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<b>Policy Name</b>	<b>Attendance Management Policy</b>
<b>Policy Author</b>	<b>Director</b>
<b>Approved by Sub Committee</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Approved by Management Committee</b>	<b>May 2023</b>
<b>Latest date of Next Review</b>	<b>May 2026</b>

West Whitlawburn Housing Co-operative will provide this policy on request at no cost, in larger print, in Braille, in audio or other non-written format, and in a variety of languages. Please contact the office.

**Registered with the Scottish Housing Regulator No. 203**  
**Registered Charity No. SCO38737, VAT Registration No. 180223636**  
**Registered society under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014**



## **1. Introduction**

West Whitlawburn Housing Co-operative (WWHC) recognises that on occasions it may be necessary for employees to be absent from work. However, we also have a duty to provide a reliable service to our customers and thus we need to ensure that we help you maintain the highest possible level of attendance.

This policy is designed to help all employees achieve good attendance, and to ensure that a consistent and fair approach in managing attendance is adopted throughout the organisation.

This policy and the guidelines it contains work in conjunction with, but is not limited to other policies such as discipline & grievance, dignity at work, health & safety and managing stress.

## **2. Aims of the Policy**

- To manage attendance in a way that reflects genuine concern for employees and to develop a positive attitude towards attendance.
- To set clear expectations for standards of attendance that we require from our employees.
- To separate two processes: attendance and absence management and provide guidelines for employees and managers in how to manage these.
- To identify the causes of absence and, where possible, develop a programme of supportive and preventive measures.
- To ensure training and support is available to both managers and employees.

## **3. Principles**

The organisation requires good attendance from all employees to meet its objectives.

- If your level of attendance is unsatisfactory you will be informed what improvement is required and possible consequences of failure to do so (which may include disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal).
- The attendance management process is not concerned with reasons for absence but with number of periods of absence/ days absent (excluding underlying health conditions protected under the Equality Act 2010).
- If you have an underlying health condition causing absence(s), then we will consider reasonable adjustments.
- Managers will conduct "return to work" interviews for every period of sickness absence within the spirit of this policy.

- You need to adhere strictly to our absence reporting procedures. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action and organisation sick pay being withheld.
- Managers will maintain accurate, up-to-date attendance records for all staff to manage absence effectively.

#### **4. Absence Monitoring**

A fundamental feature of good attendance management is the accurate and timely recording of all absences.

This is essential for processing the requirements of statutory and company sick pay arrangements and the process of managing attendance and absence. Good information allows patterns to be identified and can be an early indication of underlying health conditions. The sooner these issues are identified and acted upon – the more likely a successful conclusion for both you and the organisation can be achieved.

Accurate recording is also an essential element in satisfying potential concerns over the fairness of any actions taken by line managers.

Having maintained attendance records, section heads will be expected to provide and discuss aggregated statistics at Senior Staff Meetings and at Section Meetings with Staff.

#### **5. Absence Reporting Procedures**

If you cannot come to work, either due to illness or for any other reason, you must phone your line manager (or if not available, another manager) as soon as is reasonably possible.

You should do this before you are due to start your shift and if not possible, within one hour of your starting time.

#### **6. Certification**

##### **6.1 Self Certification**

You must fill in a self-certification form, whether or not you are entitled to sickness allowances and whatever the length or reason for absence.

Self-Certificates are required for absences of up to 7 days.

##### **6.2 Fit Notes**

If you are off due to illness or injury for more than seven consecutive calendar days, you must provide a fit note as soon as possible to your line manager.

If the Doctor ticks the 'may be fit for work' box your line manager will

arrange a meeting with you to discuss any adjustments suggested. Although we are not obliged to follow the doctor's advice, we will do our best to help you return to work and maintain a good attendance record. However, if we cannot agree reasonable adjustments you will remain off sick.

If we agree a phased return to work, the days you are still off sick within the agreed period will count as one period of absence.

An employee can come back to work at any time, even if this is before their fit note expires. They do not need to go back to their doctor first to be signed fit for work. If you come back to work before the expiry of your fit note, we will discuss this with you and may seek professional advice if required.

## **7. Keeping in Touch**

You are responsible for phoning your line manager to let them know the reasons for any absence and when you expect to return to work. If, in the event of an emergency you cannot get to a phone on day one of your absence, you should make sure that someone else calls on your behalf. After this, you should contact your line manager as soon as you can and maintain regular contact by calling daily during the first week of your absence (unless otherwise agreed with your line manager) and weekly thereafter.

