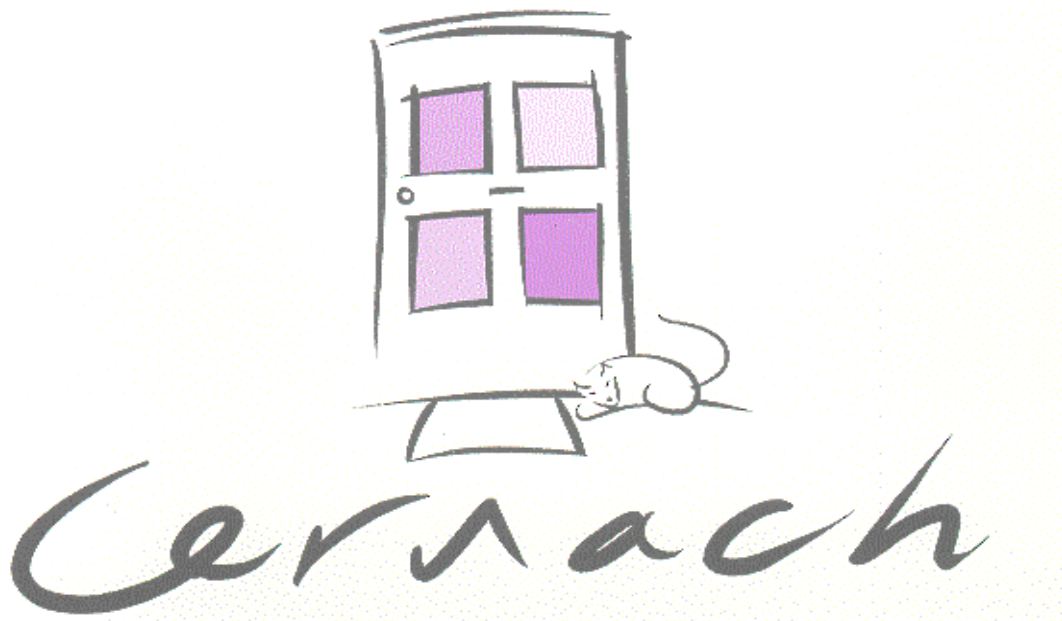


CERNACH HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED



ATTENDANCE & ABSENCE MANAGEMENT POLICY FOR EMPLOYEES

Date Approved by Management Committee:
Due for Review:

28th May 2014
May 2017

Cernach Housing Association

Attendance & Absence Management Policy

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Standard 4 of the Scottish Housing Regulator's Regulatory Framework states: "The governing body bases its decisions on good quality information and advice and identifies and mitigates risks to the organisation's purpose." More specifically and in relation to this Policy, Standard 4.3 states: "The governing body identifies risks that might prevent it from achieving the RSL's purpose and has effective strategies and systems for risk management and mitigation, internal control and audit."
- 1.2 Cernach Housing Association recognises that staff will on occasions be necessarily absent from work. However Cernach Housing Association also has a duty to provide reliable service to tenants and others and we thus need to ensure that we help staff maintain the highest possible level of attendance.
- 1.3 This policy is therefore designed to help all employees achieve good attendance, and to ensure that a consistent and fair approach in managing attendance is adopted throughout the Association.
- 1.4 This policy and the guidelines it contains are not intended to replace the Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures. The right of any employee to raise a grievance or appeal on an appropriate issue is retained and at all stages trade union representation can be obtained.

2. PURPOSE OF POLICY

- 2.1 The purpose of the policy is to clarify the position in relation to staff absence and sick leave.
- 2.2 Absence and Attendance Management shall be treated differently as follows:
 - 2.2.1 Absence Management – relates to managing a person back to Work by way of reasonable adjustments and addressing their capability to perform their work duties, taking into consideration any medical advice, the persons comments and the business case.
 - 2.2.2 Attendance Management – refers to addressing unacceptable levels of attendance, with no reference to any particular absence or medical condition. This route is to be followed in accordance with the Disciplinary Procedure.

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2.3 All staff shall be made aware of the types of absences covered by the policy and appropriate conduct.

2.4 The types of absence covered by this policy are as follows:-

Short Term Absence	A single absence of 1 – 7days
Persistent short term absence	A series of short term absences occurring over a specified period, resulting from a series of related or unrelated minor ailments, which may or may not require a medical certificate.
Long Term Absence	Absence for 4 weeks or more resulting from a health problem, which may not improve.
Unauthorised Absence	Absence which is not supported by Medical evidence or has not previously been authorised by the director or appropriate line manager. Persistent late time-keeping may be classified as unauthorised absence.

