

Attendance & Absence Management Policy

2017 -20

Personnel Committee Approval:	Person Responsible: Maureen Gimby	Reviewed: Sep 2017 Next Review: Sep 2017
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1. Purpose and Scope

- 1.1 River Clyde Homes (RCH) recognises that staff may on occasions be necessarily absent from work. However, RCH also has a duty to provide reliable service to its customers and it needs to ensure that sickness levels are monitored to ensure that the highest possible level of attendance is maintained.
- 1.2 This policy is designed to help and encourage all employees to achieve and maintain good attendance, and to ensure that a consistent and fair approach to managing attendance is adopted throughout the organisation. The policy is also designed to provide reasonable support to those absent with the aim of assisting their return to work at the earliest opportunity.
- 1.3 This policy and the procedures on how the policy will be implemented are intended to ensure that each situation is effectively, fairly and consistently managed. The policy and procedures are not intended to replace RCH's Disciplinary, Capability & Dismissal Policy or the Grievance & Dignity at Work Policy nor the relevant Procedures applying to these policies. The right of an employee to raise a grievance or appeal on an appropriate issue is retained at all stages and trade union or fellow employee representation obtained.
- 1.4 All managers have a duty to bring this Policy to the attention of their staff and ensure that it is implemented. Managers must be clear that it is their responsibility to implement this policy and to take immediate action to support staff to meet the standards of attendance and manage absence required through effective use of the Attendance & Absence Management Procedures.
- 1.5 Each and every employee has the responsibility to ensure that his/her own attendance complies with the standards expected or undertakes a programme for improvement to meet the standards. RCH will ensure that all absences will be managed within the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and applies to all RCH employees and Board Members.

2. Policy Principles

- 2.1 To manage attendance in a way that reflects genuine concern for staff and to develop a positive attitude towards attendance. This will include supporting an employee's return to work on a phased basis after a period of extended sick leave, details which are contained in the Attendance & Absence Management Procedures.
- 2.2 To set clear expectations for standards of attendance required by RCH and to ensure all staff are aware of its standards in relation to attendance and to comply with the requirements and guidelines contained in the Procedures.
- 2.3 To ensure that managers provide staff with a safe working environment and treat all staff in a responsible and caring manner and be supportive to all employees suffering any ill-health.
- 2.4 To ensure that managers will adopt a sympathetic and understanding approach to any staff member with a long-term and/or chronic health problem. Staff who find themselves in such a position should be confident that their manager will react in a supportive fashion when approached.

- 2.5 To ensure all members of staff are made aware of the importance of good attendance, the reasons why RCH focuses on good attendance and all policies and procedures concerning absence are communicated clearly to them.
- 2.6 To ensure the managers work with the HR Team and our occupational health partners to manage, monitor and review sickness absence triggers and procedures to ensure consistency and fairness is applied to all staff to improve attendance and reduce absence.
- 2.7 To ensure that managers and staff are aware of the differences between managing attendance and absence management through the provision of training, detailed guidelines and robust procedures.

3 Management of Attendance & Absence

- 3.1 RCH will aim to secure better attendance by way of support and encouragement to the employee concerned in the first instance. This will involve maintaining good records; ensuring return to work interviews are carried out, investigating and addressing any identified underlying causes of absence.
- 3.2 Employees with unsatisfactory attendance levels will be given time and encouragement to improve and informed of what improvement is required and possible consequences of failure to do so (which may include disciplinary action, including dismissal).
- 3.3 Any disciplinary action will only be considered following appropriate contacts with the employee and relevant medical advisors, such as the employee's GP and RCH Occupational Health Advisers. The employee retains the right to trade union, fellow employee representation or an official employed by a trade union only should disciplinary action be forthcoming.
- 3.4 RCH will seek, where possible, to find suitable alternative employment for any employee who is medically incapable of fully discharging their role. If there is an underlying medical condition causing absence(s), then efforts will be made to put reasonable adjustments in place.
- 3.5 Managers will conduct "return to work" interviews after every absence and within the spirit of this policy, no matter the duration of the absence.
- 3.6 All staff will adhere strictly to absence reporting, which are contained within the Attendance & Absence Management Procedures. Failure to do so may result in the withholding of RCH sick pay and/or disciplinary action being taken.
- 3.7 Managers will be responsible for ensuring accurate and up-to-date attendance records for their own staff are made timeously to enable the HR Team to produce corporate management information on attendance and absence trends.
- 3.8 Whilst absence periods related to pregnancy or an underlying medical condition, along with those that fall within the scope of Equality Act, may not normally be counted for the purpose of attendance management process, the attendance management process will be used if ongoing absence causes operational difficulties.

4 Occupational/Statutory Sick Pay

4.1 Statutory Sick Pay (SSP)

Employees are entitled to SSP irrespective to payment of Organisational Sick Pay (OSP). SSP is reviewed by the Government every October. It is not paid for the first three days of absence and runs for 28 weeks after that. All new employees with less than 26 weeks service with RCH are entitled to claim SSP for any sickness absence taken. An employee who is no longer entitled to SSP may be entitled to an incapacity benefit and they would need to visit their local Department of Social Security to find out their rights.

4.2 Occupational Sick Pay

Occupational sick pay is calculated based on a 12-month rolling programme. Providing that the employee has followed RCH absence reporting procedures, payment for sickness, absence and/or injury will be as set out in the table below as follows:

Service at first date of sickness	Full Allowance +	Half Allowance
26 weeks or under	0 weeks	0 weeks
Over 26 weeks but less than 1 year	5 weeks	5 weeks
1 year but less than 2 years	9 weeks	9 weeks
2 years but less than 3 years	18 weeks	18 weeks
3 years but less than 5 years	22 weeks	22 weeks
5 years or more	26 weeks	26 weeks

However, occupational sick pay will not be paid in the following circumstances:

- Where the employee is in legal custody
- Where the absence is due to the employee's misconduct, active participation in sport for payment or payment for injury while working for another employer
- If an employee becomes ill while on strike. The employee will be excluded from Organisational Sick Pay only for the duration of the strike action.

4.3 In any one rolling 12-month period, RCH will pay a Sickness Allowance in accordance with the above table. When sick pay entitlement has been reduced to half pay/or exhausted, the employee will be advised in advance in writing by the Payroll Team.

5 Medical Incapacity

5.1 "Medical incapacity" in terms of the policy refers to an employee being deemed medically unable to return to his/her full job role within a reasonable time period. Reasonable adjustments to allow a return to work will always be considered.

5.2 Redeployment on the ground of medical incapacity will only be considered where the medical opinion is such that a return to the original role is not possible despite extensive efforts and there is a suitable vacancy in line with business needs.

5.3 Dismissal on the grounds of medical incapacity will only be considered where the employee

cannot return to his/her own role and where no other suitable role is available into which the employee can be redeployed.

- 5.4 In cases where staff members do leave River Clyde Homes due to ill health, managers will make every effort they can to help secure appropriate access to the pension scheme and/or other relevant financial benefits that may be available.

6 Other Provisions

6.1 Absence and Holidays

If the employee is on annual leave and falls sick, it is possible to override the annual leave and process sick leave and pay instead on the production of a doctor's certificate to confirm the illness/injury and the annual leave will be reimbursed. If the employee is on sick leave and goes on holidays, he/she must produce a doctor's certificate to cover this absence. If a certificate is not forthcoming, the manager will investigate the employee's reason for absence. Depending on the outcome, a disciplinary action may be instigated.

6.2 Doctor/hospital/dental appointments

Doctor and dental appointments should be arranged outwith working hours or by using flexi time to cover appointments if during core hours. Staff will be given up to a maximum of 2 hours for hospital consultations and appointment cards must be shown to managers for authorising time off.

6.3 Conduct Whilst Off Sick

When on sick leave, employees are still expected not to breach any points of their contract of employment. They are still bound by the duties of fidelity and are expected not to participate in activities that would be at odds with their medical condition, whilst off sick. Any breach in respect of this will be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure.

6.4 Cosmetic Procedures

Absence due to cosmetic procedures (whether carried out in the UK or abroad) will not fall under the sick leave or pay. In these cases, the employee should request time off and agree with their line manager how the absence will be processed, e.g. annual leave or unpaid leave.

6.5 IVF Treatment

Absences resulting from IVF treatment will not be processed as sick leave or pay. The same relates to a partner of a person that is undergoing such treatment. Instead, employees should discuss with their line manager how time off for the treatment could be accommodated, e.g. annual leave, flexi time or unpaid leave. Absences relating to IVF treatment will also not be treated as relating to pregnancy unless the employee actually falls pregnant.

6.6 Stress Management

Stress is not an illness but a state. It can result from an illness or lead to one but it is not an illness itself. The same relates to "nervous debility". If an employee goes off sick with stress, the manager will endeavour to find out the underlying cause so that it could be determined whether conditions at work cause or contribute to stress and whether something could be done to help the situation. If the absence is certified by a doctor, the manager may ask the employee's doctor to clarify the underlying cause for stress through RCH's occupational health adviser.

7 Role of the Personnel Committee

- 7.1 The involvement of the Board and/or Personnel Committee in matters relating to attendance

is in line with the Scheme of Delegation. This may involve hearing any appeals from staff dismissed due to poor attendance whenever this is relevant.	
8	Supporting Procedures
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance & Absence Management Procedures
9	Responsibility for implementation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior Management Team Partnership Forum All Managers All staff
10	Policy Reviews / Consultation
	<p>10.1 The Policy will be reviewed in November 2018 or an earlier date if required to respond to new legislation, regulations or best practice. Any review will take account of the views of the Unions and staff that use this Policy and its relevant Procedures on a regular basis.</p>
11	Related Legislative and Statutory Framework
	<p>11.1 In formulating and implementing this policy, statutory requirements including the Employment Act 2008; the Employment Tribunals (Constitution and Rules of Procedure)(Amendment) Regulations 2008 and the Employment Act 2002 (Dispute Resolution) Regulations have been incorporated in addition to the ACAS Code of Practice 2015: Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures.</p>
12	Key Stakeholders
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership Forum All staff Board/Personnel Committee
13	Related Documents
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RCH Organisational Development Strategy RCH Code of Conduct RCH Equality and Diversity Policy and Procedures RCH Grievance and Dignity at Work Policy and Procedures RCH Disciplinary, Capability and Dismissal Policy and Procedures
14	Policy Owner
	<p>Executive Director Group Services is accountable for the implementation of this policy. The Executive Director will be supported in this by the following officers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of Corporate Services Human Resources Team