If you fail to keep in contact as outlined above, we will initiate and maintain contact with you.

We expect that you let us know the following information: the reason for your absence, when you expect to return to work and contact details which can be used to maintain contact during your absence. (If this information is not provided we will contact you to find out this information).

## **8. Failure to Comply**

Where you do not follow reporting, certification, or keeping-in-touch arrangements we may withhold company sick pay.

Failure to comply with these requirements may also lead to disciplinary action against you in accordance with our disciplinary procedure.

Similarly, if we suspect that you have falsified your absence or have deliberately misled us, we will take disciplinary action against you. In serious and/or repeated cases, it may lead to a dismissal.

## **9. Return to Work**

A thorough return to work meeting will be carried out after every period of unplanned sickness absence. The purpose of a return to work interview is to establish if you are fit to return to work. This will be done by your line

manager (or another manager if he/she is not available) on the first day of your return to work at the start of your shift. Completed forms will be kept in your personnel file. The return to work interview forms contain confidential information and may only be viewed by authorised personnel, normally your line manager or any other manager who deals with the case.

## **10. Sick Pay**

### **10.1 Statutory Sick Pay (SSP)**

If eligible to SSP, this is irrespective to your entitlement to company sick pay. The scale of entitlement to SSP is reviewed by the government, normally at the beginning of each tax year. It is not paid for the first three days of absence and runs for 28 weeks after that.

If you are no longer entitled to SSP, you may be entitled to an incapacity benefit. You can enquire about this at your local Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). We will tell you if you are not entitled to SSP and send you the appropriate government form but it is then your responsibility to claim any other State Benefit which you may be entitled to.

### **10.2 Company Sick Pay**

WWHC's sick pay scheme is fully detailed in the Conditions of Service.

In any one rolling period of 52 weeks, we will pay a sickness allowance in line with the following:

<b>Continuous service at the date sickness starts</b>	<b>Full allowance paid for</b>	<b>Half allowance paid for</b>
Up to 1 year	5 weeks	5 weeks
Over 1 and under 2 years	9 weeks	9 weeks
Over 2 and under 3 years	18 weeks	18 weeks
Over 3 and under 5 years	22 weeks	22 weeks
Over 5 years	26 weeks	26 weeks

Your allowance is worked out based on your current rate of basic pay referred to as your 'normal pay'.

If you return to work on a phased basis, we will only pay your salary for the hours and days actually worked. The days and hours that you are still off sick may entitle you to SSP and the company sick pay you are eligible to and this will be taken off your entitlement. Or, you can ask to take it from your annual leave, time off in lieu or unpaid leave instead.

## **11. Attendance Management**

This refers to dealing with unacceptable levels of attendance, with no reference to reasons for absence or medical condition.

We will aim to assist you in maintaining a good attendance record. This will involve maintaining good records, ensuring return to work meetings are completed and, helping investigate and address any identified underlying causes of absence.

Where this fails to secure a required improvement, we will invoke the terms of the disciplinary procedure. Unsatisfactory attendance reviews can result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

If at any stage during this process it becomes apparent that an underlying health condition is involved, medical information will be sought, and further discussion will take place prior to deciding on any appropriate action, if any.

Absence periods related to pregnancy or underlying health conditions classed as a disability under the Equality Act 2010 will not be considered for the purpose of attendance management process. This must be confirmed by employee's GP or Occupational Health Consultant.

Managing attendance is concerned with the number of spells of absence and/or number of days absent, which has become unacceptable. It is not concerned with the causes for absence and will never question whether absences are genuine or not. It does not therefore distinguish between absences certified by a doctor and those that are not.

## **12. Attendance Review Triggers**

Attendance review triggers are a tool for ensuring that the monitoring of absence highlights when additional action to manage attendance should start. Trigger levels are a guide to when to take action. The trigger levels should also be used as the standard to establish if the employee is back to maintaining an acceptable attendance level.

There are times when action may need to occur even though the absence level has not reached the trigger level. Absence patterns that suddenly get worse or do not appear random may prompt earlier action. A trigger level can be considered as the level of non-attendance that is so disruptive that it begins to affect efficient service delivery and puts extra pressure on colleagues still at work.

The agreed trigger levels are as follows:

<b>Stage</b>	<b>Trigger</b>	<b>Potential Outcome</b>
1	3 absences, or 5 days absence in 3 month period	Stage 1 - Informal Action
2	A further 3 periods of absence, or a further 5 days absence within a 6	Stage 2 - Written Warning

<b>Stage</b>	<b>Trigger</b>	<b>Potential Outcome</b>
	month period from when the last action was taken.	
3	A further 3 periods of absence, or a further 5 days absence within a 6 month period from when the last action was taken	Stage 3 - Final Written Warning
4	A further 3 periods of absence, or a further 5 days absence within a 6 month period from when the last action was taken	Stage 4 - Dismissal

### **Guidance on moving through the Procedure**

Where absence levels fall into one of the above categories, absence review meetings will take place with your line manager, or other manager as appropriate. Each stage of moving through the procedure, is on a rolling basis from each stage.

There may however, be occasions where an employee's attendance is satisfactory, only to lapse very soon after the review periods noted above. Where a pattern emerges, the employee's record under the Attendance Management Procedure should be borne in mind in deciding whether to repeat the previous level of the procedure or advance to the next level.

At all stages – record meeting, copy to employee, file in personnel file.

#### **Stage 1 (Informal Action)**

Informal review meeting with employee to discuss the absence.

- Establish whether there are any underlying issues relating to the absence
- Establish whether medical advice is required, or if medical advice has been obtained, the review will consider the advice given and whether further advice / support is required relative to the staff member's level of attendance and ability to continue in employment.
- Agree a way forward, action that will be taken and a time-scale for review
- Employee's attendance to be monitored for appropriate period
- Employee advised of the consequences of continued poor attendance (e.g. formal action)

## **Stage 2 (Formal Action - Written Warning)**

If the employee reaches the next attendance review trigger, then a formal disciplinary hearing may take place and a possible outcome may be the issuing of a first written warning.

Further medical advice may be sought from the employee's medical practitioner or occupational health, relative to the staff member's level of attendance and whether this is likely to improve and ability to continue in employment.

Review meeting with employee to discuss unsatisfactory attendance levels and medical information

- Establish whether there are any underlying issues relating to the absence
- Agree a way forward, action that will be taken and a time-scale for review
- Employee's attendance to be monitored for appropriate period
- Employee advised of the consequences of continued poor attendance (e.g. final written warning)
- Employee will be informed in writing of their right of appeal if disciplinary action taken.

## **Stage 3 (Formal Action – Final Written Warning)**

If the employee reaches the next attendance review trigger, then a formal disciplinary hearing may take place and a possible outcome may be the issuing of a final written warning.

The employee may be requested to attend a disciplinary hearing following the return to work interview.

Further medical advice may be sought from the employee's medical practitioner or occupational health, relative to the staff member's level of attendance and whether this is likely to improve and ability to continue in employment.

Review meeting with employee to discuss unsatisfactory attendance levels and medical information

- Establish whether there are any underlying issues relating to the absence
- Agree a way forward, action that will be taken and a time-scale for review
- Employee's attendance to be monitored for appropriate period



- Employee advised of the consequences of continued poor attendance
- Employee will be informed in writing of their right of appeal if disciplinary action taken.

#### **Stage 4 – (Formal Action – Dismissal)**

If there is still no sustained improvement in attendance whilst a final written warning remains live, then a further disciplinary hearing may be held with the employee and if no acceptable explanation is forthcoming, dismissal may result.

Any mitigating circumstances should be established during the most recent return to work interview.

### **13. Absence Management**

WWHC will adopt a sympathetic approach to employees with a long-term and/or underlying health condition. If you find yourself in such a position you should be confident that your manager will react in a supportive fashion when approached.

The following points will always be considered in relation to long-term absence:

- The nature of the illness and any contributing factors
- The likely duration and/or frequency of your absence(s)
- Any actions that can be taken by you
- Any reasonable adjustments that we could make
- Any possible redeployment opportunities
- The nature of the duties in relation to your health conditions
- Our business needs and the impact that your absence is having upon these
- Your entitlement to statutory and company sick pay

If a medical professional makes suggestions for any reasonable adjustments, these will be discussed prior to your return to work to determine if these can be accommodated, along with any suggestions you or we may also have made. Although we are not bound by the doctor's suggestions, we will make all possible efforts to accommodate your prompt return and good attendance. If we agree, any reasonable adjustments, we will also set time scales and reviews to assess if they are still required and suitable.

When managing a long-term absence, a termination of employment for the reason of ill health capability may be considered where all other options have been exhausted, and the organisation can no longer sustain the absence.

## **14. Dishonest Absence**

If you are found to falsify or exaggerate your absence, this will be treated as gross misconduct. An investigation will be carried out in accordance with our disciplinary procedure and disciplinary action may be instigated, including dismissal or future withdrawal of the company sick pay benefit.