3. AIMS OF THE POLICY

3.1 The aim of this policy is as follows: -

- 3.1.1 To ensure that the Association is as supportive as possible of its staff, while ensuring that staff understands their obligations and responsibilities.
- 3.1.2 To manage attendance in a way that reflects genuine concern for staff, and to develop a positive attitude towards attendance.
- 3.1.3 To seek to identify the causes of absence and, wherever possible develop a programme of preventative measures – such as, reviewing working environment, nature of work etc.
- 3.1.4 To make sure all staff are aware Cernach Housing Association's standards in relation to attendance.
- 3.1.5 To provide outline procedural guidelines to assist with the management of sickness absence.
- 3.1.6 To ensure training and support is available to those involved in the process

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4. PRINCIPLES

- 4.1 The Director is responsible for ensuring that this policy is issued to and understood by all staff. A staff handbook will be issued to all staff members to explain the steps, which should be taken to cover situations in which employees are absent from work because of ill health. Line managers are responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented within their section.
- 4.2 Individual staff members are responsible for following the policy and procedures, in particular for providing all relevant information including medical certificates etc when required and for keeping their immediate line manager informed of the likely duration of any absence and the anticipated date of return to work. The line manager in turn will keep the Management Team informed of the anticipated period of absence.
- 4.3 The Association will establish annual targets for unplanned staff absence and will monitor actual absence against the targets set.
- 4.4 All staff are made aware of the importance of good attendance.
- 4.5 Efforts will be made to identify and assess for an employee's absence. Any serious disciplinary action will only be considered following appropriate contracts with relevant medical advisors, through investigation and the opportunity for trade union representation.
- 4.6 Managers will conduct "return to work" interviews within the spirit of this policy and Appendix 1 provides the Return to Work Form to be used. This form replaces the requirement for a self certification form to be completed by the employee.
- 4.7 In the first instance staff with unsatisfactory attendance records will be given time and encouragement to improve.
- 4.8 Employees will be consulted where attendance standards remain poor and will be advised of the consequences of continued poor attendance.
- 4.9 All staff will strictly adhere to absence reporting procedures.
- 4.10 Managers will maintain accurate, up to date attendance records of all staff. Please refer to Appendix 2 – Individual Attendance Record.

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5. RISK MANAGEMENT

5.1 The Management Committee recognises that:

5.1.1 Effective management of staff absence makes an important contribution of the efficient conduct of all its activities and to the provision of high standard of service to existing and prospective tenants, primarily through minimising the disruption to work routines resulting from unplanned absence.

5.1.2 There are many factors, which may be the cause of staff absence, and any policy on absence management must ensure that all relevant circumstances are taken into account.

5.1.3 Managers and staff require statements of policy, guidelines and procedures to be clear and easily understood both to minimise the risk of non-adherence, and to ensure that any management action taken is fair, reasonable and effective.

6. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

6.1 The Association's Equality and Diversity policy, which was approved by the Committee in April 2012 following community consultation, outlines our commitment to promote a zero tolerance to unfair treatment or discrimination to any person or group of persons, particularly on the basis of any of the protected characteristics¹. This includes ensuring that everyone has equal access to information and services and, to this end, the Association will make available a copy of this document in a range of alternative formats including large print, translated into another language or by data transferred to voice.

6.2 We are also aware of the potential for policies to inadvertently discriminate against an individual or group of individuals. To help tackle this and ensure that it does not occur, best practice suggests that organisations carry out Equality Impact Assessments to help identify any part of a policy that may be discriminatory so that this can be addressed (please see section 6 of the Equality and Diversity Policy for more information).

¹ The Equality Act 2010 identifies the "protected characteristics" as age, disability, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, gender, gender reassignment and sexual orientation.

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- 6.3 In line with section 6.3 of the Equality and Diversity Policy, the Association will apply a screening process based on that recommended by the Equality and Human Rights Commission to ascertain whether each policy requires an Impact Assessment to be carried out. The screening process was applied to this policy and it was decided that an impact assessment is not required.

