



Staff Absence Policy

The Positive Impact Group

Effective Date

June 2026

Review Date

June 2027



Introduction

The Positive Impact Group is committed to maintaining the welfare of all its staff, ensuring a safe and healthy environment in which to thrive at work and therefore, strives to fully support staff in all areas of their well-being. Likewise, it is a firm expectation that all staff will attend work every day that they are able to do so. It is accepted that from time to time, employees will have a genuine health reason that prevents them from attending. When this occurs, management will offer appropriate support to the employee whilst they are absent, aiming to facilitate their return to work as soon as is practicable.

The main objective of this policy is to minimise staff absence from work. This strategy will be achieved through promoting a healthy working environment as set out in the Wellbeing Policy and promoting a healthy lifestyle outside of work. All staff will regularly be encouraged to access a range of health-promoting activities via team meetings and staff one-to-ones.

Organisational Responsibilities

- To provide employees with details of the Staff Absence Policy and procedures.
- To maintain accurate records of staff absences.
- To keep reasonable contact with employees, which may involve meeting with them, whilst absent from work and on their return to work.
- To monitor sickness absences at regular intervals.
- To address absences during staff performance reviews.
- To decide the most appropriate actions with any staff member who has accrued an unacceptable number of absences.
- To promote a safe workplace and a healthy lifestyle.

Employee Responsibilities

- To attend work, unless genuinely unable to carry out duties due to illness or injury.
- To observe the organisation's procedure for reporting sickness absence.
- To keep in contact with management and to attend any required meetings over the course of the absence.

Staff Absence Procedure

- To arrange the appropriate cover, a simple absence process is necessary, and all employees must adhere to it. Failure to observe this procedure may result in the absence being considered as unauthorised in alignment with the organisation's disciplinary procedure and/or sick pay being withheld.
- On the first day of absence, the employee must contact David Strong by telephone, no later than 7 am. If there is no answer to your call, you must leave a voicemail message, and David will call you back. You must speak to David before the absence can be authorised. The employee has a duty to keep in contact with David throughout the duration of the absence.
- If the absence lasts for more than 7 consecutive days, the employee must provide a fit note from their GP, without which further absences will not be authorised.
- If management is concerned that a reason for absence is not genuine, either at the beginning of the absence, during the absence, or after the absence has occurred, then this would be considered a conduct issue, and the disciplinary procedure may be actioned.

Returning to Work

A fit note certificate issued by a GP should state the period that the individual will be unfit and whether they need to see the employee again. If the doctor has not advised that they will need to see the employee again, then the employee must return to work immediately after the fit note has expired.

A return-to-work interview between the employee and their line manager will be conducted after an absence period of 1 day or longer. Wherever possible, this should be conducted during the employee's first day back, but not longer than 3 days after their return. The reasons for this meeting are:

- To greet the employee and welcome them back to work, and to update them on any changes that have occurred whilst they were away. To make available to the employee any minutes from team meetings, training updates or other relevant information pertinent to their role.
- To enquire whether the employee requires any form of support or reasonable adjustment to their role for an appropriate period. For example, if the employee has been absent due to a foot/ankle injury, arrangements could be made for them to work on the ground floor of the building.
- If the employee's absences are a cause for concern, a discussion should take place about the history of the absences, the reasons, any clear pattern, and an action plan drawn up with the aim of reducing further absences.
- If appropriate, the employee will be advised of the next stage in the procedure. For example, a Stage 1 Absence meeting (See below).

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- Clear, accurate and factual minutes of this meeting must be recorded and signed by the manager and the employee.

To manage attendance accurately, absence should be monitored and reviewed. Outlined below are the trigger points which will indicate when a staff member's level of absence has reached a cause for concern.

Trigger Points

- 3 or more incidents of absence in six months.
- 6 or more incidents of absence in twelve months.
- 4 weeks of continual absence.
- Where specific patterns of absence are apparent, i.e., every Friday, before school holidays.

These trigger points should not be used as an automatic system to take further action – any such action should depend on the actual reasons for absence. Every employee's circumstances should be duly considered to ensure that all members of staff are treated consistently.

For part-time staff members, trigger points should be pro rata.

Procedure

This procedure may be implemented where, regardless of being discussed during the return-to-work interviews, absences have continued, and the stated trigger points have been passed.

Stage 1 Absence Meeting

The director/manager will invite the employee to a Stage 1 absence meeting, providing the date, time, and venue in writing. The employee must be provided with at least 5 working days' notice of the meeting.

The meeting can go ahead if the employee does not attend, and they will be notified in writing of any decisions made to manage their absences.

During the Stage 1 Absence Meeting, the Director will:

- Explain the reason for the meeting and why the levels of absence are of concern.
- Explore the reasons for absences and if there are any issues at work or in the employee's personal life that may be contributing to the absences.