## **15. Other Provisions**

### **15.1 Absence and holidays**

If during an authorised period of annual leave, you fall ill or have an accident and you produce a fit note, we may count the period as sick leave and not as annual leave. You must speak to your manager on the first day of your return to work or earlier if possible and provide them with the necessary certification

Where an employee intends to go on holiday while on sick leave, they must request prior approval from their line manager as soon as is reasonably practical. The line manager will consider the employee's reason for absence and if approval is appropriate or annual/other leave should be used.

If you are off on long-term sick leave of more than 6 months, we will reduce your annual leave pay to the statutory minimum entitlement of 5.6 weeks, including statutory holidays, in line with WWHC's Terms and Conditions of Employment.

### **15.2 Doctor/hospital/dental appointments**

Doctor, hospital and dental appointments should be arranged outwith working hours. If it is not possible, you should request time off from your line manager. Arrangements could include using annual leave, TOIL/flexi or unpaid leave. In some circumstances managers may use their discretion and consider giving paid time off.

### **15.3 Conduct whilst off sick**

When on sick leave, you are still bound by your contract of employment with us and all our policies including Code of Conduct and your duty of fidelity. We also expect that you do not participate in activities that would be at odds with the reason for your absence. Any breach in respect of this will be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure. This includes conduct on social networking sites and any other publicly made remarks regarding our customers, work colleagues, partners and anyone else who is connected with us.

### **15.4 Cosmetic procedures**

Absence due to cosmetic procedures (whether carried out in the UK or

abroad) will not fall under the sick leave or pay unless it is recommended by health professionals. Employees should therefore request time off and agree with their line manager how the absence will be processed, e.g. annual leave or unpaid leave.

### **15.5 IVF treatment**

Absences relating to IVF treatment will not be processed as sick leave or pay. The same applies to a partner of a person that is undergoing such treatment. Instead, you should discuss with your line manager how time off for the treatment could be accommodated, e.g. annual leave, flexi time or unpaid leave. Absences relating to IVF treatment will also not be treated as relating to pregnancy unless the employee actually falls pregnant.

### **15.6 Stress management**

Stress is not an illness. It can result from an illness or lead to one but it is not an illness itself. The same relates to "nervous debility" or any other diagnosis of that type. If you go off sick with stress, your manager will endeavour to find out the underlying cause so that an appropriate action can be taken (if any) and in particular to determine whether conditions at work cause or contribute to stress and whether something could be done to help the situation. We will follow procedures as outlined in the stress management policy. If your absence is certified by a doctor, your manager may ask your doctor to clarify the underlying cause for stress.

### **15.7 Pension arrangements**

Where an employee has been on long term sick leave, which has included a period of half pay being received by the employee, WWHC will pay the cost of the employer contributions at the reduced rate for the period of the reduced sick pay.

WWHC will assist any employees who are members of the SFHA Pension Scheme who find it necessary to retire as a consequence of ill health or those with terminal ill health. WWHC will liaise directly with the Pension Trust on behalf of the staff member.

## **16. Equalities**

We are committed to ensuring equal opportunities and fair treatment for all people in our work. In implementing this Policy, we will provide a fair and equal service to all people, irrespective of factors such as gender, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, language or social origin, or other personal attributes.

## **17. General Data Protection Regulations**

The organisation will treat your personal data in line with our obligations

under the current data protection regulations and our own Privacy Policy. Information regarding how your data will be used and the basis for processing your data is provided in WWHC's employee privacy notice.

## **18. Review**

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years and in line with legislative updates.

**This policy must be read and applied together with all the current relevant EVH Guidance and templates and related WWHC policies.**

## **Temporary cover For Sickness Absence**

### **1. Introduction**

When an employee is absent through sickness for 4 weeks or more it is deemed as long term.

### **2. Policy Position**

In order to maintain service levels, an overview should be taken of the workload and priorities of the section being affected and of the organisation as a whole.

This will be done on a weekly basis to determine if additional staff resources are required

The Director will have delegated authority to ensure each section has adequate resource cover in place to meet demand during periods of staff sickness absence.

The following will be considered:

- Stress and pressures on staff due to colleague absence
- Priorities and impact on service delivery
- Budget availability for additional resource cover
- Redeployment of staff resources from other areas within the organisation
- Temporary promotions
- Cover from an external source

### **3. Reporting**

Sickness absence and temporary cover arrangements will be reported to the next Management Committee meeting.