

## SICKNESS ABSENCE POLICY

### **1. Purpose :**

The purpose of this policy is to set out any procedures for reporting sickness absence and for the management of sickness absence in a fair and consistent way.

Failing to report absence from work under this policy or falsely claiming sick pay will be treated as misconduct.

This policy does not form part of your contract of employment and it may be amended at any time.

### **2. Notification of absence :**

If you are unable to come to work because you are sick or if you have suffered an injury preventing you from working, you must notify your line manager by phone personally or through a relative or friend as early as possible on your first day of absence. If a relative or friend makes the initial contact, you should personally make contact as soon as you are able to do so.

It is your responsibility to keep your line manager informed of the reason for your absence, the possible length of absence and your likely return date.

### **3. Providing evidence of sickness :**

It is important that you submit a self-certification form for sickness absence of up to seven days.

If you are absent for eight or more consecutive days you must provide us with a doctor's certificate, called a fit note, which will state why you are not fit for work. As previously stated, you must also complete a self-certification form for the first seven days of absence.

You must keep your line manager informed of your progress, with an indication if possible of a return to work date. You are responsible for ensuring that fit notes are submitted on time to cover all periods of absence.

**4. Sick pay :**

No provision for sick pay other than the provisions of the Statutory Sick Pay Scheme, will apply to this employment.

**5. Meeting with you about your return to work :**

When you have been absent with illness, we may decide to hold a return to work interview with you. The purpose of the meeting will be to establish that you are fit enough to return to work and to consider whether there are any steps that could be taken to facilitate this.

It is also our opportunity to speak with you about any issues regarding your absence record.

**6. Dealing with long-term sickness absence or frequent short term absences :**

In circumstances where you have been absent for a long period or you have had frequent short-term absences, we will follow the process outlined below.

It is important for us to understand the reasons for your absence. We want to know whether there are things we can do to help you improve your attendance and your health. In some circumstance, we may need to get medical information about your illness before deciding on a course of action.

We may need to meet with you to discuss your absence, the medical information or other related issues. We will give you reasonable notice of the meeting and location.

Confirmation of any decision made at a meeting, the reasons for it, and the right to appeal will be given to you in writing within five working days of any sickness absence meeting (unless this time scale is not practicable, in which case it will be provided as soon as is practicable).

Where it is relevant, we will consider, whether reasonable adjustments may need to be made to your role or working arrangements.

**7. Medical Assessments :**

We may ask you to consent to us in writing to your doctor for a medical report, a copy of which will also be made available to you if required.

In appropriate circumstances, we may ask you to consent to attending a medical assessment by a doctor or occupational health adviser. We will ask you to agree that any medical report may be disclosed to us.

All medical reports will be kept confidential.

Failure to agree to a reasonable request may be considered under our Disciplinary Procedures and could result in dismissal.

**8. Your right to be accompanied at meetings :**

You may bring a companion to any meeting or appeal meeting. Your companion may be either a trade union representative or a work colleague. The identity of your companion should be made known to us in good time before the meeting takes place.

Some companions may not be allowed, for example, anyone who may have a conflict of interest, or whose presence may prejudice the meeting.

Your companion may make representations, ask questions, and sum up your position, but they will not be allowed to answer questions on your behalf. You may confer privately with your companion at any time during the meeting.

**9. First sickness absence meeting :**

This will follow the procedure set out under Heading 6 and Heading 8 on the arrangements for and right to be accompanied at sickness absence meetings.

The purposes of a first sickness absence meeting may include:

- Discussing the reasons for absence.
- Where you are on long-term sickness absence, determining how long the absence is likely to last.
- Where you have been absent on a number of occasions, determining the likelihood of further absences.
- Considering whether medical advice is required or, if already obtained, what that advice is.

- Considering what, if any, support within the business or other measures might improve your health and/or attendance.
- Determining a way forward, action that will be taken and a time-scale for review and/or a further meeting under the sickness absence procedures.
- Warning you that your employment may be at risk if your attendance does not improve.

**10. Further sickness absence meetings :**

Depending on the matters discussed at the first sickness absence meeting, a further meeting or meetings may be necessary. Further sickness absence meetings will follow the procedure set out under Heading 6 and Heading 8 on the arrangements for and right to be accompanied at sickness absence meetings.

The purposes of further meeting(s) may include :

- Discussing the reasons for and impact of your ongoing absence(s).
- Where you are on long-term sickness absence, discussing how long your absence is likely to last.
- Where you have been absent on a number of occasions, discussing the likelihood of further absences.
- If it has not been obtained, considering whether medical advice is required. If it has been obtained, considering the advice that has been given and whether further advice is required.
- Considering your ability to return to/remain in your job in view both of your capabilities and the needs of the Business and any adjustments that can reasonably be made to your job to enable you to do so.
- Considering possible redeployment opportunities and whether any adjustments can reasonably be made to assist in redeploying you.
- Where you are able to return from long-term sick leave, whether to your job or a redeployed job, agreeing a return to work programme.
- If it is considered that you are unlikely to be able to return to work from long-term absence, whether there are any benefits for which you should be considered.
- Determining a way forward, action that will be taken and a time-scale for review and/or a further meeting(s). This may, depending on steps we have already taken, include warning you that you are at risk of dismissal.

**11. Final sickness absence meeting :**

Where you have been warned that you are at risk of dismissal, we may invite you to a meeting under the final stage of the sickness procedure. The final sickness absence meeting will follow the procedure set out under Heading 6 and Heading 8 on the arrangements for and right to be accompanied at sickness absence meetings.

The purposes of the meeting will be :

- To review the meetings that have taken place and matters discussed with you.
- Where you remain on long-term sickness absence, to consider whether there have been any changes since the last meeting under stage two of the procedure, either as regards your possible return to work or opportunities for return or redeployment.
- To consider any further matters that you wish to raise.
- To consider whether there is a reasonable likelihood of you returning to work or achieving the desired level of attendance in a reasonable time.
- To consider the possible termination of your employment.

Termination will usually be with full notice or payment in lieu of notice.

**12. Appeal against decisions under this policy :**

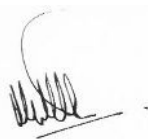
If you want to appeal against any decisions taken under this policy, you must set out your appeal grounds in writing. You will be required to submit your appeal within five working days of the date on which the decision was sent to you.

We will seek to hold an appeal meeting within fifteen working days of receiving your appeal. You may bring a companion to an appeal meeting as described in Heading 8.

We will deal with your appeal fairly and reasonably and the decision will be given to you in writing within ten working days or as soon as is practicable. You will have no further right of appeal under this policy.

Where you lodge an appeal against dismissal, the date of dismissal does not change. If your appeal is successful, the dismissal will be revoked and you will receive any relevant back pay and your continuity of service will be restored.

Signed:



Date: 1<sup>st</sup> May 2025

Malcolm Rose, Chief Executive Officer - On behalf of Shield Service Group Ltd