

## ABSENCE MANAGEMENT POLICY & PROCEDURE

### 1. POLICY STATEMENT

CSS recognises the contribution of all our workers and is committed to providing good working conditions and health and safety standards.

We understand that from time-to-time workers may be absent from their place of work due to illness and we aim to ensure that such absence is managed in a consistent, supportive and effective way so that workers are supported to return to work after illness whilst maintaining operational and service levels.

### 2. SCOPE

This policy and procedure applies to all employees and workers within the organisation.

### 3. RESPONSIBILITY

- The staff in the following roles are responsible for implementing this policy:
- The CEO has overall responsibility for Absence Management
- Quality/Office Manager has responsibility for development and implementation of policy and procedure
- Divisional Managers/Supervisors/Team Leaders are responsible for training the policy throughout the organisation and communicating internally and externally
- Divisional Managers/Supervisors/Team Leaders/Recruiters are responsible for day-to-day duties including cooperation with clients, workers and employees, handling complaints and co-ordinating improvements.
- All employees and workers are responsible for co-operating with management in the implementation of this policy.

### 4. POLICY COMMITMENTS

- We provide a fair, transparent and consistent method of dealing with the absence of workers.
- We do not expect workers to work when they are unfit and will ensure an environment free of pressure to do so.
- We are committed to effectively managing and reducing sickness absence as high levels of absence impact on our ability to provide excellent service levels to our client.
- All workers understand the policy and procedure and have access to guidance and support on the arrangements that are in place to manage sickness absence.
- All workers, jobseekers and staff understand how to, and can raise grievances, complaints, concerns, suggestions or ideas related to absence management.
- Breaches of the policy are treated as retraining or misconduct matters as appropriate and such cases are dealt with according to our QL-956 Conduct and Behaviour Breaches and QF-010 Disciplinary and Grievance Procedure.
- We monitor, review and improve the policy regularly and whenever any issues related to its implementation are identified.

The policy will be reviewed annually and at any other time it is considered necessary due to changes in business or legislation.

### 5. PROCEDURE

This procedure enables managers to address absence issues, both short and long-term, in a fair, consistent and equitable manner. It is recognised however that all cases must be dealt with on an individual basis because of differing circumstances therefore this procedure gives an outline of the principles to be observed.

This procedure will be invoked where management has cause for concern regarding a worker's short-term, persistent or long-term absence.

The procedure for managing absence MUST be followed. It is the responsibility of every worker to report any absence and only in exceptional cases should this be done by someone else on their behalf.

### **5.1 Worker Responsibilities**

#### **Reporting Absence**

All workers must telephone their line manager as early as possible prior to or on the first day of absence, before shift start but if this is not possible, no later than one hour before the scheduled start time.

Emails or text messages are acceptable only if it is not possible to make a phone call.

If a worker does not report for work, and does not respond to phone calls, we may contact the designated emergency contact to try to establish the reason for absence.

Unauthorised absence may be dealt with under our disciplinary procedures and or conduct and behaviour breach policy

Workers must talk directly to their recruitment/line manager. If the line manager/supervisor is unavailable a message must be left giving the reason for the absence. Please check your assignment details for direct contact numbers.

When reporting absence, workers must give the following information:

- the reason for the absence (if known).
- the expected length of absence (if known) If the expected length of absence is not known, then the worker should call on each day of absence.

In cases of continued absence, workers must contact their line manager again on the fourth day of absence to provide them with up-to-date information.

#### **Sickness Certification**

If an absence lasts for seven calendar days or less, on the first day back at work, workers will be required to complete a QF-312 CSS Sickness Self-Certificate giving the reasons for absence. The Certificate will be countersigned by a manager/supervisor and subsequently will be kept in the individual's personnel file.

If an absence exceeds seven calendar days a medical statement of fitness to work certificate, usually from a doctor must be provided to the line manager, no later than the tenth day of absence, covering the absence from the eighth day.

