

NORTH VIEW Housing Association

North View is a registered Scottish charity – charity registration number SC032963

POLICY

ATTENDANCE & ABSENCE MANAGEMENT

Passed:-	26/06/2024		Review Date:-	May-2029
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All North View policies and publications can be made available on CD/data-to-voice, in Braille, large print and in other languages.

For further details please contact us on 0141 634 0555 or email us on enquiries@nvha.org.uk

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 North View Housing Association recognises that on occasions it may be necessary for staff to be absent from work. However, we also have a duty to provide a reliable service to our customers and thus we need to ensure that we help you maintain the highest possible level of attendance.
- 1.2 This policy is designed to help all employees achieve good attendance, and to ensure that a consistent and fair approach in managing attendance is adopted throughout the organisation.
- 1.3 This policy and the guidelines it contains are not intended to replace other policies, covering discipline & grievance, dignity at work, health & safety, stress management matters, etc.

2.0 AIMS OF THE POLICY

- 2.1 The aims are:-
 - To manage attendance in a way that reflects genuine concern for staff, and to develop a positive attitude towards attendance.
 - To set clear expectations for standards of attendance that we require from our employees.
 - To separate two processes – attendance management and absence management – and provide guidelines for staff and managers in how to manage these.
 - To identify the causes of absence and, wherever possible, develop a programme of supportive and preventive measures.
 - To ensure training and support is available to those involved in the process.

3.0 PRINCIPLES

- 3.1 The organisation requires good attendance from all staff in order to meet its objectives.
 - If your level of attendance is unsatisfactory then you will be informed what improvement is required and possible consequences of failure to do so (which may include disciplinary action, including dismissal).



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- The attendance management process is not concerned with reasons for absence but with number of periods of absence/days absent (excluding underlying health conditions protected under the Equality Act 2010).
- If you have an underlying medical condition causing absence(s), then we'll consider whether any reasonable adjustments are possible to accommodate.
- Managers will conduct Return to Work Interviews for every period of sickness absence within the spirit of this policy.
- You need to adhere strictly to our absence reporting procedures. Failure to do so may result in a disciplinary action and withholding of the organisation sick pay.
- Managers will maintain accurate, up-to-date attendance records for all staff to manage absence effectively.

4.0 ABSENCE MONITORING

- 4.1 A fundamental feature of good attendance management is the accurate and timely recording of all absences. This is essential for processing the requirements of the statutory and occupational sick pay arrangements and the process of managing attendance and absence. Good information allows patterns to be identified and can be an early indication of underlying health conditions. The sooner these issues are identified and acted upon – the more likely a successful conclusion for both you and the organisation can be achieved.
- 4.2 Accurate recording is also an essential element in satisfying potential concerns over the fairness of any actions taken by the line managers.
- 4.3 Certain types of absences will not be recorded as sick leave; these are set out within employees' 'Terms and Conditions of Employment'.
- 4.4 If a staff member attends work but leaves because of sickness before the end of the working day, the time lost through sickness will be recorded as sickness absence and the person will be required to attend a Return to Work Interview on the first day of their return to work.

5.0 ABSENCE REPORTING PROCEDURES

Reporting

- 5.1 If you cannot come to work, either due to illness or for any other reason, you must tell your line manager (or if not available, another manager) as soon as is reasonably possible. You should do this before you are due to start your shift and if not possible, within one hour of your starting time. You must fill in a self-



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certification form, whether or not you are entitled to sickness allowances and whatever the length or reason for absence.

- 5.2 Every unplanned absence will be followed with a Return to Work Interview.

Fit Notes

- 5.3 If you continue to be absent due to illness or injury for more than seven consecutive calendar days, you must provide a fit note (which can be obtained from your GP) as soon as possible to your line manager.
- 5.4 If the Doctor ticks the 'may be fit for work' box, you will meet with your line manager to discuss any adjustments suggested. Although employers are not obliged to follow the doctor's advice, we will do our best to help you return to work and keep a good attendance record. However, if we cannot agree about the adjustments, you will remain off sick.
- 5.5 If we agree a phased return to work, the days you are still off sick within the agreed period will count as one period of absence.