7. PROCEDURES

7.1 Reporting Sickness Absence

- 7.1.1 Each employee's statement of Terms and Conditions of Employment specifies the individual responsibilities with the regard to reporting sickness absence. Pre-arranges authorised absences, absences for compassionate reasons or annual leave are excluded from this procedure.
- 7.1.2 On the first day of absence staff must notify their Line Manager or Director as soon as practicable and at the very least within 1 hour of normal starting time giving
- a) Brief details of the reason for absence
 - b) The likely duration of the absence
- 7.1.3 Line Managers shall be responsible for seeking information about the period of sickness absence from the employee. These questions shall be set out on Notification of Absence Record (Appendix 3).
- 7.1.4 Whilst messages may be left on the office answer phone when the office is closed the employee **MUST** contact their Line Manager or another member of the Management Team before 10.00 am.
- 7.1.5 If the employee is not able to make contact personally, they must arrange for a relative or friend to make contact and provide the information, within the same timescale.

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- 7.1.6 If the employee is not certain how long the absence will last they must make contact again with their Line Manager or another member of the Management Team by the end of the period covered by the first message. (i.e. at the start of the 2nd day, or the 3rd day if they said for 2 days) until they are able to advise when they will be returning to work or that they will have to attend their GP to determine appropriate category of 'fit note' for a longer period of absence (see section 8.4 below for more information on 'fit notes')

8. KEEPING IN TOUCH & STATEMENT OF FITNESS FOR WORK (FIT NOTES)

8.1 Keeping in touch

- a) The onus lies with the employee to keep their manager informed of the reasons and progress of all absences. Generally, employees should call their manager every day if the absence is shorter than one week (unless it is ascertained the sick period will last at least a week), and thereafter once a week during longer periods of absence. Where employees fail to keep in touch as outlined above, Cernach Housing Association reserves the right to initiate and maintain contact with the staff member.
- b) Where an employee fails to keep in touch, the Association reserves the right to withdraw the company sick pay and also initiate the contact with absent employees where appropriate or necessary. Where a meeting is required to discuss the health and their return to work, employees will be given notice in writing a week in advance.
- c) For absences lasting 1 – 7 days (including days not normally worked e.g. weekends) the previous requirement for a self-certificate will be replaced by using the Return to Work Form (Appendix 1) which will be completed with the Line Manager.

8.2 Fit Notes

- a) For absences lasting 8 consecutive days or more (including weekends) employees will require to visit their Doctor to determine the category in line with the 'fit note'. The categories are :-
 - i) Fit for work
 - ii) Fit for some work
 - iii) Not fit for work

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By choosing option b) Doctors may issue a fit note which specifies that an employee may be able to return to work if certain adjustments are made. These may include a phased return to work, part time working and/or adjustments to work stations.

- b) Should a Doctor suggest that an employee may be able to return to work if adjustments are made, the employee may be able to return to work if adjustments are made, the employee and their Line Manager should meet to discuss these adjustments and decide, in conjunction with the Director whether they can be made. A timescale should be set for the duration of these adjustments.
- c) In addition, should an employee feel that they are fit for work before the end date on their 'fit note', they may return to work without the Doctor signing them off as fit. However the employee and their Line Manager should meet to discuss this prior to the employee returning to work and carry out a risk assessment.
- d) Although the doctor may suggest that the employee is fit to work with adjustments or the employee may decide to return before the end of their fit note, the employer is not obliged to accept this and can if they feel it appropriate, ask the employee to continue to remain off work and to go back to their Doctor for a further fit note. This decision will be made following the discussions and risk assessments mentioned in 8.6 above.

Employees must submit the first 'fit note' by the 10th day of absence. If absence continues beyond the period covered by the first statement, the employee must ensure that subsequent fit notes are received within 4 working days after the end of the period covered by the previous certificate.

- e) If the employee fails to notify the manager either verbally or in writing within the required timescale then the absence may be treated as unauthorised absence and the Association will be entitled to withhold payment from the employee for the period not covered.
- f) Should an employee return to work on a part-time basis, they will be paid part wages and part sick pay to make up their full pay.

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8.3 Failure to Comply

Where the employee does not follow reporting; certification; or agreed keeping-in-touch arrangements, Cernach Housing Association may withhold Sickness Benefit payments. Refusal to comply with these requirements may also lead to disciplinary action being considered. Similarly any falsification or attempt to mislead on the employee's part will lead to disciplinary action. In serious and/or repeated cases, dismissal may result.

