



THORNABY TOWN COUNCIL

Absence through Sickness Policy

Thornaby Town Council recognises that there are times when an employee may feel unwell and are unable to come into work. For the good of the all employees we recognise that in such circumstances it may well be very reasonable to stay away from work until the employee feel better rather than trying to struggle on at work while not feeling able to do their job properly. While such time off work is reasonable, expected and accepted, absence through sickness can be a problem to the organisation if the absence is intentional, frequent or prolonged or without good cause. For these reasons it is always important to ensure that their line manager is aware of their inability to come to work and the reason behind it.

The employee by keeping in touch with their line manager and ensuring that that person is aware of your circumstances and any changes in those circumstances that may occur can help with employee relationships and ease their work when they come back to work. The organisation is aware that sometimes absent through sickness is not just necessary when individuals are feeling physically ill. There may be other pressures on individuals which stop them from doing their job properly. All employees are advised that they can discuss their problems with their line manager on a confidential basis. When employees have been away from work through illness a return to work interview will be conducted for all staff after all absences.

These interviews are intended to ensure that the employee is able to return to work and can deal with any circumstances that might need support as they get back into their work routine. If the absence from work has been for a prolonged period, or for a frequent amount of time for the same illness, a medical to check that the employee is able to work may be required by Thornaby Town Council. Absence from work usually means putting additional pressure on other employees while short term absences are covered. If the employee cannot find sufficient reason or a legitimate reason for absence, or if their absence appears to be very frequent, their line manager may wish to discuss this with the individual employee.

Those employees who are consistently away from work without sufficient reason may need warning about the consequences of continued absence which may ultimately result in termination of their employment.

Sickness Absence Procedures

If an employee wishes to take time off work through sickness the procedures to follow are these;

Thornaby Town Council needs to have notification of illness, sickness or injury which prevents an employee coming to work by 9.00am on the day that the absence occurs. Thereafter the employee is invited to keep in touch with the organisation to ensure that their line manager is aware of when the employee might return to work. If no contact has been made by the employee after 3 days following notification of absence the organisation may well contact the employee to enquire as to how they are feeling and if appropriate when they feel they might be coming back to work. Such enquires should not be seen as pressure to return to work but rather an enquiry after the health of the employee.

If the employee does not contact their line manager to inform them of their absence the absence may be recorded as unauthorised and would therefore be unpaid.

Thornaby Town Council will follow statutory procedures with regard to the reporting of sickness through self certification forms for periods of sickness of less than seven days. A self certification form will be required for any period of sickness lasting more than three days. A doctor's sick note will be required for periods of sickness lasting over seven days.

Where your doctor has issued a 'fit note' indicating that the employee is fit for some work an interview will be arranged which will be an opportunity to discuss the options available to them and how we may be able to address any changes required to accommodate their return to work. It must be noted that, depending on the options available to aid their return to work, there might be some delay in their return

in order to achieve any agreed changes in the workplace. We also reserve the right to tell them what the limit of any change might be. If the doctor has recommended that they return to work on a phased return they will only be paid for the hours that they work.

Returning to work procedures

After any period of absence from work, all employees will receive return to work interview on their first day back to work by their line manager.

This interview is intended to satisfy Thornaby Town Council that they are fit to return to work and to ensure that the organisation is aware of any specific issues relating to their period off work of which we need to be aware.

A record of this interview will be kept in their personal employee file.

Reviewed and Approved by Full Council on Monday 27 January 2014 (FC-14-17)