



Sick Leave Policy



Introduction

The University recognises that regular attendance is an essential part of the smooth running of the University. It also recognises that it has a responsibility to support employees who experience ill health during the course of their employment with the University. The DCU Sick Leave Policy is just one element of the University's overall commitment to support staff wellbeing and welfare.

Purpose of the Policy

The Policy outlines the provisions and arrangements in place for the administration and monitoring of the University's Sick Leave Scheme (in line with Public Service Management (Sick Leave) Regulations 2014 (S.I. No. 124 of 2014) as amended by Public Service Management (Sick Leave) (Amendment) Regulations 2015 (S.I. No. 384 of 2015)).

The Policy aims to promote and facilitate improved attendance levels amongst University employees by managing absence due to sick leave in a fair, reasonable and consistent manner. It also aims to raise awareness of the scheme rules and regulations, benefits and entitlements and the roles and responsibilities of both management and staff as they relate to the Policy.

Scope

The Sick Leave Policy applies to all employees of Dublin City University.

Policy Statement

Sick leave, with or without pay is granted, at the discretion of the University. The decision whether sick leave is granted, is a matter for the Head of School/Unit in consultation with the Director of Human Resources (HR) or his/her nominee.

Sick leave, with or without pay is granted to an employee to provide adequate opportunity for the employee to recover from the illness and facilitate an early return to work.

Notification of absence due to illness should be made to the Head of School/Unit or his/her nominee as soon as possible on the first day of illness.

Where an employee is absent on continuous sick leave of more than 2 days, a medical certificate must be provided. Where sick leave extends from Friday to Monday inclusive, a medical certificate must be furnished.



To be acceptable, a medical certificate must state the name and address of the employee, the doctor's name and address must be clearly legible on the certificate. The certificate must be signed and dated by a qualified medical practitioner registered with the Irish/UK Medical Council/Dental Council of Ireland.

The certificate must normally be for a week's duration or less. In the case of longer term illness, certificates may (with prior agreement) be submitted monthly.

The provision of a medical certificate does not in itself entitle the staff member to sick leave.

Employees who do not attend work due to illness and have not notified their Manager as to the reason for their absence or provided the appropriate medical certification will be deemed to be on unauthorized absence from work. This may result in loss of pay and /or the matter being dealt with under disciplinary procedures.

The University reserves the right to request examination of a staff member on sick leave by one or more medical practitioners appointed by the University.

Staff members' who have exhausted the allowance of sick leave with pay, or who are not eligible, may be allowed sick leave without pay.

Sick leave (on full or half pay) are fully reckonable for superannuation and increment purposes.

Absences on temporary rehabilitation remuneration (TRR) are not reckonable for superannuation and increment purposes.

Sick Leave & Pay

The Staff are eligible to sick leave with pay calculated on a pro-rata basis as outlined below.

A) Uncertified Sick Leave

Eligible staff may not exceed seven days of uncertified sick leave in any twenty-four month rolling period. Any further sick leave must be certified or be deducted from the staff member's annual leave entitlement (subject to approval from the Head of School / Unit), for the current or succeeding year, or it may be deducted from salary.



B) Certified Sick Leave – Ordinary Illness

Eligible staff who have absences of three or more consecutive days must be certified by a medical practitioner and subject to the scheme rules maybe be eligible (at the discretion of and subject to University approval) to:

- receive full pay less Social Welfare Illness Benefit for certified sick leave up to a maximum of three months (92 days) and
- half pay thereafter for a further three months (91 days), subject to a maximum of six months (183 days) paid sick leave in a rolling four-year period.

C) Certified Sick Leave – Critical Illness Protocol

Eligible staff who become incapacitated as a result of a critical illness or serious physical injury may be granted extended paid sick leave with pay, in exceptional circumstances of:

- A maximum of six months (183 days) on full pay in a year.
- Followed by a maximum of six months (182 days) on half pay. Subject to a maximum of twelve months (365 days) paid sick leave in a four year rolling period.

D) Temporary Rehabilitation Remuneration (TRR)

Where the relevant period of paid sick leave has been exhausted, an employee with a minimum of 5 years' service (in a pensionable position) may be granted Temporary Rehabilitation Remuneration (TRR) at the end of the paid sick leave period.

Staff who are members of the Single Pension Scheme may be eligible after a period of 2 years.

Absence in excess of twelve months in a four-year period will be unpaid unless a staff member qualifies for payment of TRR.

E) Pregnancy Related Illness

If a staff member is unfit for work due to a pregnancy related illness and has exhausted sick leave at half pay she will continue to receive sick leave at half pay for the duration of the pregnancy related illness, prior to going on maternity leave. If a staff member is unfit for work following maternity leave, her access to sick leave at half pay will be extended by the period of absence on sick leave on half pay due to pregnancy related illness which occurred before she went on maternity leave.



F) Overpayments

Where an overpayment of salary arises, for example, as a result of the late recording of sick leave absences, such overpayment will be recouped from the staff member's future salary payment.

Roles and Responsibilities

Employees

Employees are expected:

- To attend work as per their contract of employment.
- To take responsibility for their own health, safety and welfare.
- To advise their Manager of any circumstances that may affect their attendance.
- To comply with the notification and certification procedure in accordance with the University's Sick Leave Policy.
- To ensure that they are fully aware who to contact, by telephone, to advise of a sick leave absence.
- Where eligible, to apply for illness benefit payments from the Department of Social Protection.
- To maintain frequent (weekly) contact with their Manager, by telephone, whilst absent on sick leave. Employees on long term sick leave absence should maintain regular contact with their Manager / Human Resources to keep them updated on their progress.
- To attend any occupational health appointment that is arranged by the University and to adhere to any recommendations/outcomes arising from that assessment.
- To familiarize themselves with the University's Sick Leave Policy and the sick pay benefits.
- To comply with the provisions of the University's Sick Leave Policy (i.e. this policy).
- To avail of appropriate support services, as necessary.
- To cooperate fully with reasonable rehabilitative measures to facilitate a return to work as quickly as possible.