9. LATE TIME KEEPING

- 9.1 If an employee, for whatever reason, is going to be late for work by more than thirty minutes after their agreed starting time, they should make every effort to notify their manager and confirm that they will still be reporting for work. In the mornings prior to 9.00-am telephone messages should be left on the office answer phone, however upon arrival at work the employee must report to their Line Manager (or other Manager if not available).
- 9.2 Time lost due to late arrival will normally be made up in accordance with the Association's policy on flexible working.
- 9.3 If an employee is late for work on 4 or more occasions over a 2 month period, the Line Manager, or Director will discuss with the employee if there are any underlying reasons which may require action either by the employee, or the Association or both. The Line Manager, or Director will produce a note of the discussion, a copy given to the employee and a copy placed in their personal file.
- 9.4 Continuation of late timekeeping may result in further interviews leading to consideration of whether disciplinary action is required. Such action may include advising the employee that further late time keeping may be treated as unauthorised absence.

10. SHORT TERM ABSENCE & TRIGGERS

- 10.1 Short-term absence due to sickness must be reported to the manager as detailed in Paragraph 7.1.2. The Director or appropriate line manager will hold a return to work interview with the employee on the first available day following the return no matter how short the absence was.

The purpose of the discussion will primarily be to

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- a) Establish cause of absence
- b) Completed the return to work form
- c) Reinforce the vie regarding good attendance
- d) Raise the profile of the Attendance & Absence Management Policy

10.2 Persistent Short Term Absence

10.2.1 The Association defines 'persistent short term absence' as a number of absences which amount to at least 5% of the working days available to an employee over a period of at least 3 calendar months. Each time an employee has a short term absence the line manager will check back over the 3 calendar months from the date of the end of the absence to establish if the absence in that period is 5% or more of available working days (i.e. 3 days out of 3 months).

10.2.2 Where the total of short-term absences is 5% or more the Line Manager, or Director will meet with the employee to discuss and investigate the reasons. This discussion may form part of the 'return to work' meeting following the absence which brings the total to 5%, and its aim will be to support the employee in identifying and dealing with any appropriate causes of sickness absence.

10.2.3 A note of the meeting will be produced, copied to the employee, and a copy placed in their personal file. The note will include details of any action agreed, with timescales where appropriate (Appendix1).

10.2.4 If the pattern or level of short term absences continues, the employee will be subject to informal action by their manager on their absence levels. The timing of the informal action interview will be decided by the manager in consultation with the Director taking into account factors such as how soon the next absence(s) have occurred, their frequency, to what extent any action agreed at the previous meeting has been implemented, the employees overall performance, attitude, personal circumstances, and any other relevant factors.

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10.2.5 A note of the informal action will be produced, a copy given to the employee, and a copy placed in their personal file. The note will refer to the possibility of disciplinary action having to be taken if the attendance record does not improve, and will include details of any action agreed, with timescales where appropriate.

10.2.6 Where informal action fails to improve the level of attendance, and/or where there is no underlying medical reason for the absences, the Director will hold an interview with the employee in accordance with the Association's Disciplinary Policy. The employee will be entitled to be accompanied by a colleague at this interview. At the conclusion of the interview the Director will decide whether or not to take disciplinary action.

10.2.7 Further unsatisfactory attendance will result in the matter being dealt with under the Disciplinary Policy and Procedures.

10.2.8 At any stage in dealing with the persistent Short Term Absence, the Director may choose to refer the employee to a medical advisor. The employee will not unreasonably withhold their agreement to be referred for an independent medical examination. Alternatively the Director may seek the employee's agreement to obtain a report from the employee's GP.

10.2.9 Under the Access to Medical Reports Act 1998, the employee has the right to access any medical report relating to them, which has been supplied by a medical practitioner.

10.3 Prolonged Absence

If a period of sickness continues beyond 4 weeks, and the likely date of return is still uncertain, the employee's permission to contact their general Practitioner for a written report may be sought. Where a pattern of absence has been identified or there is a concern of an underlying medical conditions, such report may be requested (or a referral to an occupational health provider for an independent medical assessment made) where the employee's absence is less than four weeks or the employee is not currently off sick. The employee will be made fully aware of their rights regarding the granting of permission. In such cases, the fitness requirements for the job will be declared and the doctor's opinion as to a likely date of return sought.

