage 2 Improvement Plan |
| 700 or more Bradford Factor points or 4 further absences within 12 months of the Stage 2 improvement plan | Stage 3 Dismissal Hearing |

**NB** Where formal action is triggered an employee will be invited to a formal meeting. Employees who repeat any of the stages more than once may be escalated through the stages.

**For example,** the member of staff, in the example at 3.1. above, who has been on sick leave four times in a 12 month period, and has a Bradford Score of 160 would need to be advised, when s/he met with her manager on her/his return to work on 29 March that s/he had triggered under the Policy and an Informal Improvement Plan would be set.

**3.3 Exceptions to the trigger points**

While sickness absence needs to be managed consistently, managers do have some discretion about the application of trigger points.

**For example**, if a member of staff has had two episodes of sickness in quick succession the manager may give consideration to whether these episodes of sickness should be considered as related and counted - for the purposes of triggering formal target setting - as one episode.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date of Sickness** | **Diagnosis** | **Cumulative number of spells in rolling 12 month period** | **Cumulative number of days/hours in rolling 12 month period** | **Bradford Score** |
| 24 August | Migraine (1 day) | 1 | 1 day (7 hours) | 1 x 1 x 1 = 1 |
| 4 & 5 September | Cold (2 days) | 2 | 3 days (21 hours) | 2 x 2 x 3 = 12 |
| 23 – 28 March | Virus (6 days) | 3 | 9 days (63 hours) | 3 x 3 x 9 = 81 |
| 30 March | Virus (1 day) | 4 | 10 days (70 hours) | 4 x 4 x 10 160 |

In this example, the member of staff would trigger under the policy, either through having reached 160 Bradford points or 4 episodes of absence in a rolling 12 month period. However, the manager might take a pragmatic view that the sickness on 30 March was almost certainly linked to the period of viral illness that had immediately preceded it, and that perhaps the member of staff had tried to come back to work before they were fully fit. Therefore, the manager might decide to count the illnesses of 23 – 28 March and of 30 March as a single spell of 7 days duration for the purpose of the absence management policy triggers only. This would mean that the employee could be considered as having 3 not 4 episodes of absence in the preceding 12 month period and the Bradford Calculation would be:

3 (spells) x 3 (spells) x 10 (days) = 90.

The sickness episodes should still be recorded as separate episodes for the purposes of **sick pay**. For additional guidance on the use of discretion see section 18.

Where a manager has concerns about sickness, consideration should also be given to whether any sickness absence is due to a disability or other underlying health condition.  An Occupational Health referral will be helpful in supporting and managing staff with underlying health conditions and disabilities. A reasonable adjustment may be recommended, which could include an adjustment to the trigger point/Bradford score which would give rise to action under the policy.

**3.4 Informal Improvement Plan**

An informal meeting represents the first step of supporting staff with short term absence issues. It takes place when an employee has reached a 4th episode of absence, and/or 150 Bradford Factor points, in a rolling 12-month period.

The purpose of the informal meeting is to agree an Improvement Plan which encourages and supports the individual to return to being a regular attender.

The meeting should be held as soon as possible after the employee’s return and no later than 7 calendar days after the member of staff has returned to work.

Staff do not need to be **formally** invited to an Informal Improvement Plan meeting. Managers should document the meeting using the ‘Informal Improvement Plan check list’ (Appendix 4) and give a copy of it to the employee. It is not necessary to hold a ‘Return to work discussion’ as well.

**3.5 Stage 1 Formal Improvement Plan**

Staff will reach formal Stage 1 if they fail the informal improvement plan by having two absences, regardless of duration, or a Bradford Factor score of 350 or more within six months of the informal improvement plan being set.

A copy of the PCC’s Absence Management Policy should be made available to staff prior to the meeting. At this stage consideration should be given as to whether occupational health advice is needed.

The Manager should arrange a formal sickness meeting with the employee as soon as reasonably possible (template letter at Appendix 5). The purpose of the meeting is to discuss how the employee can achieve an acceptable level of attendance.

The purpose of the Stage 1 meeting is to agree a formal Improvement Plan which encourages and supports the individual to return to being a regular attender and identifies methods of supporting the individual to have below 500 Bradford Factor points and fewer than 2 further absences within the 6 months following the Stage 1 meeting. If this plan is met, the employee will return to being a regular attender at the end of the 6 month period.

The outcome of the meeting should be confirmed to the employee in writing (Appendix 6).

**NB** Employees who repeat any of the stages more than once may be escalated through the stages.

**3.6 Stage 2 Formal Improvement Plan**

If an employee fails the Stage 1 formal plan by having a further 2 episodes of absence, regardless of length, in a 6 month period from the date the Stage 1 formal improvement plan commenced, or reaches 500 Bradford Factor points, they will move to Stage 2 of the formal process.

The Manager should arrange a formal sickness meeting with the employee as soon as reasonably possible (see template letter at Appendix 7). The purpose of the meeting is to advise the employee that they have failed to achieve their attendance targets, and to discuss how the employee can achieve an acceptable level of attendance.

Consideration should be given as to whether occupational health advice is needed. If Occupational Health have identified that there is an underlying health condition causing the short term recurrent absences, adjustments should be considered and discussed.

The improvement plan will involve identifying methods of supporting the individual to have fewer than 700 Bradford Factor points and fewer than 4 further absences within 12 months following the Stage 2 meeting. If this plan is met, the employee will return to being a regular attender at the end of the 12 month period.

The outcome of the meeting should be confirmed to the employee in writing (Appendix 8).

**NB** Employees who repeat any of the stages more than once may be escalated through the stages

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* 1. **Stage 3 Review meeting**

Staff will reach formal Stage 3 if they fail the Stage 2 formal improvement plan. This will mean that they have a Bradford factor score of 700 points or more or a further 4 absences of absence within 12 months following the Stage 2 meeting.

As soon as the employee returns from the absence that triggers Stage 3, the employee should be told that they are on the final stage of the policy and that a hearing will be arranged that may result in their dismissal on the basis of capability due to health.

A member of the [insert e.g. Senior Management Team] will invite the employee to the meeting (Appendix 9) and will chair the stage 3 meeting, with support from [insert appropriate person] a third panel member may also be present. The line manager, will present a management case detailing:

• The sickness absence history of the employee.

• The meetings held with the employee.  
• Advice received from Occupational Health.

The format of this meeting is detailed in Appendix 10.

A hearing may be re-arranged once if the employee or their representative is unable to attend. At the second attempt, the hearing will take place and a decision will be made in their absence unless there are extenuating circumstances. With the approval of the Chair of the panel, a different manager may present the case to avoid delay in hearing the case.

The employee is able to be represented in the meeting by a trade union representative, colleague or friend not acting in a legal capacity.

If the Occupational Health referral reveals there is an underlying health condition causing the short term recurrent absences, adjustments should be considered and discussed.