You are permitted to return to work before the expiry of your fit note (as long as your GP does not state that they wish to see you again before returning to work), even if this is before the fit note expires. You do not need to go back to your doctor first to be signed fit for work. If you come back to work before the expiry of your fit note, we may seek professional advice.

Keeping in Touch

- 5.6 You are responsible for letting your manager know the reasons for your absence and when you expect to return to work. If, in the event of an emergency that you cannot get to a phone on day one of your absence, you should make sure that someone else calls on your behalf. After this, you should contact your line manager as soon as you can and maintain regular contact by calling daily during the first week of your absence (unless otherwise agreed with your line manager) and weekly thereafter.
- 5.7 While keeping in touch, we would expect that you let us know; the reason for your absence, the predicted recovery time and/or treatment, when you expect to return to work, and the best contact details which can be used during your absence.

If you fail to keep in contact as detailed above, we will contact you.

Failure to Comply

- 5.8 Where you do not follow reporting, certification, or keeping-in-touch arrangements, we may withhold the company sick pay. Failure to comply with these requirements



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may also lead to a disciplinary action against you in accordance with our disciplinary procedure. Similarly, if we suspect that you have falsified your absence or have deliberately misled us, we will investigate this and it may result in disciplinary action being taken against you. In serious and/or repeated cases, it may lead to a dismissal.

6.0 RETURN TO WORK

- 6.1 A Return to Work Interview will be carried out after every period of sickness absence. The purpose of a Return To Work Interview is to establish if you are fit to return to work. This is done by your line manager (or another manager if they are not available) on the first day of your return to work at the start of your working day. Completed forms will be kept in your personal file. The Return to Work Interview forms contain confidential information and may only be viewed by those authorised to your line manager and any other manager who deals with the case.
- 6.2 Having maintained attendance records, managers will be expected to provide and discuss monthly aggregated statistics at Senior Staff meetings and at departmental meetings with staff.
- 6.3 If a medical professional makes suggestions for any adjustments, these will be discussed at a Return to Work Interview, along with any suggestions that you or we may also have made. Although we are not bound by the doctor's suggestions, we will make all possible efforts to accommodate your prompt return and a good attendance, if possible. If we agree any adjustments, we will also set timescales and reviews.

7.0 STATUTORY SICK PAY (SSP)

- 7.1 If eligible to receive SSP, this is irrespective to your entitlement to company sick pay. The scale of entitlement to SSP is reviewed by the government, normally at the beginning of each tax year. It is not paid for the first three days of absence and runs for 28 weeks after that.
- 7.2 If you are no longer entitled to SSP, you may be entitled to an incapacity benefit. You can enquire about this at the Department for Work and Pensions. We will tell you if you are not entitled to SSP and send you the appropriate government form but it is then your responsibility to claim any other State Benefit which you may be entitled to.

8.0 ORGANISATION SICK PAY



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8.1

In any one rolling period of 52 weeks, we will pay a sickness allowance in line with the following scale:

Continuous service at the date sickness started:	Full allowance paid for:	Half allowance paid for:
Up to 1 year	5 weeks	5 weeks
Over 1 and under 2 years	9 weeks	9 weeks
Over 2 and under 3 years	18 weeks	18 weeks
Over 3 and under 5 years	22 weeks	22 weeks
Over 5 years	26 weeks	26 weeks

8.2 **Working out sickness allowances**

Your allowance is worked out based on your current rate of basic pay (see below). We refer to this as your 'normal pay'.

Your entitlement to Occupational Sick Pay is based on your continuous service at the first date of your period of absence.

The full allowance, referred to above, equals your normal pay and includes any Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) which you may be entitled to.

