

Absence Policy Template

Free Resource from L. Studio HR

About This Template

This absence policy template provides a clear, compliant framework for managing employee absence in your UK business. It covers sickness absence, planned leave, and notification procedures.

This is a template. Customize it with your business details and adjust to fit your specific needs.

[COMPANY NAME] Absence Policy

Last Updated: [Date] **Applies to:** All employees

1. Purpose

This policy sets out our expectations and procedures for managing employee absence, including:

- Sickness absence
- Planned annual leave
- Other authorised absences

We aim to support employees who need time off whilst ensuring business continuity and fairness for all staff.

2. Annual Leave (Holiday)

2.1 Entitlement

Statutory Minimum:

- All full-time employees are entitled to **28 days paid annual leave** per year (including bank holidays)
- Part-time employees receive a pro-rata entitlement

[COMPANY NAME] Entitlement:

- Full-time employees: **[X] days** per year [including/excluding] bank holidays
- Leave year runs from: **[1st January to 31st December / state your leave year]**

2.2 Booking Annual Leave

Notice Required:

- Give **at least [X weeks]** notice before your intended leave date
- For leave of 2 weeks or more, give at least **[X weeks]** notice

How to Request:

- Submit requests to **[manager/HR/email address]**
- Via **[email/booking system/written request]**

Approval:

- We'll respond to your request within **[X working days]**
- We may decline requests if:
 - Too many people are already off at that time
 - It's during a busy period
 - Insufficient notice was given

Peak Periods: During **[state your busy periods, e.g., "December" or "summer months"]**, we may restrict the number of staff on holiday at the same time.

2.3 Carrying Over Leave

- Unused annual leave should normally be taken within the leave year
- In exceptional circumstances, up to **[X days]** may be carried over to the next year with manager approval
- Carried-over leave must be used within **[X months]** of the new leave year

2.4 Leave and Termination

If you leave the company:

- **Unused leave:** You'll be paid for any untaken holiday

- **Excess leave taken:** Deductions will be made from final pay
 - **Notice period:** You may be required to take outstanding holiday during your notice
-

3. Sickness Absence

3.1 Notification Procedure

If you're too ill to work:

First Day:

1. Contact **[manager name/department]** by **[time, e.g., 9:00am]**
2. Via **[phone call/text/email]** to **[contact details]**
3. State:
 - Reason for absence
 - Expected return date (if known)
 - Any urgent work that needs covering

DO NOT:

- Just send a text (unless agreed in advance)
- Ask a colleague to notify us (except in emergencies)
- Assume we know you're off

Ongoing Absence:

- Update us **every [X days, e.g., "3 days"]** or as agreed with your manager
- Let us know if your expected return date changes

Return to Work:

- Inform us the day before you plan to return
- Attend a return-to-work meeting with your manager

3.2 Fit Notes (Sick Notes)

You must provide a fit note if:

- You're off sick for **more than 7 consecutive days**
- The 7 days include weekends and bank holidays

How to provide:

- Get a fit note from your GP
- Send it to **[email/postal address]** within **[X days]**
- If absence continues, provide updated fit notes to cover the full period

For absences under 7 days:

- Self-certification is acceptable
- Complete a **self-certification form** on your return (we'll provide this)

3.3 Statutory Sick Pay (SSP)

Eligibility: You qualify for SSP if:

- You've been off sick for **4 or more consecutive days** (including weekends)
- You earn at least **£123 per week** (average)

Rate:

- SSP is currently **£116.75 per week** (subject to change)
- Paid for up to **28 weeks**

[COMPANY NAME] Sick Pay (if applicable):

- We offer **[state any enhanced sick pay, e.g., "full pay for first 5 days, then SSP"]**
- Subject to **[conditions, e.g., "providing fit notes on time"]**

3.4 Return to Work Meetings

After **every absence**, you'll have a return-to-work discussion with your manager to:

- Welcome you back
- Discuss your wellbeing
- Identify any support you might need
- Update you on any changes while you were away

This is a supportive conversation, not disciplinary.

3.5 Frequent or Long-Term Absence

If **absence becomes a concern**, we may:

- Arrange additional meetings to understand the situation
- Discuss adjustments or support we can offer
- In some cases, seek advice from Occupational Health

- Consider whether the role remains suitable

We'll always be fair, supportive, and follow proper procedures.