If the panel concludes that the employee has been appropriately supported and the process has been managed fairly, that the required level of attendance is reasonable and achievable and that the employee has been given all reasonable opportunity to improve attendance to an acceptable standard but has failed to do so, they will confirm that the employee’s employment has been terminated with the appropriate notice for failure to meet an acceptable level of attendance. Employees will have the right of appeal against any dismissal. Any appeal will be held in line with the PCC’s Appeal Policy.

The main details discussed during the meeting and its outcome will be confirmed in writing to the employee (Appendix 11).

**3.8 Short Term Absence – Additional Information**

If an individual’s Bradford score is high enough to meet another stage of the policy that is not sequential to the stage already reached, Managers should not miss stages but move the employee to the next trigger point, if applicable.

If a member of staff changes their hours, for example to work less in an effort to improve their health, then the Bradford Factor triggers should be adapted to reflect the changes in hours. For example, if the working hours have reduced by 20%, then the Bradford Factor triggers should reflect this (see the Bradford Factor score calculations for part-time staff -Appendix 3)

**3.9 Percentage attendance calculation and patterns of absence**

The purpose of calculating percentage attendance is to establish whether the individual has a level of absence that warrants escalation to a higher stage of the Absence policy, up to and including stage 3. This approach may be used where a member of staff has a high level of absence which, because of its pattern over a period of time, does not give rise to either a trigger point based on episodes alone, or to a Bradford Factor score trigger, but which is so high that the organisation cannot disregard it.

The impact of a review of percentage attendance is that the employee MAY be moved to the next stage of the policy or further in line with the following guidelines:

**• 81% to 90% attendance over the last 12 months or more, consider escalation one stage up the policy.**

**• 71% to 80% attendance over the last 12 months or more, consider escalation two stages up the policy.**

**• Less than 70% attendance over the last 12 months or more, consider escalation to stage 3 of the policy.**

Individual patterns of attendance will be reviewed as a percentage of attendance over a twelve month period. To provide a true reflection of attendance, it is recommended that absence data for the preceding 36 months is reviewed.

Managers may also identify employees who have a pattern of absence, for example at the beginning and end of the week such as Monday/ Friday, regular half days, being absent due to sickness before or after annual leave or regular absence at Christmas.

Percentage attendance calculations may be completed by the Line Manager.

It is important to understand that great care must be exercised to ensure that this, like any other, managing absence procedure does not have the effect of being unreasonable or discriminating against staff with a disability. For example, if an employee has a low percentage attendance, due to a serious underlying illness, consideration may be given to reviewing actual percentage attendance against adjusted percentage attendance guidelines before consideration is given to moving an employee to the next stage of the policy.

Prior to completing the Percentage Attendance report the individual should be informed by their Line Manager that the report is being completed and the reason why it is being completed.

If action is taken, then the employee should receive a copy of the percentage attendance report. If individuals have no additional action taken, then the percentage attendance report will be kept on the individual’s personnel file in [insert appropriate location]. Individuals can ask to have a copy if they wish to.

* 1. **Part-day absence**

If a member of staff works 50% or more of their contracted hours on a specific day but cannot work the full day due to illness, then this absence will not be counted for trigger point/Bradford Factor score.

If an employee works less than 50% of their contracted hours on a specific day but cannot work the full day due to illness, they will be considered absent from work due to sickness, and this absence will be counted for trigger point/Bradford score.

Part-day absence of more than 50% should be recorded on the individual absence log, and the weekly absence return and the normal return to work processes should be applied on the employee’s return.

If an employee’s absence record shows a pattern of part-day absence, Managers will need to raise this as a concern during the return to work discussions. Where a pattern of part-day sickness absence is identified this should be discussed with the individual and if necessary, they should be referred to Occupational Health for advice. The advice requested should include whether there is, or is not, an underlying health cause and prospects for improvement. Continued absence of this kind may result in the employee being warned and formally escalated through the policy.

1. **Incidents of sickness absence which can warrant the use of discretion**

Managers may exercise their discretion to discount certain periods of absence towards triggers in the short term sickness process, where it is reasonable in all the circumstances to do so. Examples of where management discretion might be employed include:

* Where an employee (and his/her manager) know in advance that a number of incidences will occur due to, for example, a series of out-patient appointments/planned appointments/ planned surgery and recovery time. In this case the manager should still record the absences for sick pay purposes, but may decide not to include them for trigger points/Bradford Factor score.
* Where an employee is absent immediately following an injury whilst at work.
* Pregnancy related absence (pregnancy related absence must be discounted for purposes of the short term absence process, but must be recorded as absence on all absence records for sick pay purposes).
* Where an underlying health condition has been identified and is currently being investigated, Managers need to ensure staff feel supported during this period of uncertainty and any reasonable adjustments are made.
* Sickness following a bereavement or absence due to bereavement.  Managers should aim to be consistent in their decisions to use discretion, as well as open, honest and fair with individuals..

1. **Long Term Sickness**

Long term sickness absence is defined as a period of continuous absence which lasts for a period of 4 weeks or more. Regular contact should be maintained with an employee during prolonged periods of sickness absence to make sure that the member of staff is fully supported and still feels part of the team.

Depending on the circumstances of the long-term illness, the manager will need to consider the following:

* Where the sickness absence has a specific cause which means that the absence will be for a clearly defined period of time, e.g. a broken wrist, then the manager will maintain regular contact with the member of staff but will not necessarily need to refer them to Occupational Health – unless the member of staff asks to be referred or some expert advice is needed about whether any part of their role will need to be adjusted for a time when they return.
* Where the sickness absence is for a less clearly defined period of time and/or the health condition is more complex, then the line manager should consider referring the member of staff to Occupational Health for advice and also arrange to meet with the member of staff to discuss their health and to provide support. NB in these circumstances, it is not necessary to wait until four weeks has passed before inviting an employee to a meeting or making an Occupational Health referral.

**5.1 Meeting with a member of staff on long-term sickness absence**

A manager may find that s/he needs to meet once, or several times with a member of their team who is on long-term sick leave.

Ahead of any meeting the member of staff should be written to, inviting them to meet, and outlining the key points which will be discussed. These are formal meetings and therefore it is important to remember that the member of staff should be told that that they have a right to be represented by a work colleague or trade union representative or a friend not acting in a legal capacity. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss:

* How the member of staff is feeling.
* What advice has been received about how long they are likely to need to refrain from work.
* Whether there are any steps that can be taken to support a return to work in a timely and safe way (e.g. adjustment of hours or duties).
* Any support which can be offered to the member of staff.
* Any advice received or to be sought from Occupational Health, the GP and/or specialist consultant.

Managers should note that many cases of long term sickness absence may well relate to disabilities as defined by the Equality Act 2010. In any case, the PCC will meet the standards of the Act, in order that the situation is managed consistently and fairly.

If it becomes clear that an employee will not be able to return to their substantive post within the foreseeable future then the following options should be explored – this often happens at a later meeting, rather than at the first one – but this will depend on the circumstances of the case:

* + Reasonable adjustments either temporary or permanent (see sections 5.5 & 5.6).
  + Redeployment (where there is a suitable vacant position- see section 5.7).
  + The possibility of retirement on ill-health grounds (see section 5.8).
  + Termination of contract (see section 159).

