

Sickness absence management

Evidence based equality analysis

Main aims, purpose and outcomes and how does it fit in with the wider aims of the organisation:

To foster a culture of high attendance by balancing the needs of the individual with the needs of the authority. This will be achieved by implementing procedures to support employees experiencing ill health, whilst dealing with unjustified and/or high levels of sickness absence.

All reasonable support will be provided to employees who experience short or long term periods of ill health with the aim of assisting their recovery, return to work, and thereafter, to maintain a good level of attendance and performance at work.

All employees have a duty to take reasonable care of their own health and fitness to attend work and to follow the correct reporting procedures if they are ill.

Where an employee has a medical condition that is considered under the Equality Act 2010 the Council will make reasonable adjustments to help such employees carry out their job. The authority will ensure they have the same opportunities to perform well and develop during their employment as any other employee.

Lead officer: Nicola Pierce

Stakeholders: All employees, Occupational Health Service

Equality analysis is a valuable tool to help embed equality into everything we do

While process is important, equality analysis is essentially about outcomes.

Lack of evidence of discrimination is not evidence of a lack of discrimination.

It is not acceptable to say that a policy is applied uniformly to all groups and is therefore fair and equal. Applying a policy or procedure consistently may result in differential outcomes for different groups.

For each of the areas below, an assessment needs to be made on whether the policy has a positive, negative or neutral impact, and brief details of why this decision was made and notes of any mitigation should be included. Where the impact is negative, this needs to be given a high, medium or low assessment. It is important to rate the impact of the policy based on the current situation (i.e. disregarding any actions planned to be carried out in future).

High impact – a significant potential impact, risk of exposure, history of complaints, no mitigating measures in place etc.

Medium impact –some potential impact exists, some mitigating measures are in place, poor evidence

Low impact – almost no relevancy to the process, e.g. an area that is very much legislation led and where the Council has very little discretion

	Neutral	Positive	Negative
Target group / area			
Race and ethnicity (including Gypsies and Travellers; migrant workers, asylum seekers etc.)	No issues identified		
Disability (as defined by the Equality Act - a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities)		Adjustments for absence due to disability (section 6), use of discretion, advice to seek specialist information and support including Access to Work and Occupational Health, use of alternatives to telephone notification for staff with a disability	Need to add HIV/AIDS to list of conditions defined as disability (paragraph 6.02) Currently no discretion for employees undertaking a planned programme of health interventions such as physiotherapy – each appointment would count as one absence leading to the employee hitting the triggers.

Gender		Explicit reference to disallowing pregnancy related absence	Consider cross-reference to Maternity Policy and Procedure
Gender reassignment			No reference made to time off for gender reassignment – consideration to be given to either including under this procedure or as a separate document (NB similarly elective surgery is not addressed)
Religion and belief	No issues identified		
Sexual orientation (including heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual)	No issues identified		
Age (children and young people aged 0 – 24, adults aged 25 – 50, younger older people aged 51 – 75/80; older older people 81+. The age categories are for illustration only as overriding consideration should be given to needs).	Impact is currently neutral, but keep under review as workforce ages		
Rural communities			Employees in rural areas face additional challenges due to lack of public transport and local health facilities, meaning more time is spent on health appointments
Areas of deprivation	Some locations have health inequalities but the procedure is applied consistently		

Human rights		Privacy considerations and data protection is good	Need to ensure that appropriate safeguards are built in when employee data is no longer held by the Council but by Cosocius
Health and wellbeing (consider both the wider determinants of health such as education, housing, employment, environment, crime and transport, as well as the possible impacts on lifestyles and the effect there may be on health and care services)		Procedure seeks to manage sickness absence in a fair and consistent manner	
Procurement/partnership (if project due to be carried out by contractors/partners etc, identify steps taken to ensure equality compliance)			

Evidence:

Sickness Absence Procedure
Absence statistics

Action plan:

Actions required	Key activity	Priority	Outcomes required	Officer responsible	Review date
Consider best way to address absence considerations for gender reassignment and elective surgery, either through inclusion in this procedure or development of	Research the approach of other organisations	Medium	Relevant procedures developed	Rosemary Hodgson	31 December 2014

alternatives					
Consider the impact of employees hitting triggers through regular medical appointments such as physiotherapy and whether discretion should be made	Monitor	Medium	Evidence to inform future reviews of the procedure	Rosemary Hodgson	31 December 2014
Ensure proper data protection provisions to safeguard absence information on transfer to Cosocius	Review and manage contract	Medium	Confidence in the arrangements	Rosemary Hodgson	31 December 2014

Sign off	
Lead Officer:	Nicola Pierce
Approved by Head of Service:	Sam Brousas
Moderation and/or Scrutiny	
Date:	Resources equality meeting 16 January 2014 and subsequent virtual moderation of draft
Date analysis to be reviewed based on rating (high impact – review in one year, medium impact - review in two years, low impact in three years)	Three years

Please forward the completed Equality Analysis to the Equality and Diversity Managers for publishing on the Council's website