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11. LONG TERM ABSENCE & TRIGGERS

- 11.1 In all cases of sickness absence, the aim of the Association is to be as supportive as possible of employees with genuine ill health circumstances, taking into account the need to maintain high standards of service to tenants and the wider public, and the carrying out of all activities within the required timescale etc.
- 11.2 Long term absence through sickness, or the inability to work regularly and consistently because of chronic ill health, may cause particular difficulties to a small organisation such as the Association. Consideration must be given both to the needs of the individual and the Association when considering the most appropriate action to take in a case of Long Term Absence.
- 11.3 Following 4 continuous weeks absence covered by fit note(s), the Director will meet the employee who may choose to be accompanied. The purpose of the meeting will be to:-
- a) Maintain contact with the staff member
 - b) Confirm the reasons for absence
 - c) Obtain an indication, where possible, of a return to work date
 - d) Discuss any appropriate support or assistance which may be given to help the employee return to work
 - e) Discuss any concerns or answer any questions regarding the absence
- 11.4 If due to the nature of the illness the employee is not able to attend this first meeting it will be held as soon as possible after the first 4 weeks absence.
- 11.5 Where an employee's absence continues to at least 12 weeks, and there is no known timescale for the absence ending (as there would be an example for most operations etc) the Director will meet again with the employee who may choose to be accompanied, to review the situation and specifically to consider referral to a medical advisor.
- 11.6 Following receipt of any medical report, the Director will consider the following options.
- a) Where the employee is found not to be suffering from ill health the matter will be dealt with under the Disciplinary Policy.

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- b) Where the employee is found to be unfit to return to their current post, but is capable of other duties, the possibility of alternative employment by the Association may be considered.
 - c) Where the employee is or has become disabled the possibility of creating a new post to enable ongoing employment will be examined in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act.
 - d) Where the employee is unfit to return to any form of employment, or where alternative employment cannot be found, or where the employee is suffering from a health problem which will have a continuing debilitating effect resulting in continuing periods of absence due to ill health, the Director will consider whether to recommend to the Staffing & General Purposes Sub Committee that termination of employment on the grounds of incapacity due to ill health is appropriate.
 - e) Agree date to return to work.
- 11.7 The Director will keep the employee advised at every stage of the process and will where appropriate ensure that the employee has access to relevant pensions advice regarding early retirement due to ill health.
- 11.8 Where it has been agreed that the employee will be returning to work by a specified date, the Director will consider the need for following measures to help ease the return.
- a) A fresh induction programme.
 - b) Recommencing the employee on a part-time basis and gradually increasing the hours worked.
- 11.9 If it is decided to terminate the employment on the grounds of ill health, this will be done at a formal meeting with the Director at which the employee may choose to be accompanied. The employee will be given the opportunity at the meeting to provide counter medical evidence as to why the decision to terminate employment should not be taken. Any decision to terminate will be taken by the Director following consultation with the Chairperson of the Employment and General Purposes Sub Committee. The decision will be communicated verbally at the meeting and confirmed in writing within 7 days.

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- 11.10 The letter will include details of any payments due for Annual Leave not taken and in lieu of any notice due etc and will advise the employee of the right of appeal against the decision in accordance with the Disciplinary Policy Appeals Procedures.
- 11.11 At all stages in the process the Director will ensure that all relevant Policies and Procedures are adhered to, and full records kept, in case the employee decides to appeal to an industrial tribunal.

12. UNAUTHORISED/DISHONEST ABSENCE

- 12.1 Periods of unauthorised absence, whether due to sickness or late timekeeping may result in payment being withheld from the employee. Such action will normally only be considered by the Director, if a pattern of unauthorised absence becomes evident (i.e. 2/3 unauthorised absences over 2 months).
- 12.2 Before any payment is withheld the Director or appropriate line manager, will hold an informal counselling interview with the employee to discuss and investigate the reasons for the absences, and to identify and underlying causes which may require action by the employee and or the Director/or appropriate line manager. If as a result of the interview, the Director/appropriate line manager in consultation with the Director, decides that any future unauthorised absence will result in withholding of pay then the employee will be advised in writing before any action is taken.
- 12.3 A note of the meeting will be produced a copy given to the employee and a copy placed in their personal file.
- 12.4 If an employee is found to falsify or exaggerate their absence, this will be treated as gross misconduct. An investigation will be carried out in accordance with Cernach Housing Association's Disciplinary Procedure and disciplinary action may be imposed, including dismissal