The half allowance referred to above, equals half your normal pay plus SSP (if you have any left). However, you cannot receive more than your normal full pay.

In working out the level and period of allowance still due, we will review the previous 12 months before the start of your current sick leave. We will add up all periods of sick leave. We will then take this from the full allowance entitlement first and then any balance from the half allowance entitlement. Anything left will be what you are still entitled to.

We will pay you the sickness allowance according to your basic contractual hours (not including overtime).

For the purposes of working out SSP, qualifying days are treated as Sunday to Saturday. Before paying SSP you must be unable to work for at least the first four days in a row of a spell of sickness.

If you cannot come into work as a result of coming into contact with a notifiable infectious disease (that is reportable to RIDDOR in line with the Health and Safety



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at Work Act), you should tell us. You will then receive your full pay sickness allowance. We will not take the period of absence from your normal entitlement.

If you return to work on a phased basis, we will only pay your salary for the hours and days actually worked. The days and hours that you are still off sick will entitle you to SSP and the occupational sick pay you are eligible to and this will be taken off your entitlement. Or you can ask to take it from your annual leave, time off in lieu or unpaid leave instead.

9.0 ATTENDANCE MANAGEMENT

- 9.1 This refers to dealing with unacceptable levels of short term, frequent absences, with no reference to reasons for absence or medical condition.
- 9.2 We will aim to assist you in securing a good attendance record. This will involve maintaining good records, ensuring Return to Work Interviews are carried out, and helping investigate and address any identified underlying causes of absence.
- 9.3 Where this fails to secure a required improvement, we will invoke the terms of the absence management and disciplinary procedure. Unsatisfactory attendance reviews can result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.
- 9.4 If at any stage during this process it becomes apparent that an underlying health condition is involved, medical information will be sought and further discussion will take place prior to deciding on any appropriate action will follow, if any.
- 9.5 Absence periods related to pregnancy or underlying medical conditions classed as a disability under the Equality Act will not be counted for the purpose of attendance management process.

10.0 ATTENDANCE REVIEW TRIGGERS

- 10.1 Staff will occasionally be off work through illness or injury; however we do not normally expect such absence to be excessive.
- 10.2 We expect attendance levels to be high, and unplanned absences for individual employees not to exceed three absences in a rolling six month period, and five absences within a rolling twelve month period.

These are the Association's 'triggers', not confirmation of what North View deems 'acceptable levels of absence' for an individual member of staff. The Association would be concerned if an employee nears (or exceeds) these



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absence levels in any two twelve month blocks in a rolling thirty six month period. Senior Staff will discuss the levels of unauthorised absence during Return to Work Interviews.

- 10.3 An employee exceeding three absences in a rolling six month period, or five absences within a rolling twelve month period will be subject to an interview by their manager.

On the first occasion of an employee breaching a trigger, the employee will be required to attend a meeting with their manager at which they will agree a timescale and/or targets against which the employee attendance will be measured. Actions taken at this meeting may be deemed under our Disciplinary Procedures to be 'Informal Action'; the manager will confirm that at the meeting.

On the second occasion of an employee breaching a trigger, or if the employee fails to meet the targets agreed at their first meeting, the employee will be invited to a disciplinary meeting with their manager and may be issued with a First Written Warning, or a Final Written Warning (should the employee already be on a First Written Warning).

The disciplinary process will 'ramp up' should the employee continually fail to meet the targets agreed with their manager, or should they hit more trigger points.

- 10.4 An employee who repeatedly meets these triggers, or fails to meet improvement targets will be subject to our disciplinary procedures, which may lead to their dismissal.

11.0 ABSENCE MANAGEMENT

- 11.1 North View will adopt a sympathetic approach to staff with a long-term and/or chronic health condition. If you find yourself in such a position you should be confident that your manager will support you.