More than one of the above options can be explored at the same time.

At every stage, the line manager should outline what the next steps are. At each meeting, actions, timescales and when to meet again should be decided and confirmed in writing.

**5.2 If an employee is too unwell to attend meetings**

If, due to their illness, an employee is unable to attend meetings held under this policy, then the line manager should consider whether additional support would allow a member of staff to be able to meet – for example, by organising transport for the employee, making a home visit or holding the conversation by telephone.

If the employee is seriously ill, the line manager may have to have these discussions through the next-of-kin, representative or proceed in the employee’s absence.

**5.3 Return to work after long term absence**

Following a return to work after a long absence, the line manager will need to ensure appropriate reviews to check on an employee’s progress. The number of reviews and the timescales will depend on the employee’s needs and the reason for and length of the absence.

**5.4 Phased return to work**

Where an employee would benefit from a gradual increase in hours/duties, a phased return to work can be arranged by the manager - with advice from the Diocese, if appropriate.

The following guidelines apply to phased returns:

* The employee should be able to manage at least 50% of their contracted hours and activities at the beginning of the phased return, with the expectation that they will gradually increase to 100% by the end of the phased return to work. If a member of staff wishes to continue to work fewer hours for a while, after the phased return has ended, they may, with the agreement of their manager, use some of the annual leave accrued during their sick leave, to do this.
* Phased returns to the workplace will be paid at the individual’s normal substantive pay.
* The phased return to work must be time bound for a period of four weeks. A maximum of six weeks may be applied in exceptional circumstances.
* If an employee is not fit to return to their contracted hours by the end of the phased return period, then a permanent resolution needs to be found.
* If the employee’s health condition is likely to be covered by the Equality Act 2010, Occupational Health advice regarding temporary or permanent adjustments to both hours and duties should be sought.

**5.5 Temporary change in working conditions**

Where an employee's health would benefit from a temporary change in working conditions, for example, a change in location, change in duties or reduction in responsibilities or hours, and where this can be accommodated, the following guidelines should be applied:

* It is essential that this temporary change is communicated in writing and that a review date is set for four weeks. A temporary change should be no longer than 12 weeks.
* Any change should be by mutual agreement between the employee and his/her manager taking into account any recommendations made.
* Managers are responsible for making any reasonable adjustments.

**5.6 Permanent change in working conditions**

If there is an underlying medical condition contributing to sickness absence, the manager will need to consider whether there are reasonable adjustments that would support an employees return to work and sustain regular attendance. Examples of adjustments that could be made to the job include: changes to the physical environment and/or to the employee’s contracted hours and/or working pattern, and/or job content.

If a role is changed to such an extent that it is no longer correctly graded, then the revised job will be evaluated and the member of staff will be employed on the altered grade and salary. No pay protection would be offered in these circumstances.

Adjustments may also be recommended by Occupational Health or by the GP on the medical certificate, and the manager will need to consider if these adjustments are reasonable and practical in terms of the needs of the department, the cost, the impact on colleagues, and whether the adjustments can be made permanently or for a limited period only.

Where adjustments are made, the manager will need to inform all necessary parties, e.g. the PCC, the employee’s colleagues to ensure the department continues to support the employee with their return to work. The manager will need to ensure when informing colleagues of the reasonable adjustments, that they do not breach confidentiality (e.g. disclosing the reason for absence or underlying condition). The Manager should discuss and agree with returning members of staff what will be shared with their team members on their return to work.

**5.7 Redeployment**

If Occupational Health advise that the employee cannot continue in his/her job, then suitable alternative employment must be considered if there is a suitable vacancy within the organisation. An employee will be considered for any role that is vacant where they meet the essential criteria of the person specification. All redeployment periods will be subject to a 4 week trial period.. All correspondence must be kept on the personal file.

Where an employee is redeployed to a role with a lower salary no pay protection will be applied.

**5.8 Ill health retirement [insert this section where this is appropriate and available]**

If an employee is a member of the organisation’s pension scheme and is unable to perform their role as a result of ill health for the foreseeable future, then the employee can make an application for ill health retirement. There are two types of ill health retirement, ‘Serious Ill Health (in the case of terminal illness) and ‘Ill Health’ (when an employee is unable to work due to their health).

Any employee wishing to make an application for ill retirement should contact [insert details of pension scheme contact]

**5.9 Dismissal on the grounds of capability due to ill-health**

If Occupational Health advise that an employee cannot continue to work within the foreseeable future the employee must be informed that a panel hearing will need to be arranged to consider whether or not their employment will be terminated on the grounds of capability due to ill health in line with the Absence Policy.

**Panel Hearing**

A member of the [insert e.g. Senior Management Team] will invite the employee to the meeting (Appendix 11) and will chair the meeting, with support from [insert appropriate person] . A third panel member may also be present.

 A hearing may be re-arranged once if the employee or their representative is unable to attend. At the second attempt, the hearing will take place and a decision will be made in their absence unless there are extenuating circumstances. With the approval of the Chair of the panel, a different manager may present the case to avoid delay in hearing the case.

The employee is able to be represented in the meeting by a trade union representative, colleague or friend not acting in a legal capacity.

The line manager, will present a management case which will outline all the steps taken to date to support the member of staff in maintaining an acceptable level of attendance, the details of the member of staff’s absence, any medical advice received and whether any adjustments have been made.

The member of staff will have every opportunity to present their case and version of events – they will have the option to present their case in writing if they do not wish or are unable to attend a meeting.

After consideration of all the circumstances of the case, and the available medical evidence at the final review meeting, the panel will need to consider the appropriate outcome of the meeting. If all other reasonable options have been excluded, this may include termination of employment on the grounds of capability due to ill health.

Where such a dismissal is considered to be the appropriate option proper contractual notice must be given in writing (even if the employee is not being paid due to the expiry of sick pay).   Managers should note that if notice is given before the expiry of sick pay then the remaining element of sick pay contributes to the full period of notice pay.

If dismissed on the basis of capability due to ill health, the employee will have the right of appeal. Any appeal will be held in line with the PCC’s Appeal Policy.

The format for a hearing is detailed in Appendix 9.

* 1. **Alternative medical opinion**

Where the employee does not accept the contents of the report from the Occupational Health Service, he/she has the option of obtaining independent medical evidence, at their own cost, and presenting this to the manager, who will take this into consideration in conjunction with Occupational Health, before reaching a decision. A manager may be faced with conflicting medical reports and in these circumstances, further advice should be sought from the Occupational Health Service before a decision is made.

**6 Privacy and Data Protection Statement**

In accordance with the GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation), employees have a right to access information that XX may hold on them. This includes information regarding any HR processes undertaken (e.g. flexible working applications, grievances, disciplinary action etc), or information obtained through monitoring processes (e.g collation of information about number of days sickness absence). The way in which information about an employee will be used is outlined within the XX Privacy Notice, copies of which are available from XX.  XX is committed to being transparent about how it collects and uses personal data and to meeting its data protection obligations. To this end, XX undertakes that the employee will be made aware of any information regarding them that is gathered as part of a HR process.

As a data subject, each employee has a number of rights (outlined in the Privacy Notice).

If you would like to exercise any of these rights, please contact the XX Data Protection Officer.

**Appendix 1**

**Self Certification Form**

This form should be completed if you are off sick for periods up to **7** calendar days (including days off) and must be received by your line manager within seven days of your first day of sickness.

If your sickness continues beyond the **7th** calendar day you should also obtain a medical certificate from your Doctor and submit this to your line manager immediately.

**Basic Details**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Employee Name |  |
| Job Title/Role |  |
| Department |  |

**Absence Details**

I certify that I was unable to attend work due to sickness/ injury from …../…/…… to ……/……/…….. inclusive (including non-working days)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Please detail reasons for absence. |  | |
| **Sickness Code** (Please refer to the list on page 2 of this form) |  | |
| I can confirm that the total working days lost during this sickness absence episode was | Days | |
| Was this absence related to a workplace accident or incident? | **Yes** | **No** |
| If Yes, please confirm who this was raised with? |  | |

**Absence Notification**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Date of absence notification |  |
| Method of notification  (i.e. phone call, email, text message) |  |
| Absence notified to (Name and Title) |  |

**Declaration**

|  |
| --- |
| I hereby sign to confirm that the details provided above are true and accurate and I understand that if I knowingly provide inaccurate or false information about my absence it may lead to action being taken under the PCC Disciplinary Procedure.  Signature: ……………………………………Date: …….................. |
| Manager: Name…………………………………… Dept:………………………………………  Signature…………………………………………………………… Date…………………… |

**Sickness Absence Reasons**

(as defined by the Institute of Occupational Medicine (IOM) for the UK Health and Safety Executive (HSE)

<http://www.iom-world.org/sicknessabsence/saclist.htm>

| **Level 1 Code** | **Level 1 description (click on the link to go to the relevant level 2 code and description)** |
| --- | --- |
| 10 | [Anxiety/stress/depression/other psychiatric illnesses](http://www.iom-world.org/sicknessabsence/saclist.htm#sac10) |
| 11 | [Back Problems](http://www.iom-world.org/sicknessabsence/saclist.htm#sac11) |
| 12 | [Other musculoskeletal problems - (exclude back problems- include neck problems)](http://www.iom-world.org/sicknessabsence/saclist.htm#sac12) |
| 13 | [Cold, Cough, Flu - Influenza](http://www.iom-world.org/sicknessabsence/saclist.htm#sac13) |
| 14 | [Asthma](http://www.iom-world.org/sicknessabsence/saclist.htm#sac14) |
| 15 | [Chest & respiratory problems - (exclude nose & throat problems, asthma, cold, cough, flu)](http://www.iom-world.org/sicknessabsence/saclist.htm#sac15) |
| 16 | [Headache / migraine](http://www.iom-world.org/sicknessabsence/saclist.htm#sac16) |
| 17 | [Benign and malignant tumours, cancers](http://www.iom-world.org/sicknessabsence/saclist.htm#sac17) |
| 18 | [Blood disorders (e.g. anaemia)](http://www.iom-world.org/sicknessabsence/saclist.htm#sac18) |
| 19 | [Heart, cardiac & circulatory problems](http://www.iom-world.org/sicknessabsence/saclist.htm#sac19) |
| 20 | [Burns, poisoning, frostbite, hypothermia](http://www.iom-world.org/sicknessabsence/saclist.htm#sac20) |
| 21 | [Ear, nose, throat (ENT)](http://www.iom-world.org/sicknessabsence/saclist.htm#sac21) |
| 22 | [Dental and oral problems](http://www.iom-world.org/sicknessabsence/saclist.htm#sac22) |
| 23 | [Eye problems](http://www.iom-world.org/sicknessabsence/saclist.htm#sac23) |
| 24 | [Endocrine / glandular problems (e.g. diabetes, thyroid, metabolic problems)](http://www.iom-world.org/sicknessabsence/saclist.htm#sac24) |
| 25 | [Gastrointestinal problems (e.g. abdominal pain, gastroenteritis, vomiting, diarrhoea) - exclude dental and oral problems](http://www.iom-world.org/sicknessabsence/saclist.htm#sac25) |
| 26 | [Genitourinary & gynaecological disorders - exclude pregnancy related disorders](http://www.iom-world.org/sicknessabsence/saclist.htm#sac26) |
| 27 | [Infectious diseases](http://www.iom-world.org/sicknessabsence/saclist.htm#sac27) |
| 28 | [Injury, fracture](http://www.iom-world.org/sicknessabsence/saclist.htm#sac28) |
| 29 | [Nervous system disorders - exclude headache/migraine](http://www.iom-world.org/sicknessabsence/saclist.htm#sac29) |
| 30 | [Pregnancy related disorders](http://www.iom-world.org/sicknessabsence/saclist.htm#sac30) |
| 31 | [Skin disorders](http://www.iom-world.org/sicknessabsence/saclist.htm#sac31) |
| 32 | [Substance abuse - incl alcoholism & drug dependence](http://www.iom-world.org/sicknessabsence/saclist.htm#sac32) |
| 98 | [Other known causes (nec) - not elsewhere classified in SA scheme](http://www.iom-world.org/sicknessabsence/saclist.htm#sac98) |
| 99 | [Unknown causes / Not specified](http://www.iom-world.org/sicknessabsence/saclist.htm#sac99) |

**Appendix 2**

**Return to work Checklist/Discussion**

A return to work discussion should be completed following each episode of absence. This form is designed to act as a guide for line managers when completing return to work discussions and act as record of the return to work discussion for the line manager and employee.

**Basic Details**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Employee Name |  |
| Job Title/Role |  |
| Department |  |

**Absence Overview**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| First Day of Absence |  |
| Last Day of Absence |  |
| Type of Absence (i.e. Self-Certified / Certified/ Unauthorised) |  |
| What was the reason(s) for absence? (please note and detail) |  |
| Where there any other reasons affecting the absence (i.e. personal or domestic circumstances; work-related problems) |  |
| Is the employee fit to return to work? |  |
| Are there any support mechanisms which need to be put into place to support the employee at this time? (i.e. reasonable adjustments to role/tasks/hours) |  |
| Number of episodes and days absence in the last 6 months |  |
| Number of episodes and days absence in the last 12 months |  |
| Bradford Factor Score |  |

Discussion of Concerns

(i.e. poor attendance levels, failure to follow notification procedure, failure to follow certification procedure, impact on department, reduced standards of work)

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Checklist//Follow up Areas: (tick if appropriate)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Set up formal review meeting? |  | Self-Certificate Received? |  |
| Occupational Health? |  | Medical Certificate Received? |  |
| Action reasonable adjustments? |  | Work Related Injury? |  |
| Secondary Employment? |  | Other, please detail: |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Date of Meeting: |  |
| Manager’s Signature |  |
| Employee’s Signature |  |

