

Lewisham Islamic Centre

Sick Leave Policy

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1.0	01/12/18	Policy finalized

The latest version of this policy will always be on the intranet.

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SICK LEAVE POLICY

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1. Purpose of the Policy

- 1.1. **Lewisham Islamic Centre's Sick Leave Policy** outlines the Centre's provisions for Employees who become sick and need to be absent from work.
- 1.2. This helps to clarify from the outset the expectations, roles and process so that everyone is clear about their obligations and what actions they should be taking.
- 1.3. This policy specifies how sick leave will be accrued and how it may be used.
- 1.4. It also provides guidance about arrangements for sick pay, reporting and managing sickness absence and the procedure for returning to work/**Fit for Work assessments**.

2. Scope

- 2.1. **LIC's** Sick Leave Policy applies to all paid Staff working at the Centre.

3. Policy Elements

- 3.1. This policy deals with sick pay, reporting sickness absence and how **LIC** manages sickness absence.
- 3.2. Failing to report sickness absence under this policy or falsely claiming sick pay will be treated as misconduct.
- 3.3. **LIC** reserves the right to revise or amend this Sick Leave Policy to reflect changes in the organisation or legislative law.

4. How to Report Sickness Absence & Evidence of Incapacity

- 4.1. Where you are unable to come to work because you are, sick; recovering from sudden illness; receiving mental/psychological care or counselling or suffering from an injury of some sort, it is important that you telephone your line managers early as possible before your normal start time, failing that, within two hours from your start time, on each day of absence.
- 4.2. The following details should be provided:
- a) The nature of your illness.
 - b) The expected length of your absence from work.
 - c) Contact details.
 - d) Any outstanding or urgent work that requires attention.
- 4.3. **Line Managers should ensure that:**
- a) Any sickness absence that is notified to them is recorded.
 - b) Arrangements are made, where necessary, to cover work and to inform colleagues and service-users (whilst maintaining confidentiality).
- 4.4. You should expect to be contacted during your absence by your line manager who will want to enquire about your health and wellbeing and be advised, if possible, as to your expected return date.
- 4.5. When the sick absence lasts more than seven consecutive calendar days, the Employee must provide **a relevant doctor's certificate**, called **a fit note**.
- 4.6. **LIC** reserves the right to ask the Employee at any stage of their absence to produce a **Self-certification form** up to seven consecutive calendar days.

5. Providing Evidence for Sickness

- 5.1. It is important that you fill in and send to **the Centre Coordinator** a **self-certification form** for sickness absence between four and seven consecutive calendar days.
- 5.2. Where the sickness absence lasts for more than a week, you must provide us with a relevant **doctor's certificate, called a fit note**, stating that you are not fit for work and the reason(s) why. This should be forwarded to your line manager as soon as possible.
- 5.3. If your sickness absence is going to continue when the fit note or Doctor's certificate expires, it is your responsibility to provide us with a new certificate covering your continued absence.
- 5.4. Where your doctor provides a fit note stating that you 'may' be fit for work, it is important that you tell your line manager. You can then discuss with your line manager any additional measures that may be needed to facilitate your return to work, taking account of your doctor's advice. This may take place at a return to work interview.
- 5.5. If appropriate measures cannot be taken, you will remain on sick leave, your position of work will be reviewed, and a date will be set to review the situation.
- 5.6. Where we are concerned about the reason for absence, or the level of frequent short-term absence, we may require a medical certificate for each absence regardless of duration. In such circumstances, we will cover any costs incurred in obtaining such medical certificates, for absences of a week or less, on production of a doctor's invoice.

6. Unauthorised absence

- 6.1. Cases of unauthorised absence will be dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure.
- 6.2. Absence that has not been notified according to the sickness absence reporting procedure will be treated as unauthorised absence.

- 6.3. If you do not report for work and have not telephoned your line manager to explain the reason for your absence, your line manager will try to contact you, by telephone and in writing if necessary. **This should not be treated as a substitute for reporting sickness absence.**

7. Fit for Work Programme

- 7.1. If you are absent with sickness for four weeks, either **LIC** or your doctor may suggest referring you to the **Fit for Work Programme**.
- 7.2. The Fit for Work programme is a government-funded occupational health assessment service.
- 7.3. The intention behind the programme is to help Employees get back to work when they have been absent due to sickness.
- 7.4. Your Doctor can, where he or she believes it is appropriate, suggest that a referral is made earlier than 4 weeks.

8. Sick Pay

- 8.1. If you are absent from work, you are entitled to: Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) provided the relevant requirements are satisfied.
- 8.2. Statutory sick pay is not paid for the first three consecutive days of sickness absence and may be payable for up to 28 weeks.
- 8.3. Thus, employees can still qualify for SSP if off sick for a maximum of 4 days (First 3 days during sickness SSP will not be paid) in any period of 8 weeks.
- 8.4. **The following conditions apply:**
- ✓ The Employee has taken necessary steps to notify their line manager of the sickness absence within seven consecutive calendar days

- ✓ The Employee has provided the Employer with a fit note in the case of absence of more than 7 consecutive days.

8.5. **For the avoidance of doubt, there is no customary entitlement to contractual sick pay henceforth it may only be paid on a discretionary and exceptional basis.**

9. Keeping in contact during sickness absence

- 9.1. If you are absent on sick leave, you should expect to be contacted from time to time by your line manager in order to discuss your wellbeing, expected length of continued absence from work and any of your work that requires attention.
- 9.2. Such contact is intended to provide reassurance and will be kept to a reasonable minimum.

10. Meeting Regarding Return to Work

- 10.1. When you have been absent with illness, your line manager may hold a return-to-work interview with you.
- 10.2. The reason for the meeting is to check that you are fit enough to return to work and consider whether there are any steps that could be taken to facilitate this.
- 10.3. A return to work interview enables us to confirm the details of your absence, giving you the opportunity to raise any concerns or questions you may have, and to bring any relevant matters to our attention.
- 10.4. **LIC** is committed to helping members of staff return to work from long-term sickness absence. We will, where appropriate and possible, support returns to work by:
 - a) Obtaining medical advice;

- b) Making reasonable adjustments to the workplace, working practices and working hours;
- c) Considering redeployment; and/or
- d) Agreeing a return to work programme.

11. Dealing with Long-term Sickness Absence or Frequent Short-term Absences

11.1. In circumstances where you have been absent for a long period or you have had frequent short-term absences, **we will follow the process outlined below;**

- a) Seek to understand the reasons for your absence.
- b) Offer advice or assistance in improving your attendance and your health.
- c) We may ask for the medical information about your illness before deciding on a course of action.
- d) Organise meetings with you to discuss your absence, the medical information or other related issues, giving you reasonable notice of the meeting and location.
- e) Where you are unable to attend the meeting, at the time specified, it is very important that you let us know as soon as possible. We will then seek to arrange another time where you are able to attend.
- f) Where it is relevant, we will consider whether reasonable adjustments may need to be made to the sickness absence procedure, or to your role or working arrangements.

12. Medical Assessments

- 12.1. In appropriate circumstances, we may ask you to consent to attending a medical assessment by a doctor or occupational health adviser.
- 12.2. Sometimes it may be that a specialist medical practitioner is the right person for you to see and we will discuss that with you.
- 12.3. We will ask you to agree that any medical report produced may be disclosed to us. Ideally, we would want to discuss the information with the occupational health adviser or doctor.
- 12.4. All medical reports will be kept confidential.

13. Sickness absence meetings procedure

- 13.1. We may apply this procedure whenever we consider it necessary, including, for example, if you:
 - a) Have been absent due to illness on several occasions;
 - b) Have discussed matters at a return to work interview that require investigation; and/or
 - c) Have been absent for more than 5 days.
- 13.2. Unless it is impractical to do so, we will give you 7 days written notice of the date, time and place of a sickness absence meeting. We will put any concerns about your sickness absence and the basis for those concerns in writing or otherwise advise why the meeting is being called. A reasonable opportunity for you to consider this information before a meeting will be provided.
- 13.3. The meeting will be conducted by your line manager and/or another suitable member of the management team. You may bring a companion with you to the meeting – a colleague or a trade union representative.

- 13.4. You must take all reasonable steps to attend the meeting. Failure to do so without good reason may be treated as misconduct. If you or your companion are unable to attend at the time specified, you should immediately inform your line manager who will seek to agree an alternative time.
- 13.5. Confirmation of any decision made at a meeting, the reasons for it, and of the right of appeal will be given to you in writing within 28 days of a sickness absence meeting (unless this time scale is not practicable, in which case it will be provided as soon as is practicable).
- 13.6. If, at any time, your line manager considers that you have taken or are taking sickness absence when you are not unwell, they may refer matters to be dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure.

14. Right to be accompanied at meetings

- 14.1. You may bring a companion to any meeting or appeal meeting under this procedure.
- 14.2. Your companion may be either a trade union representative or a fellow employee. Their identity must be confirmed to the manager conducting the meeting, in good time before it takes place.
- 14.3. Some companions may not be allowed: for example, anyone who may have a conflict of interest, or whose presence may prejudice a meeting. Companions should not normally work at another department, unless no-one reasonably suitable is available at the department at which you work.
- 14.4. A companion may make representations, ask questions, and sum up your position, but will not be allowed to answer questions on your behalf. You may confer privately with your companion at any time during a meeting.