- 11.2 The following points will always be considered in relation to long-term absence:-

- The nature of the illness and any contributing factors
- The likely duration and/or frequency of your absence(s)
- Any actions that can be taken by you
- Any reasonable adjustments that we could make
- Any possible redeployment opportunities
- The nature of the duties in relation to your health conditions
- Our business needs and the impact that your absence is having upon these
- Your entitlement to Statutory and Occupational Sick Pay



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When managing a long-term absence, it is possible that termination of employment for the reason of ill health capability may be considered where all other options have been exhausted, and the organisation can no longer sustain the absence. We will ensure that we seek the appropriate advice if and when necessary.

12.0 DISHONEST ABSENCE

- 12.1 If you are found to falsify or exaggerate your absence, this will be treated as gross misconduct. An investigation will be carried out in accordance with North View disciplinary procedure and disciplinary action may be instigated, including dismissal or future withdrawal of the company sick pay.

13.0 OTHER PROVISIONS

Absence and holidays

13.1

If during an authorised period of annual leave you fall ill, and you produce a self-certificate or fit note we may count the period as sick leave and not as annual leave. You must speak to your manager on the first day of your return to work or earlier if possible and provide them with the necessary certification.

If there is a public or general holiday during your period of sickness, and you provide a self-certificate or fit note this will be counted as sick leave and you will receive the holiday at another time.

If your illness prevents you from taking your holiday entitlement, we will carry over the remainder to the next holiday year.

If you are on sick leave and go on holiday you should contact your line manager to seek authorisation and to let them know how long you will be away for and to ensure communication resumes upon your return.

Doctor/dental appointments

- 13.2 Doctor, and dental appointments should be arranged outwith working hours. If it is not possible, you should request time off from your line manager. Arrangements could include using annual leave, TOIL or unpaid leave. In some circumstances, managers could also use their discretion and consider giving paid time off. Where possible, evidence of appointments should be provided

Conduct whilst off sick

- 13.3 When on sick leave, you are still bound by your contract of employment with us



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and all our policies including the code of conduct and your duty of fidelity. We also expect that you do not participate in activities that would be at odds with the reason for your absence. Any breach in respect of this will be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure. This includes conduct on social networking sites and any other publicly made remarks regarding North View, its customers, work colleagues, partners and anyone else who is connected with us.

Cosmetic procedures

- 13.4 Absence due to cosmetic procedures (whether carried out in the UK or abroad) will not fall under the sick leave or pay unless it is recommended by health professionals. Employees should, therefore, request time off and agree with their line manager how the absence will be processed, e.g. annual leave or unpaid leave.

IVF treatment

- 13.5 Absences relating to IVF treatment will not be processed as sick leave or pay. The same applies to a partner of a person that is undergoing such treatment. Instead, you should discuss with your line manager how time off for the treatment could be accommodated, e.g. annual leave, flexi time or unpaid leave. Absences relating to IVF treatment will also not be treated as relating to pregnancy unless the employee actually falls pregnant.

Stress management

- 13.6 Stress is not an illness. It can result from an illness or lead to one but it is not an illness itself. The same relates to "nervous debility" or any other diagnosis of that type. If you go off sick with stress, your manager will endeavour to find out the underlying cause so that an appropriate action could be taken (if any) and in particular to determine whether conditions at work cause or contribute to stress and whether something could be done to help the situation. If the absence is certified by a doctor, your manager will ask your doctor to clarify the underlying cause for stress.

14.0 Data Protection

- 14.1 The organisation will treat your personal data in line with our obligations under the current data protection regulations and our own Data Protection Policy. Information regarding how your data will be used and the basis for processing your data is provided in North View's Fair Processing Notice for employees.

End of Policy



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Reviews and amendments:

30 th July 2008	-	wording of item 11.3 changed.
27 th October 2010	-	policy reviewed.
30 th September 2015	-	policy reviewed.
22 nd February 2023	-	policy reviewed.
26/06/2024	-	policy reviewed following establishment of Stress Management Policy



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