**Appendix 3**

**Bradford Factor triggers for part time staff**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Contracted Hours** | **Informal Improvement Plan** | **Stage 1** | **Stage 2** | **Stage 3** |
| 35 | 150 | 350 | 500 | 700 |
| 34.5 | 148 | 345 | 493 | 690 |
| 34 | 146 | 340 | 486 | 680 |
| 33.5 | 144 | 335 | 479 | 670 |
| 33 | 141 | 330 | 471 | 660 |
| 32.5 | 139 | 325 | 464 | 650 |
| 32 | 137 | 320 | 457 | 640 |
| 31.5 | 135 | 315 | 450 | 630 |
| 31 | 133 | 310 | 443 | 620 |
| 30.5 | 131 | 305 | 436 | 610 |
| 30 | 129 | 300 | 429 | 600 |
| 29.5 | 126 | 295 | 421 | 590 |
| 29 | 124 | 290 | 414 | 580 |
| 28.5 | 122 | 285 | 407 | 570 |
| 28 | 120 | 280 | 400 | 560 |
| 27.5 | 118 | 275 | 393 | 550 |
| 27 | 116 | 270 | 386 | 540 |
| 26.5 | 114 | 265 | 379 | 530 |
| 26 | 111 | 260 | 371 | 520 |
| 25.5 | 109 | 255 | 364 | 510 |
| 25 | 107 | 250 | 357 | 500 |
| 24.5 | 105 | 245 | 350 | 490 |
| 24 | 103 | 240 | 343 | 480 |
| 23.5 | 101 | 235 | 336 | 470 |
| 23 | 99 | 230 | 329 | 460 |
| 22.5 | 96 | 225 | 321 | 450 |
| 22 | 94 | 220 | 314 | 440 |
| 21.5 | 92 | 215 | 307 | 430 |
| 21 | 90 | 210 | 300 | 420 |
| 20.5 | 88 | 205 | 293 | 410 |
| 20 | 86 | 200 | 286 | 400 |
| 19.5 | 84 | 195 | 279 | 390 |
| 19 | 81 | 190 | 271 | 380 |
| 18.5 | 79 | 185 | 264 | 370 |
| 18 | 77 | 180 | 257 | 360 |
| 17.5 | 75 | 175 | 250 | 350 |
| 17 | 73 | 170 | 243 | 340 |
| 16.5 | 71 | 165 | 236 | 330 |
| 16 | 69 | 160 | 229 | 320 |
| 15.5 | 66 | 155 | 221 | 310 |
| 15 | 64 | 150 | 214 | 300 |
| 14.5 | 62 | 145 | 207 | 290 |
| 14 | 60 | 140 | 200 | 280 |
| 13.5 | 58 | 135 | 193 | 270 |
| 13 | 56 | 130 | 186 | 260 |
| 12.5 | 54 | 125 | 179 | 250 |
| 12 | 51 | 120 | 171 | 240 |
| 11.5 | 49 | 115 | 164 | 230 |
| 11 | 47 | 110 | 157 | 220 |
| 10.5 | 45 | 105 | 150 | 210 |
| 10 | 43 | 100 | 143 | 200 |
| 9.5 | 41 | 95 | 136 | 190 |
| 9 | 39 | 90 | 129 | 180 |
| 8.5 | 36 | 85 | 121 | 170 |
| 8 | 34 | 80 | 114 | 160 |
| 7.5 | 32 | 75 | 107 | 150 |
| 7 | 30 | 70 | 100 | 140 |
| 6.5 | 28 | 65 | 93 | 130 |
| 6 | 26 | 60 | 86 | 120 |
| 5.5 | 24 | 55 | 79 | 110 |
| 5 | 21 | 50 | 71 | 100 |
| 4.5 | 19 | 45 | 64 | 90 |
| 4 | 17 | 40 | 57 | 80 |
| 3.5 | 15 | 35 | 50 | 70 |
| 3 | 13 | 30 | 43 | 60 |
| 2.5 | 11 | 25 | 36 | 50 |
| 2 | 9 | 20 | 29 | 40 |
| 1.5 | 6 | 15 | 21 | 30 |
| 1 | 4 | 10 | 14 | 20 |
| 0.5 | 2 | 5 | 7 | 10 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

**Appendix 4**

**Informal Improvement Plan Checklist**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name of employee: | Date of meeting: |
| Manager holding the meeting: |  |

|  |
| --- |
| Summary of dates of absences and reasons for absences which have led to Informal Improvement Plan: |
| Bradford Factor Score over the last rolling 12 months: |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Questions / discussion points** | **Response from employee** | |
| **Reasons for absence and support** | | |
| Looking at the last 6 -12 months, what have been the reasons for absence, and are there any patterns, links or common causes? |  | |
| The plan over the next 6 months is to:   * Have no more than 1 period of absence * To have no more than 349 Bradford Factor points over a rolling 12 months (pro rata for part time staff).   This is in order to return to being a regular attender. Are there any reasons at work or at home that will stop you achieving this? |  | |
| Is there a need for an Occupational Health referral? |  | |
| Discuss other ways to manage absence, i.e. unpaid leave, study time, parental leave etc. |  | |
| Discuss changing terms and conditions of employment, reduce hours, reduce work load, capability and nature of work. |  | |
| Is there anything else we need to be aware of? |  | |
| **Reporting of absence and documentation** | | |
| Remind employee if they need to provide a self-certificate on the 1st day of absence, and a GP note on the 8th day of absence |  | |
| **Policy and the next stages** | | |
| Explain that if the employee has less than 2 absences within 6 months, or 349 Bradford Factor points or less over a rolling 12 months (pro rata for part time staff), then they return to being a regular attender. | | (tick if done) |
| Explain that an employee will move to Stage 1 Formal if they have 2 absences or more within 6 months, or have Bradford Factor score of 350 or more in a rolling 12 months (pro rata for part time staff). | | (tick if done) |
| Confirm Bradford factor scores for next stage if individual is part time (see chart- Appendix 3): | | |

|  |
| --- |
| Any other comments / issues / actions |

Signed by Manager:

Signed by Employee:

Date:

**Appendix 5**

**Invite to ‘Stage 1’ Formal Improvement Plan letter**

Insert Employee Name

Insert Date

Dear <Employee Name>,

**Re: Invite to Stage 1 Absence Meeting**

I am writing to confirm that I would like to meet with you in order to review your sickness absence record as your level of sickness has now triggered a formal meeting in line with the PCC’s Absence Management Policy. As such a meeting has been arranged to take place, the details of which are as follows:

Date:

Time:

Location:

At this meeting, I will be discussing my concerns with you in relation to your attendance levels and the impact of this upon name of church and the department. However, this meeting will also provide you with a chance to talk about your sickness record and any health problems you may wish to tell me about. This meeting is an ideal time to bring to my attention any other factors (i.e. personal or domestic circumstances) which may be affecting your attendance levels in order that we can discuss and explore any support or actions that need to be taken in the future. I have enclosed a copy of the Absence Management Policy which provides further information in regards to the nature and potential outcomes of this meeting.

In line with the Absence Management Policy you are welcome to be supported by a trade union representative, work colleagues or friend not acting in a legal capacity and it is your responsibility to arrange this. However, should you wish to bring someone to support you please advise me of this in advance. Please note that [insert as appropriate} may also be present.

