

SLOUGH BAPTIST CHURCH POLICY	Managing Absences Policy
POLICY NUMBER: SBCP-24	



Primary Responsibility:	Secretary	
-------------------------	-----------	--

Issued:	13 th May 2024
Status:	Final
Review Period:	5 years
Next Review Date:	May 2029

DISTRIBUTION

Original	Slough Baptist Church Office
Copy	Website (PDF)

1. Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the Church manages the attendance of employees in a manner that is effective and fair. It therefore seeks to establish an atmosphere in which absence issues can be discussed and resolved at an early stage.

2. Employee's Responsibilities

2.1. Notifying your Manager

In the event that you will be absent from work due to sickness or injury, you should:

- Notify your manager or supervisor by telephone, email or messaging service within an hour of your usual start time.
- Unless you are unfit to do so, make the call yourself, rather than getting a relative or other third party to do so on your behalf.
- When making the call, be prepared to advise:
 - The exact reason for your absence;
 - The likely length of absence, where possible;
 - If medical attention is being sought;
 - An agreed means of keeping in touch while absent.

On your return to work:

- Complete a sickness self-certification for absences of up to 5 days, or;
- Provide a doctor's certificate for absences of over 5 days.

2.2. Absence for Reasons Other Than Sickness

Should you be absent from work for any other reason, including unforeseen personal circumstances, your manager should be informed in the same way as for sickness absence as detailed above.

If you require to be absent for part of any working day you must also inform your line manager and seek their permission first. Arrangements can then be made with regards to the basis on which this time off will be taken (e.g. as annual leave, unpaid or with hours to be made up at a later date) Failure to do so may lead to your being considered absent without leave and disciplinary action being taken.

2.3. Lateness

If you anticipate being late for work for any reason, you should inform your line manager as soon as possible. If you fail to do so, you may be considered to be absent without leave during this period and subject to disciplinary action.

Repeated lateness may be dealt with under the Poor Performance Procedure (SBCP-27).

3. Manager's Responsibilities

- Making sure the procedures to manage absences are effectively applied at all levels of the Church.
- Making sure positive and preventative action is taken at all levels.
- Maintain records of employee absence as described in this policy, which will be classed as confidential and retained as per the requirements of the Church's Data Protection Policy (SBCP-35).
- Maintain records of interviews / letters.
- Provide notice in writing to the employee during the formal stages of any related disciplinary action.

4. Absence Patterns Requiring Management Action

The procedure for Managing Absence will be triggered by any one of the permutations detailed in the examples below:

- Three instances of sick leave or unauthorised absence in a rolling 26-week period.
- Five or more days sick leave or unauthorised absence in a rolling 26-week period.
- Five instances of sick leave or unauthorised absence in a rolling 52-week period.
- Ten or more days of sick leave or unauthorised absence in a rolling 52-week period.

5. The Procedure

A thorough investigation will be carried out to establish whether the employee is genuinely incapable of achieving a satisfactory standard of attendance or is deliberately refusing to carry out his / her duties - in which case it is a question of misconduct.

The line manager should consider whether the absence is due to an underlying cause for example:

- If an employee whose attendance is being monitored has a period of long-term absence because of a specific medical condition, such as a broken leg, that period of absence should not be considered.
- If an employee develops an underlying medical condition, which is causing most of the absence, our approach may need to alter.

The line manager will meet the employee to get an explanation for their absences and look for an underlying cause for the apparently unrelated absences.

At this informal meeting, the manager will tell the employee that the level of absence is a cause for concern, that they need to stay fit for work, and that they will be closely monitored. Brief notes of the meeting will be placed on the employee's file.

The line manager and employee should review their attendance record after a period of eight weeks.

If the employee is absent without reasonable justification / certification in the 26-week period following the attendance review meeting, the line manager may commence with disciplinary proceedings, in line with the Church's Disciplinary Procedure (SBCP-06).

Where the Disciplinary Procedure has commenced, the employee will be asked in writing to give permission for the Church Secretary to contact their GP to ask if there are any health issues that could be causing the absences.

6. Long-term or Recurrent Medical Conditions

If an employee has a long-term or recurrent medical condition and has periods of absence from work as a result of that condition, the Church Secretary will seek legal advice with regard to the application of this procedure.

This advice will cover:

- Whether the illness fall under the definition of a disability;
- Whether the church should arrange and pay for medical investigations;
- Whether the employee should be offered alternative work (if it is available);
- Whether the employee should be offered ill health retirement;
- Whether this process should be applied up to dismissal.

**MANAGING FOR HEALTH
CHECKLIST AND INTERVIEW GUIDANCE**

Name:		Interview Date		Stage	
Interviewing Manager					
Also Present		In Capacity of			

The interviewing manager should be in possession of all necessary documentation and details appertaining to the discussion / interview where appropriate / available.

i.e. sickness record, occupational health report, and welfare reports.

INTERVIEW GUIDE	COMMENTS
Explain the reason for the interview and confirm whether there is any underlying medical reason for absence.	
Are there any circumstances to be taken into consideration? e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work environment (e.g. lighting) • domestic problems • accident or injury • lack of job satisfaction • excessive hours • shortage of leave • harassment • self-induced illness, e.g. alcohol / drugs / sport. 	
Would any form of counselling be of assistance? i.e. welfare / specialist.	
Stress the need for an improvement in attendance and explain the next steps.	
Confirm that the outcome of the interview will be confirmed in writing.	