



Sickness Absence Policy

Adopted by Full Council – September 2023

To Review September 2024

Introduction

Aspatia Town Council is committed to improving the health, wellbeing and attendance of its employees.

Key Principles:

1. As a responsible employer, Aspatia Town Council undertakes to provide payments to members of staff if unable to attend work due to sickness in line with their Contract of Employment for sick absence and sick pay.
2. Aspatia Town Council will support any member of staff if they have genuine grounds for absence for whatever reason. This support includes:
 - (a) “Special leave” for necessary absences not caused by sickness.
 - (b) A fairly flexible approach to the taking of annual leave
 - (c) Access to counsellors where necessary.
 - (d) Rehabilitation programmes in cases of long-term sickness absence.
3. Aspatia Town Council will consider any advice given by a member of staffs GP on the “Statement of Fitness for Work”.
4. Aspatia Town Council respects the confidentiality of all information relating to the member of staff’s sickness.

This policy will be implemented in line with all data protection legislation and the Access to Medical Records Act 1990 and GDPR 2018.

Notification of absence

If a member of staff is going to be absent from work they should speak to the Mayor as soon as they are aware that they will not be able to fulfil their contractual hours. They should also give a clear indication of the nature of the illness and a likely return date. The Mayor will check with the member of staff to ascertain if there is any information that they need to know about the current workload.

Evidence of incapacity

The member of staff can use the accepted self-certification arrangement for the first seven days of absence. Thereafter a "Statement of Fitness for Work" is required to cover every subsequent day. If absence is likely to be protracted, i.e. more than four weeks continuously, there is a shared responsibility for the Mayor and the member of staff to maintain contact at agreed intervals. "May be fit for some work" If this is the advice of the GP on the Statement of Fitness for Work, then it will be discussed with the member of staff as to ways of helping them to get back to work, possibly by a phased return or temporarily amended duties.

Return to work discussions

The Mayor will discuss absences with the member of staff upon return to work to establish:

- (a) The reason for and cause of absence.
- (b) Is there anything that the Mayor can do to help.
- (c) That the member of staff is fit to return to work. If the member of staff's GP has advised that they 'may be fit for work' the return to work discussion can also be used to agree in detail how her return to work might work best in practice.

A more formal review will be triggered by:

Frequent short-term absences or long-term absence. This review should look at any further action required to improve the member of staff's attendance and wellbeing.