



## **Absence Management Policy**

### Policy Statement

Absence levels can have an impact on service delivery, costs and on staff who have to cover for absent colleagues. The objective of this policy is to provide a fair and consistent means of managing absence to maximise attendance levels. It is not the intention of this policy to compel staff to attend work when they are genuinely unfit to do so.

### Pre-employment health checks

All new appointments will be conditional on the employee being certified fit to undertake the post by an occupational health advisor. The Rock Trust will comply with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act when making any recruitment decisions where health issues are highlighted by the pre-employment health check.

### Notification

Employees must contact their manager, or in their absence a senior manager, to report all absences. This should be done as soon as is reasonably practical to enable alternative arrangements to be made to cover their work. For ongoing absences, the employee must also keep in regular contact with their managers to update them on progress.

### Certification

For all absences employees will complete a self certification form upon return to work. For absences lasting more than 7 calendar days, medical certificates must be provided to cover the absence from the eighth day onward. These should be sent by the employee to their manager as soon as they are obtained.

### Action upon return to work

Managers will hold a return to work interview with the employee after every absence. This is a proven means of managing absence and improving attendance levels. These meetings need not be lengthy but should be used to establish the reasons for the employees' absence and to complete the self certification form.

### Record keeping and monitoring

Accurate and effective record keeping is fundamental so that any patterns and trends can be identified and appropriate action taken. Details of all absences should be recorded centrally. Absence statistics should be regularly reviewed by senior management and the Board.

### Absence concerns

Where a manager has concerns about an employees absence (whether frequency, pattern or reasons) these concerns will be discussed with the employee. The manager may deem it appropriate to implement further action to improve the employees' attendance. These actions could include requiring the employee to submit a medical certificate for every absence irrespective of length, asking the employee for permission to contact their GP for a medical report or asking them to agree to be referred to an occupational health advisor.

Such actions should be taken with the aim of establishing whether there is an underlying medical problem and the matter should therefore be dealt with as a capability issue. If there is no underlying health issue identified then the matter may be dealt with as a conduct issues and the disciplinary procedure may be invoked.

### Responsibility for implementing the policy

The Rock Trust will ensure that managers are competent to handle absence issues with their staff. All managers will have the responsibility to ensure that the policy applied fairly and consistently to all the staff they manage.

Employees have the responsibility to comply with the policy and to co-operate with any investigations which may be undertaken into their absences.

Breaches of the policy will be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure.