



Sickness and Attendance Policy

While the Town Council understands that illness is something that is outside individual control, as a small organisation, any staff absence can have a significant impact on its work. If you are unwell and unable to attend work, please let your manager know as soon as possible, as the Council may need to rearrange work or cancel meetings on your behalf. Although every illness is different, if you are able to say how long you expect to be off that would be helpful.

If your absence is for 7 days or less, then you must complete a self-certificate stating the reasons for absence on your return. Absences greater than 7 days must be supported by a medical certificate from a doctor. In the case of a lengthy absence, where you require more than one "doctor's note", it is your responsibility to ensure that you have a new certificate before the old one expires.

If you start incurring regular short-term absences, cumulative absences over a period, or your absences appear to follow a pattern, the Town Council may wish to have a confidential discussion with you regarding your attendance. The primary aim is to support staff by looking at ways to assist in either the short term or a more permanent basis, provided that it does not compromise the Council's overall objectives. The Town Council may also wish to seek medical advice (with your consent) from your doctor or other health professional on the best way forward.

If, despite these efforts and independent advice, your attendance continues to fall below the standards that the Town Council expect, then it may be necessary to take further action via the disciplinary procedure.

If your absence is prolonged the Council will keep in touch with you, although this will be done sensitively and in accordance with your wishes. As a general rule, if your absence exceeds 4 weeks the Council will wish to obtain some medical advice (with your consent) from your doctor or other health professional regarding the possible length of your absence and prospects for your return, as well as any other advice. Whether or not your illness could be considered a disability under the formal legal definition the Town Council will always consider whether there are any reasonable adjustments that could be made.

While the Town Council will make every effort to support you, there may be circumstances where the Council cannot fulfil its organisational objectives without your role being undertaken and if this happens then it may be

necessary to consider your dismissal on health grounds. This will always be a last resort and the options will be fully discussed with you before any final decision is taken.

The Town Council treat mental health issues as seriously and with the same general approach as physical illnesses. Sometimes mental health issues can manifest themselves in other ways, such as excessive "presenteeism". If at any point you believe you are suffering from a mental health issue which is affecting, or caused by, your work, please talk to your manager in complete confidence. The Council will take whatever steps possible to support you.

Alcohol and Drugs

While attending work under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or legal drugs which have been misused, would be a disciplinary matter, the Town Council also understands that sometimes individuals may become addicted to or dependent on such substances. If you believe you have a problem then please speak in confidence to your manager. The Town Council will do its utmost to be supportive and to assist you to gain support, advice and where appropriate treatment. As a general approach, the Town Council will treat such issues in the same way as other areas of ill health, and follow the guidelines above.