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13. ABSENCE MONITORING

- 13.1 A fundamental feature of good attendance management is the accurate and timely recording of all absences. This is essential both in terms of the requirements of the Statutory Sick Pay arrangements and the Association Sickness Benefit scheme. Good information also allows patterns to be identified and can be an early indication of underlying problems. The sooner these problems are identified and acted upon – the more likely a successful conclusion for staff member and employer alike can be achieved.
- 13.2 Accurate recording is also an essential element in satisfying any concerns over the fairness of any actions taken by line managers. The responsibility for maintaining such records rest with the Corporate Services Manager.
- 13.3 Keeping good quality, up to date records also means that:-
- a) Concise data is available for each employee during the year
 - b) Problems are identified at an early stage
 - c) Staff members are treated fairly and consistently
 - d) Trends and underlying causes can be more easily identified
 - e) Relevant Health & Safety issues can be identified
 - f) Departmental and Corporate attendance rates can be improved
 - g) Managers are better able to explain decisions where continued poor attendance results in counselling and/or disciplinary action.

14. OTHER PROVISIONS

14.1 Absence and holidays

If an employee is on annual leave and falls sick, it is possible to override the annual leave and process sick leave and pay instead. A doctor's certificate to confirm the illness/injury should be obtained from the employee in order to do that.

If an employee is on sick leave and goes on holidays, the line manager will investigate whether this is appropriate considering the employee's reason for absence. Depending on the outcome a disciplinary action may be instigated.

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14.2 Doctor/Hospital/Dental Appointments

Doctor and hospital appointments should be arranged out with working hours. If it is, however not possible, then employees should request time off from their Line Manager. Arrangements could include using annual leave, TOIL or unpaid time off. In some circumstances Managers could also use their discretion and consider giving paid time off.

14.3 Conduct Whilst off Sick

When on sick leave, employees are still expected not to breach any points of their contract of employment. They are still bound by the duties of fidelity and expected not to participate in activities that would be at odds with their medical condition whilst off sick. Any breach in respect of this will be dealt with under the Disciplinary Procedure.

14.4 Cosmetic Procedures

Absence due to cosmetic procedures (whether carried out in the UK or abroad) will not fall under the sick leave or pay. In these cases, the employee should request time off and agree with their Line Manager how the absence will be processed, e.g. annual leave or unpaid leave.

14.5 IVF Treatment

Absences resulting from IVF treatment will not be processed as sick leave or pay. The same relates to a partner or a person that is undergoing such treatment. Instead, employees should discuss with their Line Manager how time off for the treatment could be accommodated, e.g. annual leave, flexi time or unpaid leave. Absences relating to IVF treatment will also not be treated as relating to pregnancy unless the employee actually falls pregnant.

14.6 Stress Management

Stress is not an illness but a state. It can result from an illness or lead to one but it is not an illness itself. The same relates to "nervous debility". If an employee goes off sick with stress, the Manager will endeavour to find out the underlying cause so that it could be determined whether conditions at work cause or contribute to stress and whether something could be done to help the situation. If the absence is certified by a doctor, the Manager may ask the employee's doctor to clarify the underlying cause for stress.

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15. MONITORING AND REVIEW

- 15.1 Sickness absence levels will be monitored by the Director who will submit summary information covering the preceding three months to the Staffing and General Purposes Sub Committee at their quarterly meetings. A summary covering the preceding 12 months will be presented at the first meeting after the end of the financial year.
- 15.2 The Staffing and General Purposes Sub Committee will review the definition of persistent short term absence annually at their first meeting after the end of the financial year, in light of the absence levels over the preceding 12 months and will decide on the definition for the next 12 months period.

16. MANAGING SERIOUS CASES

16.1 Procedural Issues

Those cases where all efforts to improve attendance fails, it will be necessary for the employer to demonstrate that the procedures employed were fair. The circumstances of each case will have to be examined in its own right, but the following outline tests, as a minimum should be satisfied:-

- a) That all stages in the procedure the employee has been dealt with in a fair and consistent manner.
- b) That medical advice in relation to the staff member's ability to continue in employment has been received and that this has been discussed with the employee and that his/her views have also been considered.
- c) That all appropriate stages in the Disciplinary Procedure have been followed and that formal warnings are clear and explicit and that the opportunity for improvement has been afforded throughout. (In cases of long-term absence through chronic ill-health it will rarely be appropriate to issue formal warnings. A different approach is required in such cases and this is explained later.)
- d) That the scopes of employment provisions contained in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 have been considered in relation to the employee's circumstances.

