



## **Managing absence**

This factsheet aims to provide information on best practice in regards to absence management.

### **Legal requirements**

The legal requirements surrounding the management of employee absence can be found within the Disability Discrimination Act, the Health and Safety at Work Act, the Employment Rights Act, and the Data Protection Act.

You can encourage a work environment that maximises staff attendance, high motivation and job satisfaction by:

- Providing good working conditions and high standards
- Offering interesting and varied work involving employee responsibility
- Encouraging teamwork
- Giving as much flexibility as you can
- Creating a thorough induction training programme
- Having effective policies that are known and understood by staff

### **Monitoring and recording**

For seven days or less of absence, employees should produce a self-certification form. For more than seven days of absence, employees should produce a self-certification form with a doctor's certificate. Throughout the period of absence you should remain in contact with the employee to update records and assess the situation.

Monitor and assess absence levels within your organisation and benchmark against other industry averages and other similar organisations to see if there are any problems.

### **Sickness absence policy**

It is best to develop a sickness absence policy to clarify your expectations and to manage each sickness case on a fair and consistent basis.

Return to work interviews are a good practice to ensure that the employee is fit to return to work and to welcome the employee back into the workplace.

Employee absence can be a conduct matter or a capability matter, and should be treated with sensitivity and due regard to legislation.

To access medical records, employers are required to seek consent from employees.

It is good practice to make reasonable adjustments to working arrangements, premises, or jobs to enable each employee, with or without a disability, to maximise their attendance and productivity.

Dismissals due to ill health are complex, so employers should consult an employment lawyer.

**This information is taken from the publication *The Good Employment Guide (2005)*.  
Find out more at [www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/publications](http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/publications)**

To find out more about managing absence, visit the following websites:

1) Acas: Information for new and existing employers

[www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk)

2) askNCVO: NCVO provides free information, signposting and services for trustees, staff and volunteers

[www.askncvo.org.uk](http://www.askncvo.org.uk)

3) Business Link: Becoming an employer for the first time

[www.businesslink.gov.uk](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk)

4) Health and Safety Executive (HSE): For information around health and safety and the law

[www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)