

**Outcomes
First
Group.**

ATTENDANCE MANAGEMENT POLICY

**Policy Folder:
Human Resources**

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Implementation: It is the responsibility of line managers to ensure that all colleagues are aware of and understand this policy and any future revisions.

Compliance: This policy complies with all relevant regulations and other legislation as detailed in the *Compliance with Regulations & Legislation Statement*.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This policy is for all employees of Outcome First Group, except for colleagues in their probation. (Colleagues on probation should refer to Section 18). This policy does not apply to agency/external consultancy colleagues, self-employed project workers or bank colleagues.

1.2 Outcomes First Group is committed in supporting the health and wellbeing of all our colleagues.

1.3 Outcomes First Group recognises that ill health is sometimes unavoidable, therefore this policy has been designed to ensure that a consistent approach is adopted whilst considering the individual circumstances of the colleague.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

Word / Term	Descriptor
Short-term Sickness	Any period of sickness up to 4 calendar weeks (20 consecutive days) in duration
Long-term Sickness	Any period of sickness over 4 calendar weeks (20 consecutive days) in duration.
Working Days	An employee's contracted working day, and hours, or equivalent e.g. a shift.
Phased Return	A period of time that follows a long-term sickness absence in which the colleague is supported to gradually return to work. This would not usually be more than 4 weeks
Secondary Employment	Where a colleague has more than one role in OFG (this includes internal bank work) or externally for another employer
Elective Surgery	A type of surgery that is chosen by the colleague, rather than being a medical necessity; it does not involve a medical emergency

3.0 PURPOSE

3.0 This policy is to ensure that any attendance management action taken is fair and consistent throughout OFG, regardless of age, ethnicity, gender, marital or civil partnership status, social status, trade union membership or working patterns.

3.1 It benefits all of us for everyone to be fit and healthy, in order to meet the requirements of their role. With this in mind, Outcomes First Group promotes a safe and healthy environment in line with health and safety legislation. To do this, we will provide and promote our Employee Assistance Program and on occasion we will ask your permission to complete an Occupational Health referral and or GP reports

4.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 It is the personal responsibility of all our colleagues to ensure their regular attendance at work is in line with their contract. Where colleague absence impacts on their ability to fulfill their role, it is appropriate for this to be reviewed.

4.2 Employees must:

- Understand their responsibility to take all reasonable steps to optimize their recovery from illness.
- Inform their manager of any absence at least 1 hour prior to their shift starting.
- Provide sickness certificates throughout the absence period.
- Notify the HR department(hroperationsadvice@ofgl.co.uk) if any claim is being made against a third party's insurance regarding personal injury. This includes compensation for loss of earnings.
- Fully engage with well-being meetings and fitness for work assessments. (This will include providing written permission for the organization to access medical reports prepared by a GP)

4.3 Line Manager's must:

- Ensure confidentiality when dealing with colleague absences and ensure any information provided is only disclosed on a need-to-know basis and with the colleague's agreement.
- Monitor and manage colleague absences in a timely manner and as a continuous process in accordance with this policy.
- Contact the HR department (hroperationsadvice@ofgl.co.uk) for advice at an early stage and ensure the leave request and all absence paperwork is saved on the colleagues' PeopleXD.
- Conduct welfare meetings with colleagues who have been absent for more than 4 weeks and maintain regular contact which suits both parties.
- Where appropriate, make reasonable adjustments to support a colleagues return to work.
- To change the dates, the manager must cancel the current request and submit a new one in PeopleXD

4.3.1 Maintaining Contact During Sickness Absence

- Managers are required to maintain regular contact with employees during their sickness absence, even if the employee has provided a sick note. This contact should be agreed upon at the start of the absence and can include methods such as weekly or bi-weekly phone calls, emails, or text messages. The purpose of this contact is to provide support, keep the employees updated, and discuss any assistance they may need. Special attention should be given to employees who have disclosed mental health concerns, ensuring appropriate follow-up and support are provided.

4.4 Role of HR

- Provide support to employees needing assistance with third-party claims.
- Offer additional advice to managers during the initial stages of sickness and return-to-work meetings.
- Assist employees during any sickness absence period/process.

5.0 NOTIFICATION OF ABSENCE

5.1. Colleagues should notify their line manager or on-call manager of any absence by telephone at least an hour before the start of their workday. Only in exceptional circumstances can a friend or relative call on your behalf. Where you have failed to attend work, the manager will attempt to contact you

5.2 Colleagues should give as much detail as possible when reporting absent, this includes: reason for absence, whether a GP has been consulted, an agreed level of communication for long term absence, if the absence is work related and an estimated duration of absence. The line manager needs to ensure this information is stored on People XD.

5.3 Colleagues must provide fit notes when issued by the GP to their line manager, the information on the form is to provide advice only and is not a legal obligation on the organisation as the employer.

