

NORTH VIEW Housing Association

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

POLICY

ATTENDANCE & ABSENCE MANAGEMENT

Passed:-	25/06/2025	Review Date:-	May 2030
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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 employees to be absent from work. However, it also has a duty to provide a reliable service to its customers and thus needs to ensure that it helps employees 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 employees, and to develop a positive attitude towards attendance.
 - To set clear expectations for standards of attendance required from employees.
 - To separate two processes - attendance management and absence management – and provide guidelines for employees and line 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 employees in order to meet its objectives.
 - If an employee's level of attendance is unsatisfactory they 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 an employee has an underlying medical condition causing absence(s), then North View will consider whether any reasonable adjustments are possible to accommodate.
- Line Managers will conduct Return to Work Interviews for every period of sickness absence within the spirit of this policy.
- Employees need to adhere strictly to North View's absence reporting procedures. Failure to do so may result in a disciplinary action and withholding of the organisation sick pay.
- Line 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 the employee and North View 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 an employee 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 they 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 an employee cannot come to work, either due to illness or for any other reason, they must telephone their line manager (or if not available, another manager) as soon as is reasonably possible. The employee should do this before they are due to start their shift and if not possible, within one hour of their starting time.

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They must fill in a self-certification form, whether or not they 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 an employee continues to be absent due to illness or injury for more than seven consecutive calendar days, they must provide a fit note (which can be obtained from their Doctor) as soon as possible to their line manager.
- 5.4 If the Doctor ticks the 'may be fit for work' box, the employee will meet with their line manager to discuss any adjustments suggested. Although North View is not obliged to follow the Doctor's advice, it will do its best to help the employee return to work and keep a good attendance record. However, if North View cannot agree about the adjustments, the employee will remain off sick.
- 5.5 If North View agrees a phased return to work, the days the employee is still off sick within the agreed period will count as one period of absence.

Employees are permitted to return to work before the expiry of the fit note (as long as their Doctor does not state that they wish to see them again before returning to work), even if this is before the fit note expires. Employees do not need to go back to their Doctor first to be signed fit for work. If they come back to work before the expiry of the fit note, North View may seek professional advice.

Keeping in Touch

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

If the employee fails to keep in contact as detailed above, North View will contact them.

Failure to Comply

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- 5.8 Where an employee does not follow reporting, certification, or keeping-in-touch arrangements, North View may withhold the company sick pay. Failure to comply with these requirements may also lead to a disciplinary action against the employee in accordance with the disciplinary procedure. Similarly, if North View suspects that an employee has falsified their absence or have deliberately misled North View, it will investigate this and it may result in disciplinary action being taken against the employee. 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 the employee is fit to return to work. This is done by the employee's line manager (or another manager if they are not available) on the first day of the employee's return to work at the start of their working day. Completed forms will be kept in the employee's personal file. The Return to Work interview forms contain confidential information and may only be viewed by those authorised by your line manager and any other manager who deals with the case.
- 6.2 Having maintained attendance records, line 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 the employee or North View may also have made. Although North View is not bound by a medical professional's suggestions, it will make all possible efforts to accommodate the employee's prompt return and a good attendance, if possible. If North View agrees any adjustments, it will also set timescales and reviews.

7.0 STATUTORY SICK PAY (SSP)

- 7.1 If eligible to receive SSP, this is irrespective of the employee's 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 an employee is no longer entitled to SSP, they may be entitled to an incapacity benefit. They can enquire about this at the Department for Work and Pensions. North View will tell an employee if they are not entitled to SSP and send them the appropriate government form but it is then the employee's responsibility to claim

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any other State Benefit which they may be entitled to.

8.0 ORGANISATION SICK PAY

- 8.1 In any one rolling period of 52 weeks, North View 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

The allowance is worked out based on the employee's current rate of basic pay (see below). North View refer to this as the employee's 'normal pay'.

An employee's entitlement to Occupational Sick Pay is based on their continuous service at the first date of their period of absence.

The full allowance, referred to above, equals the employee's normal pay and includes any Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) which they may be entitled to.

The half allowance referred to above, equals half the employee's normal pay plus SSP (if they have any left). However, the employee cannot receive more than their normal full pay.

In working out the level and period of allowance still due, North View will review the previous 12 months before the start of the employee's current sick leave. It will add up all periods of sick leave. It will then take this from the full allowance entitlement first and then any balance from the half allowance entitlement. Anything left will be what the employee is still entitled to.