If an absence continues beyond the period covered by the initial medical certificate, further fitness to work certificates must be submitted to give continuous cover for the period of absence. On eventual return to work employees must complete the QF-312 CSS SELF CERTIFICATION SICKNESS FORM in respect of the first seven days or less not covered by a doctor's medical certificate.

If the doctor's medical certificate does not specify the period of absence covered, it will be classed as covering a period of seven calendar days only.

### **5.2 Absence Management Process**

On returning to work, workers will be required to attend a return to work interview with their line manager to discuss their absence.

The discussion should allow for an exchange of information and be as frank and as open as possible as this will prevent any misunderstandings concerning the nature of the absence.

This will also enable the line manager to discuss any assistance or reasonable adjustments that may be possible to enable an employee to return to work or prevent further absence occurring.

A record of the interview should be kept by the line manager on form QF-313 - RETURN TO WORK INTERVIEW FORM.

### **Short-Term Persistent Absence**

#### **Monitoring and Consultation**

CSS operates an accurate method of recording and monitoring levels of absence. If the amount of time being taken off for illness is giving cause for concern, the supervisor/manager will discuss this with the worker at the return-to-work interview.

#### **Continued Absence**

If absence levels continue to cause concern, then workers may be referred to a Company specified doctor /Occupational Health Service for an independent medical examination. Alternatively, a medical report may be requested from the individual's GP with the permission of the worker concerned.

If the absence is the consequence of an underlying medical condition, then medical advice will be sought to identify any reasonable adjustments or assistance that the Company can provide.

#### **Disciplinary Action**

Continued non-attendance, with no underlying medical condition identified, may result in action being taken under the QL-956 Conduct and Behaviour Breaches and QF-010 Disciplinary and Grievance Procedure and could ultimately lead to dismissal/end of assignment. As part of this process workers will be given the opportunity to improve their attendance.

### **Long-Term Absence**

#### **Consultation and Discussion**

In cases of long-term absence, the line manager must arrange to conduct regular 'care and concern' meetings with the aim of:

- Helping to prevent workers from feeling isolated
- Planning and implementing workplace adjustments where necessary, in collaboration with the individual
- Planning and coordinating a return-to-work plan

These meetings should be recorded and notes sent to the worker concerned. Workers may choose to be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative.

If workers are too ill to travel, the line manager may choose to conduct a home visit at a mutually convenient time.

#### **Medical Advice**

Where there is doubt regarding a worker's ability to return to work on a permanent basis, advice must be sought from Occupational Health Service Provider. Alternatively, a medical report may be requested from the individual's GP with the permission of the member of staff concerned.

Workers must make themselves available to attend medical referrals.

#### **Returning to Work**

Where possible the Company will make its best endeavours to aid a return to work on a permanent basis. To establish the most effective way of doing this the Company may seek further medical advice.

This may include making reasonable adjustments to the worker's job, allowing a phased return to work, or by allowing the worker to return to work on a reduced or alternative hours basis.

#### **Redeployment**

If medical opinion is that a worker is unfit to return to their former assignment, the possibility of alternative work will be considered. However, depending on the availability of alternative posts, this may not be possible.

### **5.3 Termination on the Grounds of Capability**

Should the termination of a worker's contract be identified during the final care and concern meeting as the only appropriate option (i.e. other options as outlined above have been investigated and found to be inappropriate) a formal capability review meeting must be held with the worker in question and their line manager to fully consider the situation again.

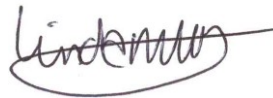
At this meeting, the worker may choose to be accompanied by a work colleague or Trade Union Representative.

Following the meeting if the workers contract is terminated, they will be given a letter confirming the reason for termination, the date of dismissal, their right to appeal, any payment in lieu of contractual notice and any other outstanding payments to which they are entitled e.g. annual leave.

### **5.4 Data Protection**

All information relating to an individual's absence will be handled in line with Data Protection principles and will be used purely to carry out the management of their employment.

Dated 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026



Linda Miller - CEO