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- Listen attentively to everything that the employee has to say and respond appropriately.
 - Implement an agreed plan of identified support to improve attendance.
 - Advise that it is expected that there will be a sustained improvement in attendance. Issue an appropriate period to monitor attendance.

Possible Outcomes:

- No further action required at this stage.
- Set or, if necessary, extend a period of informal attendance monitoring.
- Issue the staff member with a Stage 1 warning, which will stay on record for 6 months. Issue a period of attendance monitoring with the express understanding that further absences within this timeframe may trigger the next stage in the procedure.

Stage 2 Absence Meeting

The director/manager will invite the employee to a Stage 2 Absence meeting if no improvements have been made when the target period (of formal or informal monitoring) terminates.

The director/manager will invite the employee to a Stage 1 absence meeting, providing the date, time, and venue in writing. The employee must be provided with at least 5 working days' notice of the meeting.

The meeting can go ahead if the employee does not attend, and they will be notified in writing of any decisions made to manage their absences.

The director/manager must ensure that all the information relating to the employee's absence is accurate and correct, and that any offers of support to the employee via return-to-work meetings or Stage 1 Absence meetings have been given and documented. If the employee would like medical evidence to be considered during this meeting, it must be submitted prior to the event to provide time for the director or manager to give it due consideration.

During the Stage 2 Absence Meeting, the Director will:

- Discuss their concerns about the continued absences and why it remains a management issue.
- Establish the reasons for absence. Are there any issues inside or outside of work that are contributing to or causing absences?

- Review any support measures that have already been put in place to assist staff members in reducing absences.
- Carefully consider the employees' responses and identify any further support that can be offered to help the staff member reduce such absences.

Possible Outcomes:

- No further action needed at this stage.
- An extension of the support plan and absence monitoring set out in stage 1.
- Issue the employee with a Stage 2 warning, which will remain on file for 9 months. Issue a formal absence monitoring time frame. Explain (and provide in writing) that further absences will lead to a Stage 3 absence meeting that could result in dismissal.

Stage 3 Absence Hearing

The member of staff should receive a letter, 10 days in advance of the meeting. This letter should detail:

- The date and time of the hearing and where it will take place. Due consideration must be given to these particulars.
- Any evidence that the organisation will rely on during the hearing. This includes medical evidence.
- Their entitlement to have in attendance a trade union representative / professional association representative or a work colleague not involved in the matter. No other person may attend.
- The possible consequences of the hearing.
- The employee must submit to the director any supporting evidence that he or she will present at the hearing at least 3 working days prior to the hearing.

The member of staff may be granted one extension of up to 5 days if their chosen representative cannot attend on the date or time of the meeting. Moreover, the hearing may go ahead in the absence of the employee and/or the representative. If this were to happen, the member of staff will be notified in writing of any decisions made during the hearing.

The objective of the meeting is to carefully deliberate whether the staff member can continue to be employed with the organisation. This deliberation will consider their health, level of absences and the effect that this has had on their capability to perform their role to the expected standard. Consideration will also be given to the organisation's ability to absorb the staff member's level of absence.

Possible Outcomes:

- If a case for dismissal cannot be ascertained, a final formal warning may be issued, which will stay on the employee's record indefinitely. A formal attendance target will be set, which, if failed, will result in dismissal without notice, on the grounds that the required levels of attendance have not been sustained.
- If the director decides that the staff member's level of absences is unacceptable and unlikely to improve given the heard evidence, then the employee may be dismissed without notice on the grounds that the required levels of attendance have not and will not be sustained.

The Management of Long-Term Absence Due to Sickness

If an employee is absent for 4 weeks or longer, they will receive regular contact from the director or their line manager. These contacts may include regular reviews to talk about their continued absence, a potential time frame for their return to work, and any reasonable adjustments that could be considered to help their return to duties.

Accrual of Annual Leave

All staff have the right to accrue annual leave whilst absent from work due to sickness.

This policy is reviewed annually.

Overall responsibility lies with the Director, who liaises with the Senior Leadership Team to ensure a robust and sustainable model of Leadership.

Signed by Director



James Armson

Appendix 1 — Return to Work Interview

Name of employee: Name of manager present:		
Date of the first day of absence:	Date of return to work:	No. of days absent:
Reason for absence:	Any absences that are not agreed will be unauthorised and will be: Paid Not paid <i>(Delete as necessary)</i>	
Was medical advice sought? Was any advice given followed? 		
Was the absence related to an accident at work? Was it reported? Provide details. 		
Is the member of staff fit to return to work? If not, provide details. 		

Is there anything else that may affect recovery or the chances of this type of absence occurring again?

What support can The Positive Impact Academy provide?

Any further action. Additional meeting? Attendance target? Fit note to be adhered to?

Signature of employee:

Date:

Signature of director/manager:

Date:

