

Mundford Parish Council

Employee Absence Policy

Introduction

This policy applies to all **Mundford Parish Council** (MPC) employees and is intended to support these employees during periods of absence and to ensure that employees are treated in a fair and consistent manner.

Aim and Principles of the Policy

- Ensure the impact and cost of employee absence for the employee and MPC is kept to a minimum.
- Treat employees fairly, consistently, and sensitively when absent from work for ill health.
- Provide a reasonable and safe working environment, appropriate welfare facilities, and
- advice on general health issues.
- Individuals will be treated with respect and confidentiality.
- Open communication between managers and employees is encouraged.

Employee Responsibilities

Absence reporting

It is the employee's responsibility to inform their Line Manager (MPC Clerk or MPC Chairman/ Vice Chair) of any absences from work. Employees must report their absence from work as soon as possible by contacting the MPC Office or Mobile. Where an employee is signed off by a GP for a prolonged period of time you must ensure you call your Line Manager weekly to keep them updated. Prior to returning to work employees must contact their Line Manager to advise them of their return-to-work date.

Doctors Certification

Where absences last for seven calendar days or more the employee is required to submit a fit note from their GP. Where a fit note expires, the employee can return to work, or if they are not fit to return to work the employee needs to provide a further fit note from their GP. Failure to provide a fit note may result in MPC withholding occupational sick pay (OSP) where eligible. Where an employee is absent from work for four weeks or more the Line Manager may complete an Occupational Health Referral.

Occupational Health Referral

We may require you to consent to a medical examination by an Occupational Health Advisor or request a report from your GP. You will be asked to agree that any report produced in connection with any such examination may be disclosed to your Line Manager and that we may discuss the contents of the report with our advisers and the relevant doctor. Any

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medical reports will provide your Line Manager with professional recommendations on the employee's likelihood of returning to work within the foreseeable future along with, where possible, how MPC can support the employee back to work. Recommended reasonable adjustments will be considered where they are operationally reasonable, and feasible to accommodate.

Line Manager's Responsibilities

- Where an employee has not contacted their Line Manager to report their absence the Line Manager will contact the employee or their next of kin to establish the reason for their absence.
- The Line Manager will keep in regular contact with the employee absent from work and will arrange and hold welfare meetings as appropriate in long term sick cases to ensure support is provided.
- A return to work will be completed with the employee (face to face or over the phone) ideally within 1 week of the return-to-work date.

Return to Work

A return to work is in place to ensure that employees are fit to return to work, able to carry out their job activities in a safe manner and discuss where appropriate any reasonable adjustments that need to temporarily be put in place to support the employee.

Long Term Absence Management Procedure (absences in excess of four weeks)

Welfare Meetings

During a period of long-term absence Managers will conduct welfare meetings with employees so that they can understand the details surrounding the absence and consider support that will facilitate a return to work for the employee. Unless it is impractical to do so, we will give you 1 week's written notice of the date, time, and place of a welfare meeting. We encourage welfare meetings to be conducted at a work location however if this is not possible for medical reasons, we can arrange for the meeting over the phone.

Facilitating a Return to Work

The MPC will, where appropriate and possible, support returns to work by:

- Obtaining medical advice (Occupational Health referral and/or GP report).
- Making reasonable adjustments to the workplace, working practices, and working hours.
- Agreeing a phased return-to-work programme.
- A personal risk assessment to be undertaken if appropriate.

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Phased Return to Work Plan

When required an employee and line manager will agree a phased return to work plan. Typically, a plan will be based on recommendations from the Occupational Health report and/or the employees GP or specialist. An individual plan will be created using the recommendations and making reasonable adjustments that are operationally feasible (a Personal Risk Assessment may also be implemented for this period). A phased return to work plan will be devised for a fixed period (usually up to eight weeks' maximum) and the employees will receive pay for the hours they have worked. An employee can choose to use remaining holiday entitlement to make their pay up to their full contractual pay, where eligible.