- To minimize absences arising from accidents or ill health by complying with health & safety requirements.

Managers

Managers are expected:

- To promote and encourage high levels of attendance.
- To keep accurate and up to date sick leave records for all employees for whom they are responsible.
- To ensure compliance with notification and certification procedures in accordance with the University's Sick Leave Policy.
- To notify HR of an employee's sick leave absence if it is greater than one week or immediately if the medical certificates states 'stress', work related or otherwise.
- To ensure an employee's sick leave record is assessed at the start of each sick leave absence. There are many factors for consideration such as sick pay benefits, occupational health assessment, extended paid sick leave assessment under Critical Illness Protocol, Income Continuance claims etc., as applicable.
- To inform HR of an employee's anticipated and actual return to work from sick leave.
- To seek support and advice from HR regarding the management of sick leave absence.
- To ensure that employees are aware who they should contact, by telephone, in the event that they are absent due to illness or injury and that all employees have the necessary contact details.
- To advise employees when their sick leave record is a cause for concern (e.g. frequent or persistent short-term sick leave absence, frequent uncertified sick leave etc.) and of the necessary improvements required.
- To ensure employees maintain regular contact by telephone, when absent due to illness or injury and to contact employees directly if this is not adhered to (following consultation with Human Resources).
- To take all reasonably practicable steps to accommodate an employee's return to work from sick leave in line with any recommendations from HR and/or the University's Occupational Health Provider.
- To make reasonably practicable adjustments to employment arrangements or accommodations for employees with a disability in line with any reasonable accommodation recommendations.



- To advise employees of the Employee Assistance Programme and promote its uptake.
- To manage health and safety in the workplace in accordance with the University's and Departmental Safety Statements.
- To maintain confidentiality in relations to employees' sick leave records.
- To discuss each sick leave absence with employees' at the earliest opportunity on their return to work and keep a record of each discussion.

Human Resources (HR)

HR advises Managers and staff on the operation of the University's Sick Leave Policy. HR is expected:

- To provide information to employees in relation to the University's Sick Leave Policy.
- To provide information, guidance, training and support for Managers in relation to the University's Sick Leave Policy.
- To provide advice and support to Managers in monitoring and managing sick leave absence and to ensure that the University's Sick Leave Policy are consistently applied.
- To refer employees to the University's Occupational Health Physician, as appropriate.
- To notify employees in writing of occupational health appointments, outcomes, recommendations and sick pay benefits.
- To liaise with Managers, as required, on the implementation of recommendations arising from occupational health assessments.
- To advise employees on the availability of the Employee Assistance Programme.
- To ensure that any salary adjustments arising from a reduction of sick pay benefits are processed in a timely manner on receipt of sick leave records from Managers.

University's Occupational Health Provider

The University's Occupational Health Provider (OHP) provides a confidential specialist occupational health service for all employees referred. The OHP shall:

- Assess the employee's current fitness for work.
- Liaise with the employee's own medical practitioner (with consent), if necessary.
- Advise on the likely duration of absence (and eligibility to ill-health retirement in long terms sick leave situations).



- Make recommendations, as appropriate and necessary, to assist an employee’s recovery and return to work.
- Advise on reasonable accommodations to facilitate the employee’s return to work as required.

Sanction

Cases of persistent or repeated sick leave absence and/or incapability may be addressed in line with Section 4.7 of [Statute 5 of 2010](#) (Suspension and Dismissal of Employees).

Definitions

Self Certified Sick Leave	Sick leave of up to and including two consecutive working days which is not certified by a doctor.
Certified Sick Leave	Sick leave which has been certified by a doctor. All absences in excess of two consecutive working days must be covered by a doctor’s medical certificate.
Frequent short-term absence	Normally, absences of 1-2 days at a time, on five or more occasions in a 12 month period.
Long-term absence	Absences lasting more than four consecutive weeks
Unauthorised absence	Occurs when a staff member’s absence: 1) Is not supported by a doctor’s medical certificate by due date where applicable i.e. by the third day of absence. 2) Has not been notified to and approved by the appropriate manager.
Occupational Health Physician	(OHP) is defined as a provider of independent medical advice.

Related Documentation

The University Sick Leave Policy should be read in conjunction with:

[**Revised Sick Leave arrangements applicable to all Staff of the Universities and other Third Level Colleges under the remit of the HEA**](#)



Other relevant documentation which should be read in conjunction with the policy include:

2014: New Arrangements for Sick Leave - [Letter from Tom Boland Chief Executive HEA.](#)

Department of Public Expenditure and Reform [Guide to Sick Leave Regulations](#)

Sick leave arrangements - a [Communication to all public service bodies](#)

Statutory Instruments S.I. No. 124 of 2014 [PUBLIC SERVICE MANAGEMENT \(SICK LEAVE\) REGULATIONS 2014](#)

Contact

Any queries regarding should be directed to the Human Resources Department.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed in line with appropriate legislation and/or circulars or updates as issued by DPER, HEA or DES from time to time.

Version Control

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End.