4. Other Types of Absence

4.1 Medical Appointments

Routine Appointments:

- Try to book outside working hours where possible
- If unavoidable during work hours, give as much notice as possible
- Time off may be **[paid/unpaid]** depending on circumstances

Recurring Medical Treatment:

- Discuss with your manager to agree a suitable arrangement

4.2 Emergencies and Dependants

You have the right to **reasonable unpaid time off** to deal with emergencies involving a dependant (e.g., child, parent, spouse), such as:

- Unexpected childcare breakdown
- Serious illness or accident
- Death of a dependant

Procedure:

- Notify us **as soon as possible**
- State the reason and expected duration
- This is for **emergencies only**, not planned events

4.3 Time Off for Dependents (Parental Leave)

Eligible employees can take:

- **Maternity/Paternity Leave**
- **Parental Leave** (unpaid, to care for a child)
- **Shared Parental Leave**

Speak to **[HR/manager]** for details and to arrange this.

4.4 Compassionate Leave

We offer **[X days paid/unpaid leave]** in the event of bereavement or serious family illness. Speak to your manager as soon as possible.

4.5 Jury Service or Public Duties

If you're called for **jury service** or certain **public duties**:

- Notify us immediately with the official summons
 - You're entitled to reasonable time off
 - Pay: **[state whether paid/unpaid or "claim loss of earnings from court"]**
-

5. Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absence includes:

- Not turning up for work without notification
- Being absent without approval
- Extending leave without permission

Consequences:

- You will **not be paid** for unauthorised absence
- It may lead to **disciplinary action**
- Repeated unauthorised absence could result in dismissal

If you can't come in:

- Always contact us, even if you think you'll be in trouble
 - We'd rather know what's happening
-

6. Bradford Factor (Optional - for monitoring patterns)

We use the **Bradford Factor** to identify patterns of short-term absence that may need addressing:

Formula: $S^2 \times D$

- **S** = Number of separate absences in 12 months

- **D** = Total days absent in 12 months

Example:

- 10 separate 1-day absences = $1^2 \times 10 = \mathbf{1000 \text{ points}}$
- 1 absence of 10 days = $1^2 \times 10 = \mathbf{10 \text{ points}}$

Trigger points:

- **[300+]**: Informal discussion
- **[500+]**: Formal review meeting
- **[800+]**: Potential disciplinary action

This is a tool to identify patterns, not an automatic punishment.

7. Returning from Long-Term Absence

If you've been off for **[4 weeks or more]**:

- We may arrange a **phased return** (e.g., reduced hours initially)
- We'll discuss any **workplace adjustments** you might need
- Regular check-ins to ensure you're coping

Your wellbeing is important. We want to support your return.

8. Record Keeping

We maintain records of:

- All absence (dates, reasons, duration)
- Fit notes and medical certificates
- Return-to-work meetings

Your rights:

- Data is kept confidential in line with **GDPR**
 - You can request to see your absence records at any time
-

9. Policy Review

This policy is reviewed **annually** or when employment law changes.

Questions? Contact [HR contact/manager name] at [email/phone]

How to Use This Template

For L. Studio HR Clients:

1. Replace placeholders:

- [COMPANY NAME] - Your business name
- [Date] - Today's date
- [X days/weeks] - Your specific numbers
- [manager/HR] - Who employees should contact

2. Customize sections:

- Annual leave entitlement (statutory minimum is 28 days including bank holidays)
- Sick pay arrangements (if you offer more than SSP)
- Notice periods for holiday requests
- Busy periods when leave might be restricted

3. Consider your business:

- Small business? Keep it simple - don't over-complicate
- Seasonal work? Emphasize busy period restrictions
- Remote workers? Adjust notification procedures

4. Legal compliance:

- This template follows UK employment law
- Always check current statutory rates (SSP changes annually)
- Consider getting legal review for complex situations

What to Do Next:

1. Customize this policy for your business
2. Have it reviewed by HR professional or solicitor

3. Share with all employees
 4. Get acknowledgment that they've read it
 5. Review annually and when laws change
-

Important Notes

 **This is a template, not legal advice.**

- Customize it to fit your business
- Check current employment law and statutory rates
- Consider professional review before implementing
- Keep up to date with changes in UK employment law

 **Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) rates change annually** - always check gov.uk for current rates.

 **Consider your specific needs:**

- Industry requirements (e.g., healthcare, education)
 - Size of your team
 - Nature of your work (remote, shift patterns, etc.)
-

Need Help?

L. Studio HR can help you:

- Customize this policy for your business
- Create a complete employee handbook
- Ensure compliance with current UK law
- Implement absence tracking systems

Contact: <https://chuiable.github.io/lstudiohr/>

© L. Studio HR Ltd. This template is provided free for use. No warranty is given as to its suitability or legal compliance. Professional review is recommended.

Last Updated: January 2026