I would be grateful if upon receipt of this letter you can confirm your attendance, by contacting me on <insert number>.

If you have any questions or concerns in advance of the meeting, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

PC

Line Managers Name

**Line Managers Title**

Enc: name of church Absence Management Policy and Procedure

**Appendix 6**

**Outcome of ‘Stage 1’ Meeting letter**

Insert Employee Name

Insert Date

Dear <Employee Name>,

**Re: Outcome of Stage 1 Absence Meeting**

I write following our meeting on <insert date> in which we discussed your attendance record, which amounts to <insert number> working days lost due to sickness absence during the last 12 month rolling period and a Bradford Factor score of <insert number> over a rolling 12 month period.

The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the reasons for your absences, discuss methods of support, and to agree an improvement plan in order that you can return to being a regular attender.

During this meeting you were supported by / chose to be unrepresented.

I advised that your sickness absence has exceeded an acceptable level as outlined in the Absence Management Policy and that I was concerned by your inability to sustain a regular attendance at work.

*Summarise all discussion points from the meeting which may include some or all of the following:*

* *Any personal problems or work related problems.*
* *Disclosed underlying issues.*
* *Support offered by managers and whether accepted/declined.*
* *The need to change terms and conditions of employment as support.*
* *Feelings at the present time.*
* *Impact of absence on the department.*
* *Any advice received from Occupational Health.*

**Where Occupational Health referral is to be completed** - During this meeting, we discussed the reasons for your absence and you advised that you have <insert details of underlying health condition>. We agreed that that in line with this information a referral to Occupational Health to seek further medical advice would be helpful. Once I am in receipt of this information, we agreed to meet again to further discuss your absence record.

During this meeting I explained that I needed to see an improvement in your attendance. I stated that I realise that you can’t predict when you may be ill, however I informed you that you needed to achieve the required level of attendance. You were advised that you will remain on Stage 1 for 6 months and during this time your targets are:

* To have no more than 1 episodes of absence in the next 6 months and
* To have 499 Bradford Factor points or less (pro rata for part time employees) over a rolling 12 months.

The date of this Stage 1 meeting will expire in 6 month’s time on <insert date>. Should you meet the above plan you will return to being a regular attender.

You should be aware that if you do not meet the plan within 6 months then you will be escalated to Stage 2 of the Absence Management Policy. If you are unable to meet the target at Stage 2 then you may be dismissed on the grounds of capability – due to ill health. This is clearly a situation that we wish to avoid and I hope does not arise, but it is only fair that I am completely transparent about all possible outcomes.

I trust this accurately reflects the discussions held, however should you have any concerns with this letter or if you have any questions or are unsure about any aspect of the process then please do not hesitate to contact me <insert number>.

Yours sincerely,

Line Managers Name

**Line Managers Title**

Enc: Absence Management Policy and Procedure

**Appendix 7**

**Invite to ‘Stage 2’ meeting letter**

Insert Employee Name

Insert Date

Dear <Employee Name>,

**Re: Invite to Stage 2 Meeting**

**Where there has already been a stage 1 meeting held and targets failed:**

I write further to our meeting on <insert date> in which we discussed concerns regarding your attendance and sickness absence record. At this meeting I outlined my expectations in terms of your attendance and you were advised that your targets over the next 6 months were:

* To have no more than 1 episodes of absence in the next 6 months and
* To have 499 Bradford Factor points or less (pro rata for part time employees) over a rolling 12 months

Unfortunately, you have failed to meet this target, as a result of your absence(s) on <insert dates of absence>. Therefore, I write to invite you to a further review meeting, to be held under Stage 2 of name of church Absence Management Policy. The details of this meeting are as follows:

Date:

Time:

Location:

At this meeting, which will be held under Stage 2 of the Absence Management Policy, I will be discussing my concerns with you in relation to your attendance levels and the impact of this upon the organisation and the department. This will also be an opportunity to discuss your health condition further and explore any reasonable adjustments and other options that could be made to sustain your attendance at work. This meeting is an ideal time to bring to my attention any other factors (i.e. personal or domestic circumstances) which may be affecting your attendance levels in order that we can discuss and explore any support or actions that need to be taken in future. I have enclosed a copy of the Absence Management Policy which provides further information in regards to the nature and potential outcomes of this meeting.

In line with the Absence Management Policy you are welcome to be supported by a trade union representative, work colleagues or friend not acting in a legal capacity and it is your responsibility to arrange this. However, should you wish to bring someone to support you please advise me of this in advance. Please note that [insert as appropriate} may also be present.

I would be grateful if upon receipt of this letter you can confirm your attendance, by contacting me on <insert number>.

If you have any questions or concerns in advance of the meeting, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Line Managers Name

**Line Managers Title**

Enc: Absence Management Policy and Procedure

**Appendix 8**

**Outcome of ‘Stage 2’ Meeting letter**

Insert Employee Name

Insert Date

Dear <Employee Name>,

**Re: Outcome of Stage 2 Review Meeting**

I write following our meeting on <insert date> in which we discussed your attendance record, which amounts to <insert number> working days lost due to sickness absence during the last 6 months and a Bradford factor score of <insert number> over a rolling 12 month period. I advised that your sickness absence exceeds the targets set and that I was concerned by your inability sustain a regular attendance at work.

The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the reasons for your absences, discuss methods of support, and to agree an improvement plan in order that you can return to being a regular attender.

During this meeting you were supported by / chose to be unrepresented.

*Summarise all discussion points from the meeting which may include some or all of the following. This list is not exhaustive:*

* *Any personal problems or work related problems.*
* *Disclosed underlying issues.*
* *Support offered by managers and whether accepted/declined.*
* *The need to change terms and conditions of employment as support.*
* *Feelings at the present time.*
* *Impact of absence on the department.*
* *Any advice received from Occupational Health.*

**Where Occupational Health referral is to be completed** - During this meeting, we discussed the reasons for your absence and you advised that you have <insert details of underlying health condition>. We agreed that that in line with this information a referral to Occupational Health to seek further medical advice would be helpful. Once I am in receipt of this information, we agreed to meet again to further discuss your absence record.

During this meeting I explained that I needed to see an improvement in your attendance. I stated that I realise that you can’t predict when you may be ill, however I informed you that you needed to achieve the required level of attendance. You were advised that you will remain on Stage 2 for 12 months and during this time your targets are:

* To have no more than 3 episodes of absence in the next 12 months and
* To have 699 Bradford Factor points or less (pro rata for part time employees) over a rolling 12 months.

The date of this Stage 2 meeting will expire in 12 month’s time on <insert date>. Should you meet the above plan you will return to being a regular attender.

You should be aware that if you are unable to meet the target set then you may be dismissed on the grounds of capability – due to ill health. This is clearly a situation that we wish to avoid and I hope does not arise, but it is only fair that I am completely transparent about all possible outcomes.

I trust this accurately reflects the discussions held, however should you have any concerns with this letter or if you have any questions or are unsure about any aspect of the process then please do not hesitate to contact me <insert number>.