6.0 ACCIDENT/INCIDENT REPORTING

6.1. In the unfortunate event of an accident happening at work which results in the colleague having to go off shift, the most senior colleague should be made aware of the situation before the colleague leaves the premises. It is the colleague's responsibility to ensure that a report of the injury is completed prior to them leaving.

6.2 The manager is responsible for ensuring that any accident and or incident is reported and passed on to the Health & Safety Team and a RIDDOR report is completed where required.

7.0 SICKNESS AND ANNUAL LEAVE

- 7.1 If a colleague falls ill immediately before or during annual leave, the group will allow, upon request, the colleague to take their annual leave at a later date, if the colleague has complied with the notification of their absence, keeps in touch and submits a Fit Note to cover the absence if applicable.
- 7.2 Any amendments to annual leave need to be approved by your line manager in writing. Any annual leave converted to sickness leave will be recorded in the normal way under this policy.
- 7.3 At the end of the annual leave year, if a colleague is absent long term, carryover of untaken annual leave will be considered. Additional carry over may be considered for the purpose of fulfilling a phased return to work.
- 7.4 Any colleague whose contract is terminated on the grounds of medical capability, will receive a payment for any outstanding annual leave, this will be calculated in line with their contractual allowance.

8.0. OBTAINING MEDICAL ADVICE

- 8.1. Outcomes First Group has the right to refer a colleague to an independent medical Professional for an assessment and / or to obtain medical information/advice where appropriate. Consent to obtain a medical report will be requested in writing.
- 8.2. Under the Access to Medical Reports Act 1988, colleagues have the right to see the report prior to it being submitted to the company.
- 8.3. Colleagues have the right to withhold consent, however, please note if you don't provide consent in writing, the company will make a decision based on the information they have available which as a result may not include specialist medical input.
- 8.4. Colleagues who consent to attending an Occupational Health appointment but fail to attend without a valid reason will have to pay the cost for not attending; this will be deducted from their pay.

9.0 PREGNANCY RELATED SICKNESS

- 9.1 Any absence directly related to pregnancy will not be considered under the formal process. However, if the illness occurs in the 4 weeks preceding the expected week of childbirth and is pregnancy related, the maternity leave will automatically start on the day after the first day of absence. Please refer to the Maternity Policy in this instance.
- 9.2 We are committed to supporting our colleagues throughout their pregnancy and to remain at work. When you notify the company that you're pregnant, we will carry out a full pregnancy risk assessment and support you with suitable alternative employment where possible

10.0 DISABILITY RELATED SICKNESS

- 10.1 Outcomes First Group policy is to oblige the colleagues' rights under the Equality Act 2010. Where necessary, the group will make reasonable adjustments to a colleague's working environment, or other relevant factors which impact their ability to do their role

11.0 RETURN FROM ABSENCE

- 11.1 All colleagues should complete a return to work with their manager on their return to work (if the manager is not available; a designated appropriate colleague will support). Colleagues do not have to provide a fit note for absences up to and including 7 calendar days Any absences over 7 calendar days, a fit note from the GP is required. All return-to-work meetings should be conducted within 3 working days of the employee's return to work.
- 11.2 If a colleague wants to return to work prior to the expiry date on their fit note, the colleague must obtain an up-to-date fit note from their GP confirming they are fit to return to work.
- 11.3 In exceptional circumstances, if the colleague is not comfortable discussing the reason for their absence with their manager, the colleague can discuss their absence with another manager or a member of HR. If during the return-to-work meeting, it's felt the colleague is not fit to return to work, advice must be requested from HR (hroperationsadvice@ofgl.co.uk).
- 11.4 A return to work plan should consider the following:
- the colleague's working hours and pattern
 - is a phased return required, if so, for how long and when this will be reviewed
 - whether any modifications or reasonable adjustments to the role are needed
 - whether redeployment needs to be considered
 - whether the colleague needs any specific support and/or training
 - advice from medical reports and Fit Notes

12.0 ABSENCE TRIGGERS

When a colleague has met any of the below 'triggers', the manager must consider moving to the formal review procedure in 13.

12.1 Triggers for short term sickness absence are anyone, or more of the following:

- 3 episodes of sickness absence during a continuous 3 month rolling period
- 5 episodes of sickness absence during a continuous 12 month rolling period
- 11 working days continuous sickness absence in a 12-month rolling period
- A Bradford factor score of 80 or above.

12.2 Absences that are linked with recurring patterns such as the following will also trigger an absence Review, for example

- Repeated absences just before rest days or bank holidays
- Absences that coincide with annual leave requests that have been declined
- Absences that occur during the same period each year
- Absences with regularly occur on the same day of the week

13.0 SHORT TERM ABSENCE MANAGEMENT

Stage 1 – Formal Sickness Review Meeting

13.1 This meeting will be conducted by the Line Manager, the colleague will be entitled to be joined by a union representative or colleague. A notetaker will also be in attendance to record the meeting.

13.2 The colleague will be given a minimum of 48 hours' notice of the meeting in writing. This letter will clearly outline the reason for the concern and the purpose of the meeting.

