



Do you employ staff?

Do you have difficulty understanding your legal and contractual responsibilities as an employer?

Do employment problems keep you awake at night?

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## Absence Management Tips

### Why Is Managing Absence Important?

One of the most obvious downsides of absenteeism is the cost incurred by the employer. According to the CIPD's Absence Management Survey conducted in 2014, the average cost of an employee's absence per year is £609 (based on the average employee having 6.6 days of absence per year). Employee absence can be very costly due to sick pay and the possible requirement for overtime to be worked. Not only can absence cause financial detriment to a company, it can cause cultural damage too. If a company is failing to manage employee absence it is more likely that a culture of non-genuine absences will develop. Employee absence can also cause low morale, low motivation, and stress for the employees who stay in work and have to complete their missing colleague's role as well as their own, making work seem like a punishment for those who commit to maintaining good attendance levels.

### Why Do Some Employers Not Manage Employee Absence?

Some employers can find the prospect of managing employee absence quite daunting, possibly due to a lack of experience in this area or due to being scared or sensitive to the possible conflict that can arise when managing an employee. Similarly, some employers fail to manage employee absence because they are scared of the consequences of managing it wrong. In these instances some employers would rather avoid the issue all together. Failing to manage employee absence can also be attributed to something simpler, such as being too busy or being unaware of how bad the situation is.

### Tips for Managing Employee Absence

The best advice that can be offered to any employer is to ensure that you have a thorough and legally compliant absence management procedure and that you follow it to the letter! A good procedure will explain the company's expectations to employees, will set out the steps that management should follow when managing an employee absence and will also help your company to develop a culture of accountability; something which will help you to manage problems such as high levels of employee absence. If employees know that their absences will be looked at closely they may be less likely to have non-genuine absences.

As well as a culture of accountability, it is good to try to foster a workplace culture, which focuses on openness, communication, and employee well-being. Actively encouraging a healthy workforce is another good way to proactively manage employee absence.

As of autumn 2015 the Government will be fully introducing its' Fit For Work Scheme. This scheme will enable employers to have easier access to absence management tools such as a telephone and website service to offer basic medical advice, and Occupational Health Advisors. The overall aim of the scheme is to help both employers and employees find a way to work together to help the employee return to work i.e. agreed upon reasonable adjustments. For more information on the introduction of the Government's Fit For Work Scheme, please see our August Employment Law Update 2015.

## How Can We Help?

If you are a retained client then we will regularly be updating your Absence Management procedure, as well as supplying you with template letters and forms that will enable you to manage absences both efficiently and effectively. We also provide an Absence Management Workshop to our clients' management teams, enabling them to feel more confident in their management skills.

If you are not a client and you have any queries relating to any of the subjects raised within this newsletter then please do not hesitate to contact us at [hradvice@hasslefreehr.co.uk](mailto:hradvice@hasslefreehr.co.uk)

For clarification of any of the above updates or for advice and guidance on any HR and/or Health and Safety Concerns contact us by emailing [hradvice@hasslefreehr.co.uk](mailto:hradvice@hasslefreehr.co.uk) or by calling 02476 664092.

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