Yours sincerely,

Line Managers Name

**Line Managers Title**

Enc: Absence Management Policy and Procedure

**Appendix 8**

**Invite to ‘Stage 3’ meeting letter**

Insert Address Details

Insert Employee Name

Insert Date

Dear <Employee Name>,

**Re: Invite to Stage 3 Meeting**

I am writing in connection with your sickness absence record.

(*manager presenting case*), (*managers job title*), and (*other appropriate person*), (*job title*) have advised that you have reached stage 3 of the name of church Absence Management Policy and therefore I have convened a panel hearing to consider your case. I can confirm that the details of your Stage 3 meeting are as follows:

Date:

Time:

Venue:

You are entitled to be accompanied to this meeting by either a trade union representative, a workplace colleague or a friend not acting in a legal capacity and it is your responsibility to arrange this.

If you or your representative are unable to make this date and time, then I will ensure that an alternative date and time is arranged. I should however advise that if you are unable to make a second date then the hearing will take place and a decision will be made in your absence.

This hearing will be held under the terms of the name of church’s Absence Management Policy and Procedure, a copy of which is enclosed with this letter. Also enclosed is a copy of the management report.

(*name of presenting manager*) and (*name of other appropriate person*) will be attending to present the management case. I shall be accompanied on the panel by (*detail other panel members* *and their job titles*).

As part of this panel hearing, you will have the opportunity to respond to the management case. Therefore, it is advised that you prepare what you would like to present to the panel before the date of the hearing and send it to me by <insert date>. You will also have the opportunity to ask the management side questions. The panel will also have the opportunity to ask you and the management side questions.

You should be aware that if the decision of the panel is that you have reached the final stage of the short term sickness process, then you may be issued with notice to end your contract with name of church on the grounds of capability due to ill health.

I would be grateful if upon receipt of this letter you can confirm your attendance, by contacting me on <insert number>. If you have any questions or concerns in the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Managers Name

**Managers Title**

Enc: Absence Management Policy and Procedure

Management Report

**Appendix 9**

**Format for a ‘Stage 3’ meeting/Final Long Term Sickness meeting**

The hearing must be conducted impartially. The manager conducting the hearing must ensure that the employee is given every opportunity to state his or her case and that, only facts relevant to the case are considered. The conduct of the hearing will be as follows:

* Welcome and introductions.
* Confirm with the employee that they have received the letter notifying them of the hearing and the associated documentation. Also confirm if the panel received any information/evidence from the employee.
* Confirm with the employee that they understand that this hearing is being held in line with the name of church’s Absence Management Policy and advise that one potential outcome of the hearing could be dismissal due to capability as a result of ill health.
* Advise that all parties can request a comfort break/ adjournment and any requests should be directed at the Chair.
* Clarify the format of the meeting.
* The manager will outline the case, including: The nature of the attendance/ill health issue, impact of absences, the actions/support already implemented/considered, the improvements required, the medical evidence.
* The panel will ask any questions in relation to the case presented.
* The employee will be given the opportunity to ask any questions in relation to the case presented.
* The employee will then be invited to state his/her case.
* The panel will ask any questions in relation to the case presented.
* The manager will be given the opportunity to ask any questions in relation to the case presented.
* The manager to be given an opportunity to make a closing statement.
* The employee to be given an opportunity to make a closing statement.
* Ask if the manager and employee has any additional information they would like to add, not already previously raised at the hearing.
* Meeting adjourned to consider the case.
* If the panel is unable to make a decision as further information/time is required, inform the employee as to when they can expect written notification of the decision (or if further action was deemed necessary what this would entail).
* When closing the hearing, ensuring that everyone understands what is going to happen.
* Panel makes a decision.
* Advise that the outcome of the hearing will be confirmed in writing.
* If applicable employee should be offered a right of appeal and details of whom any such appeal should be addressed.

**Appendix 10**

**Outcome of ‘Stage 3’ meeting letter**

Insert Employee Name

Insert Date

Dear <Employee Name>,

**Re: Outcome of Stage 3 Absence Hearing**

I write to [\*confirm/advise of] the outcome of the absence hearing that you attended on <insert date>, arranged to discuss the issues outlined in the earlier letter dated <insert date>.

The hearing was held in accordance with name of church’s Absence Management Policy and Procedure. The Panel comprised of <names/title/departments>. \*<*Specify names/designations of any others present and their reason for attendance, depending on the circumstances of the case e.g. note-taker>*.

Having been invited to bring a companion, i.e. a trade union representative or a work colleague to the hearing you [\*choose not to do so/were accompanied by <insert name and role e.g. colleague/trade union representative/friend>].

**Consideration**

***Insert*** *a paragraph summarising the main points of discussion at the hearing and factors considered by the panel in reaching their decision. This should include:*

* *the nature of the attendance/ill health issue,*
* *number of sickness episodes/days lost/Bradford Factor score over the last 12 months*
* *impact of the absence(s) on the department/colleagues/service provision,*
* *the actions and reasonable adjustments/support considered/implemented and their impact on addressing the issue,*
* *occupational health advice.*
* *any other potential reasonable interventions or support to enable their retention not previously considered, if any.*

*Also summarise the employee’s own case and whether they put forward any special circumstances/information/options that required further consideration and the outcome of this consideration.*

**Decision**

Having considered the full circumstances of the case the panel decided

* [\*to defer the hearing pending the provision of further medical information]
* [\* that further consideration should be undertaken in relation to reasonable adjustments, supported by further monitoring/review periods]
* [\* that further consideration should be undertaken in relation to redeployment/retirement]
* [\*<detail any other specific options agreed>]
* [\*that having unsuccessfully explored all other options as detailed above, regrettably though the panel fully accepted that your absence is for genuine illness, the department cannot continue to sustain the level of absence and its associated impact. Therefore, with regret it was felt that there was no alternative but to dismiss you on grounds of capability due to ill health].

***NOTE: For outcomes other than dismissal due to capability please detail what action was agreed and the plans associated with their implementation, including for example: responsibilities/timeframes/review periods, etc.***

***[For cases other than dismissal]***

***Insert*** *a paragraph explaining that should any of the agreed, action(s) detailed not result in an effective return to work and/or a sustained improvement in attendance, the situation would need to be reviewed again and could ultimately lead to a further ill health capability hearing being convened, under name of church’s Absence Management Policy and Procedure.*

***[For dismissal cases only]***

*I am therefore giving formal notice that* your contract of employment will terminate on <insert date> [\*at the end of your [number of weeks] notice period. You have <insert number> days accrued annual leave. With the agreement of your manager, you may choose to take some of your leave during your notice period. Any outstanding annual leave which has not been taken by your termination date of <insert date> will be paid to you as part of your final salary payment.

**Appeal [*only to be inserted when dismissing on grounds of capability*]**

You have the right to appeal this decision. Any appeal should be sent to [insert appropriate person} at at the following address within 10 working days:

[Insert Appropriate Appeal details address}

If you wish to appeal it will be your responsibility to state your case and bring to the attention of the Panel all relevant documentary evidence that should be considered. The decision of an appeal panel is final.