15. Stage 1: First Sickness Absence Meeting

15.1. The purposes of a first sickness absence meeting may include:

- a) Discussing the reasons for your absence and the likely next steps and prognosis.
- b) Where you are on long-term sickness absence, determining how long the absence is likely to last.
- c) Where you have been absent on several occasions, determining the likelihood of further absences.
- d) Considering whether medical advice is required.
- e) Considering what, if any, measures might improve your health and/or attendance.
- f) Agreeing a way forward, action that will be taken and a time-scale for review and/or a further meeting under the sickness absence procedure.

15.2. For regular, short-term absence concerns, **LIC** may set you targets for improvements. If the sickness absence does not improve, we will monitor your progress following the first sickness absence meeting.

15.3. Where you have not been able to return to work from longer-term sickness or if you are unable to meet any targets set for short-term absences, we will invite you for a further meeting. The point of a further meeting is to assess whether the absence situation is likely to improve.

15.4. We reserve the right to hold this meeting in your absence if it is considered necessary in view of previous cancellations and/or rescheduling.

16. Stage 2: Further Sickness Absence Meeting(s)

16.1. Depending on the matters discussed at the first stage of the sickness absence procedure, a further meeting or meetings may be necessary.

16.2. The purposes of further meeting(s) may include:

- a) Discussing the reasons for and impact of your ongoing absence(s).
- b) Where you are on long-term sickness absence, discussing how long your absence is likely to last.
- c) Where you have been absent on several occasions, discussing the likelihood of further absences.
- d) If it has not been obtained, considering whether medical advice is required. If it has been obtained, considering the advice that has been given and whether further advice is required.
- e) Considering your ability to return to/remain in your job in view both of your capabilities and our business needs and any adjustments that can reasonably be made to your job to enable you to do so.
- f) Considering possible redeployment opportunities and whether any adjustments can reasonably be made to assist in redeploying you.
- g) Where you are able to return from long-term sick leave, whether to your job or a redeployed job, agreeing a return to work programme.

h) If it is considered that you are unlikely to be able to return to work from long-term absence, whether there are any benefits for which you should be considered.

i) Agreeing a way forward, action that will be taken and a time-scale for review and/or a further meeting(s). This may, depending on steps we have already taken, include warning you that you are at risk of dismissal.

16.3. We reserve the right to hold this meeting in your absence if it is considered necessary in view of previous cancellations and/or rescheduling.

17. Stage 3: Final sickness absence meeting

17.1. Where there is no improvement in reaching any targets set for reduction of short-term absences or you have been unable to return to work from long-term sickness or have been given a written warning that you are at risk of dismissal, we will invite you to a final meeting.

17.2. The purposes of the meeting will be:

a) To review the meetings that have taken place and matters discussed with you.

b) Where you remain on long-term sickness absence, to consider whether there have been any changes since the last meeting under stage two of the procedure, either as regards your possible return to work or opportunities for return or redeployment.

c) To consider any further matters that you wish to raise in relation to your sickness absence and the likely prognosis.

d) To consider whether there is a reasonable likelihood of you returning to work or achieving the desired level of attendance in a reasonable time.

e) An assessment of whether or not to terminate your contract of employment.

- f) Termination will normally be with full notice or payment in lieu of notice.

17.3. We reserve the right to hold this meeting in your absence if it is considered necessary in view of previous cancellations and/or rescheduling.

18. Appeal Against Decisions Under This Policy

18.1. Where you want to appeal against the outcome of any stage of this procedure, you must set out your appeal grounds in writing within, 5 working days of the date on which the decision was sent to you and may bring a companion to an appeal meeting.

18.2. Unless it is not practicable, you will be given written notice of an appeal meeting within two weeks of the meeting. In cases of dismissal, the appeal will be held as soon as possible. Any new matters raised in an appeal may delay an appeal meeting if further investigation is required.

18.3. You will be provided with written details of any new information which comes to light before an appeal meeting. You will also be given a reasonable opportunity to consider this information before the meeting.

18.4. Where practicable, an appeal meeting will be conducted by a manager senior to the individual who conducted the sickness absence meeting.

18.5. We will seek to deal with your appeal fairly and reasonably. The decision will be provided to you in writing, usually within [two weeks] of the appeal hearing.

18.6. The original decision may be confirmed, revoked or replaced with a different decision. The final decision will be confirmed in writing, if possible, within 28 days of the appeal meeting. There will be no further right of appeal.

- 18.7. Where you lodge an appeal against dismissal, the date of dismissal will not change or be delayed pending the outcome of an appeal. However, if the appeal is successful, the decision to dismiss will be revoked with no loss of continuity or pay.
- 18.8. We reserve the right to hold this meeting in your absence if it is considered necessary in view of previous cancellations and/or rescheduling.