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- e) That alternatives to dismissal have to be considered. Any alternative to dismissal should be discussed and agreed with the staff member concerned.

16.1.1 Short-Term – Frequent Absences

- a) Cernach Housing Association will aim to secure better attendance by way of support and encouragement to the employee concerned in the first instance. This will involve maintaining good records, ensuring return to work interviews and helping investigate and address any identified underlying causes of absence.
- b) Where the employee fails to secure an improvement Cernach Housing Association will invoke the terms of the Disciplinary Procedures. If at any stage during this process it becomes apparent that an underlying health issue is involved, then the alternative procedure for dealing with Long-Term Sickness Absence will be used.

16.1.2 Long Term Sickness Absence

- a) Cernach Housing Association and its managers will adopt a sympathetic and understanding approach to any staff member wrestling with a long-term and/or chronic health problem. Staff who find themselves in such a position should be confident that their manager will react in a supportive fashion when approached.
- b) The following points will always be considered in relation to long term absence:-
 - 1) The nature of the illness
 - 2) Any contributing factors
 - 3) The likely duration of the employee's absence
 - 4) The nature of the employee's duties in relation to his/her health problems
 - 5) The business needs of Cernach Housing Association and the impact that the employee's absence is having upon these
 - 6) The employee's length of service
 - 7) The entitlement to Sickness Benefit

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- c) Throughout the duration of the employees absence it will be expected that he/she will keep in touch and advise of progress. Managers will also seek to obtain medical reports and assessments at appropriate junctures during the absence and will arrange to discuss these with the staff member when received. Where the staff member disagrees with the nature of any medical reports, he/she will be free to seek and offer alternative medical evidence.
- d) Along with considering any medical reports, the manager will keep the staff member fully appraised as to whether/for how long the absence can be borne by Cernach Housing Association. In cases where dismissal through medical incapacity is being considered, full discussions with the employee will take place first, and he/she will be afforded the opportunity to express views on such a course of action.
- e) In cases where staff members do leave Cernach Housing Association due to ill health, managers will make every effort to help secure appropriate access to pension scheme and/or other relevant financial benefits that may be available

17. STATUTORY SICK PAY (SSP)

Employees are entitled to SSP. This is reviewed by the Government every October. It is not paid for the first three days of absence and runs for 28 weeks after that. An employee who is no longer entitled to SSP may be entitled to an incapacity benefit and they would need to visit their local Department of Social Security to find out their rights.

18. GOOD ATTENDANCE REWARDS

Cernach Housing Association has introduced a separate Reward & Recognition Strategy allowing Staff to benefit in some way within the following categories:-

- Long Service
- Attendance
- Business Improvements
- Training

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19. POLICY REVIEW

The attendance & Absence Management Policy shall be reviewed every four years or sooner as deemed necessary by the Management Committee. The success of the policy shall be measured against the following outputs and outcomes:-

OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES
<i>Provide opportunity for Staff to participate in policy review</i>	<i>Staff aware of own and others' responsibilities</i>

Signed _____ (Chairperson) Date _____

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ATTENDANCE & ABSENCE MANAGEMENT POLICY

SUMMARY FOR STAFF HANDBOOK

REPORTING

Procedures for notifying and certifying sickness and other absences are outlined in staff's Terms and Conditions of service – as supplemented by the Association's Attendance & Absence Management Policy, a copy of which is issued to all staff upon taking up post.

7.1.2 On the first day of absence staff must notify their Line Manager, or Director as soon as practicable and at the very least within 1 hour of normal starting time giving

- a) Brief details of the reason for absence
- b) The likely duration of the absence

7.1.3 Line managers shall be responsible for seeking information about the period of sickness absence from the employee. These questions shall be set out on Notification of Absence Record (Appendix3).

7.1.4 Whilst messages may be left on the office answer phone when the office is closed the employee MUST contact their Line Manager or another member of the Management Team before 10.00am.

7.1.5 If the employee is not able to make contact personally, they must arrange for a relative or friend to make contact and provide the information, within the same timescale.

7.1.6 If the employee is not certain how long the absence will last they must make contact again with their Line Manager or another member of the Management Team by the end of the period covered by the first message. (i.e. at the start of the 2nd day, or the 3rd day if they said for 2 days) until they are able to advise when they will be returning to work or that they will have to attend their GP to determine appropriate category of 'fit note' for a longer period of absence (see section 8.4 below for more information on 'fit notes').