North View will pay the employee the sickness allowance according to their basic contractual hours (not including overtime).

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

If the employee cannot come into work as a result of coming into contact with a

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notifiable infectious disease (that is reportable to RIDDOR in line with the Health and Safety at Work Act), they should tell North View. The employee will then receive their full pay sickness allowance. North View will not take the period of absence from the employee's normal entitlement.

If the employee returns to work on a phased basis, North View will only pay their salary for the hours and days actually worked. The days and hours that the employee are still off sick will entitle them to SSP and the occupational sick pay they are eligible to receive and this will be taken off their entitlement. Or they can ask to take it from their 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 North View will aim to assist its employees 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, North View 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 2010 will not be counted for the purpose of attendance management process.

10.0 ATTENDANCE REVIEW TRIGGERS

- 10.1 Employees will occasionally be off work through illness or injury; however North View does not normally expect such absence to be excessive.
- 10.2 North View expects 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.

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

On the first occasion of an employee breaching a trigger, the employee will be required to attend a meeting with their line 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 Disciplinary Procedures to be 'Informal Action'; the line 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 line 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 line 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 employees with a long-term and/or chronic health condition. If an employee finds themselves in such a position they should be confident that their line manager will support them.

- 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 the employee

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- Any reasonable adjustments that North View could make
- Any possible redeployment opportunities
- The nature of the duties in relation to the employee's health conditions
- North View's business needs and the impact that their absence is having upon these
- The employee's entitlement to Statutory and Occupational Sick Pay

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. North View will ensure that it seeks the appropriate advice if and when necessary.

12.0 DISHONEST ABSENCE

- 12.1 If an employee is found to have falsified or exaggerated their 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 the employee falls ill, and they produce a self-certificate or fit note North View may count the period as sick leave and not as annual leave. The employee must speak to their line manager on the first day of their 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 the employee provides a self-certificate or fit note this will be counted as sick leave and they will receive the holiday at another time.

If an employee's illness prevents them from taking their holiday entitlement, North View will carry over the remainder to the next holiday year.

If an employee is on sick leave and go on holiday they should contact their line manager to seek authorisation and to let them know how long they will be away for and to ensure communication resumes upon their return.

Doctor/dental appointments

- 13.2 Doctor, and dental appointments should be arranged outwith working hours. If it is

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not possible, employees should request time off from their line manager. Arrangements could include using annual leave, TOIL or unpaid leave. In some circumstances, line 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, employees are still bound by their contract of employment with North View and all its policies including the code of conduct and the employee's duty of fidelity. North View also expect that the employee does not participate in activities that would be at odds with the reason for their 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.

Fertility treatment

- 13.5 Absences relating to fertility treatment will not be processed as sick leave or pay. The same applies to a partner of an employee that is undergoing such treatment. Instead, you are encouraged to discuss with your line manager how time off for the treatment could be accommodated, e.g. annual leave, flexi time or unpaid leave.
- 13.6 Employees who have undergone embryo transfer (the last stage of fertility treatment) and who have yet to have pregnancy confirmed will be considered 'pregnant until proven otherwise' (PUPO) and protected under the Equality Act 2010. If the employee is confirmed as pregnant, they will continue to have the same right rights throughout pregnancy and maternity, as with 'non-fertility treatment' pregnancies. If the embryo transfer is unsuccessful, the employee is protected under the Equality Act 2010 for two weeks after finding this out.

Neonatal Care Leave and Pay

- 13.7 Neonatal care leave and pay gives people with a parental relationship for a baby who receives neonatal care the opportunity for additional leave and pay.
- 13.8 Employees are entitled to neonatal care leave (if they meet the eligibility criteria)

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of up to 12 weeks for a baby born on or after 6th April 2025 and the baby has received medical or palliative neonatal care for at least 7 consecutive days within the first 28 days after birth. If the employee has 26 weeks continuous service by the end of the relevant week, earn above the lower earnings limit and are entitled to neonatal care leave they are also entitled to statutory neonatal care pay

13.9 Full details are found in the Neonatal Care Leave and Pay Policy.

Stress management

13.10 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 an employee goes off sick with stress, their line 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, the employee's line manager will ask the Doctor to clarify the underlying cause for stress.

13.7 The Association's Stress Management Policy provides further information to help reduce and eliminate stress for employees.

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

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 25/06/2025
25/06/2025	-	policy reviewed to broaden IVF definition, and to include establishment of Neonatal Care Leave and Pay Policy. It also clarifies process of calling to report absences.

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