



Seaford Town Council

## Sickness Absence Policy

Seaford Town Council is committed to maintaining the health, well-being and attendance of all its employees.

The Council's absence policy is based on the following principles:

- It undertakes to provide reasonable payments to employees who are unable to work due to sickness.
- It will support employees who have genuine grounds for absence for whatever reason. This support includes a flexible approach to the taking of annual leave and returning to work after long term sickness.
- It will respect the confidentiality of all information relating to an employee's sickness and information will be held in line with all data protection legislation.

Regular, punctual attendance is an implied term of every employee's contract of employment and the Council asks each employee to take responsibility for maintaining good attendance and reporting absence according to the procedures set out in this policy.

### 1. Absence reporting

An employee must report their absence from work owing to illness to their line manager by telephone as early as possible and no later than one hour after they are due to commence their working day on which the absence first occurs. When possible notification of absence should be given the previous evening to allow staff cover to be arranged. When reporting their absence, the employee should give a clear indication of the nature of their illness and the likely date of their return to work.

In the case of the Town Clerk being absent, he / she should inform key department managers so they are aware of the absence. If the Town Clerk's absence is to be over one week an email should be sent by the Town Clerk (if practical) to all Councillors advising them accordingly as well as advising of contingencies that are in place.

### 2. Certification

Sickness certificates are required for all absences and should cover all calendar days, including work days, weekends, public holidays and any days not normally worked.

A self-certification may be made for the first seven calendar days of absence. From the 8<sup>th</sup> day onwards a medical certificate is required. A final Doctor's statement giving the date on which the employee will be fit to resume work must be given to their line manager prior to their return to work of absences where a medical certificate has been obtained.

The Council reserves the right to require an employee to attend an Occupational Health Doctor / professional where it is deemed appropriate.

If the absence is not continuously covered by a self certificate, Doctor's statement or in-patient certificate, it may be treated as unauthorised absence and dealt with using the disciplinary procedures.

### 3. Return to Work

On return to work the employee should complete and give to their line manager a Self-Certification Form.

A 'fit for work' certificate is required should the employee wish to return to work before their medical certificate runs out.

On return to work the line manager will have an informal discussion with the employee in order to establish: the reason for and cause of absence, the employee's fitness to return to work and whether they need any support to return to work.

### 4. Sent Home

If while an employee is at work they decide that they are unwell and need to go home, for health and safety purposes they must inform their line manager before they leave the building. The employee will need to discuss with their line manager how this absence is to be treated i.e. sickness absence or time off in lieu.

### 5. Medical, Dental, hearing or Optician Appointments

Where possible medical appointments should be made outside of working hours. If this cannot be arranged they should disrupt the working schedule as little as possible, e.g. made early or late in the day. Employees will be required to use TOIL to cover such absences.

Where attendance for a medical or hospital appointment necessitates a complete day's absence from work, this will be treated as sick leave (unless annual leave is utilised) and the procedure for self-certification should be followed.

## **6. Use of Leave**

The Council recognises that some employees choose to take annual leave or allocate time off in lieu (TOIL) on days or periods where they are ill. This should be discussed with the employee's line manager, who will consider the request for alternative leave instead of sickness absence.

There may be occasions where it is possible for an employee to work from home despite not being fit enough to attend work, an example may be post-operation/ injury recovery or in the circumstances of contagious illnesses, that physically means they cannot attend the workplace but may still be able to carry out work functions from home.

The Town Clerk will have to consider and approve any requests to work from home and the employee will have to evidence the work done afterwards. The principle consideration when making this decision will be the employee's wellbeing.

## **7. Absence during pregnancy**

Pregnancy related absence will be dealt with separately from sickness absence in accordance with the Council's Maternity Policy.

## **8. Sick Pay**

An employee will be paid their agreed basic remuneration in line with the scale of payment for any one year that runs from 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> March.

Entitlement to payment is subject to notification of absence and production of medical certificates as required above.

The Council operates the Statutory Sick Pay scheme and the employee is required to co-operate in the maintenance of necessary records. For the purposes of calculating entitlement to Statutory Sick Pay 'qualifying days' are those days on which an employee is normally required to work. Payments made to an employee by the Council under its sick pay provisions in satisfaction of any other contractual entitlement will go towards discharging the Council's liability to make payment to an employee under the Statutory Sick Pay scheme.

The Council reserves the right to require an employee at any time to submit to a medical examination by a medical practitioner nominated by the Council, subject to the provisions of the Access to Medical Reports Act 1988 where applicable. Any costs associated with the examination will be met by the Council.

Whilst on absence due to sickness or incapacity or for any other reason under this policy, the employee is not permitted to undertake any paid work for another employer or for any business established by the employee without express permission from the Council.

The scale of payment is set out in all employee's contracts of employment, subject to meeting the conditions of the scheme.

## **9. Sickness Levels**

Where an employee's levels of sickness absence are causing concern, the Town Clerk will investigate the matter; checking for any patterns in absence or recurring reasons for absence, and looking at whether any adaptations may be needed within the workplace to assist an improvement in absence levels.

Where there is belief that absence levels are at an unacceptable level or unjustified, this may be dealt with initially through informal meetings with the employee or if felt necessary, through the Council's Disciplinary Procedure.

The Council will reward employees with a small annual bonus within the December pay for those employees with low sickness records for prior 12 months (1<sup>st</sup> December to 30<sup>th</sup> November) on the following basis;

Zero day's sickness absence	=	£100
Up to one day's sickness absence	=	£75
Up to two day's sickness absence	=	£50
Up to three day's sickness absence	=	£25
More than three day's absence	=	£0

Adopted: April 2017

Review: April 2020 (or if legislation changes)