***[For dismissal cases only]***

**Insert a paragraph** as relevant to the circumstances of the case, seeking to close on a constructive/positive note e.g. thanking them for their dedicated service to the organisation, wishing them all the very best for their future etc.

Yours sincerely

Managers Name

**Managers Title**

Enc: name of church’s Appeal Policy

**Appendix 11**

**Invite to final long term sickness meeting letter**

**PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL**

Insert Employee Name

Insert Date

Dear <Employee Name>,

I am writing in connection with your long term sickness absence record.

(*manager presenting case*), (*managers job title*), and (other appropriate person), (*job title*) have demonstrated within a management case report why it is believed you have reached the final stage of the long term sickness process under the name of church’s Absence Management Policy.

I have given the management case report my full consideration and I have convened a panel hearing to consider your case, the details of which are as follows:

Date:

Time:

Venue:

This hearing will be held under the terms of name of church’s Absence Policy and Procedure, a copy of which is enclosed with this letter. Also enclosed is a copy of the management report.

(*name of presenting manager*) and (*name of other appropriate person)* ) will be attending to present the management case. I shall be accompanied on the panel by (*detail other panel members* *and their job titles*).

As part of the long term sickness panel hearing, you will have the opportunity to respond to the management case. Therefore, it is advised that you prepare what you would like to present to the panel before the date of the hearing and send it to me by <insert date>. You will also have the opportunity to ask the management side questions. The panel will also have the opportunity to ask you and the management side questions

As you know, you are also entitled to be represented at this hearing by a trade union representative, colleague or friend not acting in a legal capacity.

You should be aware that if the decision of the panel is that you have reached the final stage of the long term sickness process, then a potential outcome of the meeting will be to issue you with notice to end your contract with name of church on the grounds of capability due to ill health.

I should be grateful if you would let me  *(detail contact number)* know by *(provide deadline)* whether you will be attending. If I do not hear from you or you do not attend, the hearing will proceed in your absence.

If you have any queries about the contents of this letter or about the meeting on the *(detail* *hearing date),* or if there is anything we can help you with then please do not hesitate to contact me on *(contact number).*

Yours sincerely

Managers Name

**Managers Title**

**Enc:** Management Case

Absence Management Policy and Procedure

**Appendix 12**

**Outcome of long term sickness final hearing letter**

Insert Employee Name

Insert Date

Dear <Employee Name>,

**Re: Outcome of Long Term Sickness Hearing**

I write to [\*confirm/advise of] the outcome of the long-term sickness absence hearing that you attended on <insert date>, arranged to discuss the issues outlined in the earlier letter dated <insert date>.

The hearing was held in accordance with the name of church’s Absence Management Policy and Procedure. The Panel comprised of <names/title/departments>. \*<*Specify names/designations of any others present and their reason for attendance, depending on the circumstances of the case e.g. note-taker>*.

Having been invited to bring a companion, i.e. a trade union representative or a work colleague to the hearing you [\*choose not to do so/were accompanied by <insert name and role e.g. colleague/trade union representative/friend>].

**Consideration**

***Insert*** *a paragraph summarising the main points of discussion at the hearing and factors considered by the panel in reaching their decision. This should include:*

* *the nature of the attendance/ill health issue,*
* *length of the long-term absence*
* *the actions and reasonable adjustments/support which have been considered/implemented and their impact on addressing the issue,*
* *the occupational health advice received*
* *any other potential reasonable interventions or support to enable their retention if any.*
* *details of application for ill-health retirement, if relevant*

*Also summarise the employee’s own case and whether they put forward any special circumstances/information/options that required further consideration and the outcome of this consideration.*

**Decision**

Having considered the full circumstances of the case the panel decided

* [\*to defer the hearing pending the provision of further medical information]
* [\* that further consideration should be given to reasonable adjustments, which would allow return within a known and reasonable time frame e.g. by DATE]
* [\* that further consideration should be undertaken in relation to redeployment]
* [\*<detail any other specific options agreed>]
* [\*that having explored all possible options, it was concluded that you would not be able to safely return to work within a known and reasonable time frame, due to your illness. Therefore, with regret it was concluded that there was no alternative but to terminate your employment on the basis of capability due to ill health].

***NOTE: For outcomes other than dismissal due to capability please detail what action was agreed and the plans associated with their implementation, including for example: responsibilities/timeframes/review periods, etc.***

***[For cases other than dismissal]***

***Insert*** *a paragraph explaining that should any of the agreed, action(s) detailed not result in an effective return to work within a known and reasonable time frame e.g.by DATE, then the situation would need to be reviewed again and could ultimately lead to a further long term sickness hearing being convened, under the* name of church*’s Absence Management Policy and Procedure.*

***[For cases where redeployment is supported, but employee is unable to return to their substantive position in the foreseeable future]***

After discussing the various options, it was agreed that redeployment would be pursued.  Occupational Health confirmed that the following type of role would be suitable should a vacancy become available <insert any details of the type of role or working pattern that would be suitable>. It was explained that if you were redeployed into a post lower than your current salary then your pay would not be protected.

It was explained that the meeting on <insert date> also represented the start of the redeployment period, which will last for a period of <insert contractual notice period > weeks until <insert last date of contractual notice period>.

Over the next <insert contractual notice period > weeks you will be advised of any vacancies within the name of church . If you meet the minimum criteria for a post the vacancy will then be held and the recruitment process suspended unless interviews have already been arranged and shortlisted candidates informed. In such circumstances you will be considered on the same terms as other shortlisted applicants.  An informal interview will then take place involving the receiving line manager and yourself.  The purpose of the interview is to ensure that you meet the minimum criteria of the job.  If following an informal interview, you are found to meet the minimum criteria then an offer of alternative employment will be made, subject to a four week trial period.

It was explained to you at the meeting, that you were also being issued with notice to terminate you contract on the ground of capability due to ill-health with effect from <insert date> and you contract will be terminated on <insert date- end of contractual notice period> if it is not possible to redeploy you by the end of the <insert contractual notice period > week redeployment period.

***[For dismissal cases only]***

*I am therefore giving formal notice that* your contract of employment will terminate on <insert date> [\*at the end of your [number of weeks] notice period. You have <insert number> days accrued annual leave. This outstanding leave will be paid to you as part of your final salary payment.

**Appeal [*only to be inserted when dismissing on grounds of capability*]**

You have the right to appeal this decision. Any appeal should be sent to [insert appropriate person} at at the following address within 10 working days:

[Insert Appropriate Appeal details address}

If you wish to appeal it will be your responsibility to state your case and bring to the attention of the Panel all relevant documentary evidence that should be considered. The decision of an appeal panel is final.

***[For dismissal cases only]***

**Insert a paragraph** as relevant to the circumstances of the case, seeking to close on a constructive/positive note e.g. thanking them for their dedicated service to the organisation, wishing them all the very best for their future etc.

Yours sincerely

Managers Name

**Managers Title**

Enc: name of church’s Appeal Policy