13.3 The outcome of this meeting can result in either a first written warning for sickness absence which stays on file for 6 months or for sickness absence to be monitored over a 3-month period with clear targets set.

13.4 Line managers should not wait until the end of the review period if further absences occur, and the targets breached.

Stage 2 – Formal Sickness Review Meeting

13.5 If following a formal stage one review, the colleague's level of attendance has not improved, the manager will move forward to a further stage 2 hearing. The reason for the concerns and purpose of the meeting will be set out in the invite letter.

13.6 The outcome of this meeting can result in a final written warning for sickness absence which stays on file for 12 months with clear targets set. The colleague will be informed that failure to improve may lead to dismissal on the grounds of capability.

Stage 3 – Final Sickness Review Hearing

13.7 If after following a formal stage 1 & 2 hearing, the targets have not been met, a final stage 3

sickness absence review meeting will take place. This meeting will be conducted by the manager who will go through the history of the case. The outcome of this meeting can result in dismissal for capability.

Before reaching the decision to dismiss, the manager must consider:

- The nature of the illness
- Whether reasonable adjustments have been sufficiently explored
- The likelihood of the illness/ a related illness recurring
- The length of the absences and periods of good health in between
- The impact the colleagues' absence is having on the team, young adults and service
- Any other points that need to be considered

14.0 LONG TERM SICKNESS ABSENCE MANAGEMENT

- 14.1 Long term sickness absences are to be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, line managers are expected to conduct regular welfare meetings with their colleague for any absences that are over 28 days.
- 14.2 Colleagues who are off sick for a pre-determined period, due to elective surgery may not need to be actively engaged as above if their return-to-work plan has been confirmed or a timetable for return to work has been discussed. But the line manager may refer the colleague to Occupational Health for support and guidance.
- 14.3 For complex absences, including cases of terminal illness, the line manager is expected to commence a suitable review process with advice from HR, this will be done on a case-by-case basis.
- 14.4 In cases of long-term ill health, where it has been advised that the colleague may be unlikely to be able to return to work in the foreseeable future, a formal medical capability meeting must be arranged. The colleague has the right to be accompanied by a colleague or a Trade Union representative.
- 14.5 A formal medical capability meeting can result in medical capability dismissal as per clause 17 within this policy.

15.0 APPEAL PROCESS

- 15.1 All colleagues have the right to appeal following all formal stages of the formal review process. The appeal should be put in writing and sent to the Appeal Officer (hroperationsadvice@ofgl.co.uk) as indicated on the outcome letter of sanction, within 5 working days of receiving the outcome letter.
- 15.2 The appeal should be based on either of the following:
- Whether the policy and procedure have been correctly observed and applied
 - Whether the level of sanction imposed is inappropriate and if not, why
 - Any additional evidence that is considered relevant to the outcome.
- 15.3 The appeal request will be acknowledged within 5 working days of receipt, an appeal hearing must take place within 14 working days of receiving the appeal letter.

15.4 Colleagues have the right to be represented by a fellow colleague or Trade Union representation.

15.5 The appeal decision concludes the internal process.

16.0 COSMETIC SURGERY

16.1 If a colleague request time off for cosmetic surgery, they will be encouraged to use their annual leave. This should be agreed in advance with the colleagues Line Manager. Colleagues who have no annual leave entitlement to use can be supported to take unpaid leave.

16.2 Any colleagues who wish to take advantage of this policy must:

- Inform their manager as soon as their plans to undergo cosmetic surgery have been confirmed.
- Provide a statement from a qualified medical practitioner that cosmetic surgery has been approved and giving the likely duration of recovery.
- Give reasonable notice of the day on which the surgery will take place.

17.0 MEDICAL SUSPENSION

17.1 Outcomes First Group has a duty to ensure the health and safety of its colleagues. In exceptional circumstances, it may be necessary to medically suspend a colleague until medical clearance has been obtained. A medical suspension would be with pay and the decision would be taken in conjunction with relevant advice from Occupational Health.

18.0 RULES FOR PROBATIONARY COLLEAGUES

18.1 Colleagues in probation will have monthly meetings with their Line Manager, Where colleagues within their probationary period fail to meet the standards of attendance, the Line Manager will discuss this with the colleague and explain the level of improvement needed. Colleagues will be advised if there is little or no improvement in their attendance, this could result in termination of their employment.

19.0 MISUSE OF THE SICKNESS ABSENCE POLICY

19.1 Failure to follow the notification of absence process could result in no sick pay for the duration of the absence. The absence will be recorded and treated as unauthorized unpaid absence which may lead to disciplinary action.

20.0 ASSOCIATED POLICIES

- Annual Leave Policy
- Maternity Leave Policy
- Capability Policy
- Disciplinary Policy

We are part of the Outcomes First Group Family, by working together we will build incredible futures by empowering vulnerable children, young people and adults in the UK to be happy and make their way in the world

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