



Attendance and Absence Management Policy

Contents

1.	Introduction	2
2.	Principles.....	2
3.	Absence Reporting Procedures	3
4.	Absence Reporting Procedures	4
5.	Attendance Management	5
6.	Absence Management	8
7.	Long-Term Absence.....	9
8.	Sickness During Annual Leave.....	11
9.	Capability	11
10.	Other Provisions	12
11.	Good Attendance Award.....	14
12.	Other Related Policies and Procedures.....	15
13.	UK General Data Protection Regulation 2021	15
14.	Policy Review.....	15
15.	Equality Impact Assessment	15
17.	Managing Absence Flowchart.....	16

1. Introduction

ng2 Ltd is committed to managing attendance and absence at work to ensure that we are supporting employees with health concerns, providing reliable and cost effective services to customers and improving the organisation's performance.

ng2 Ltd recognises that employees may on occasion be absent from work and this policy is designed, therefore, to ensure that a consistent and fair approach in managing attendance and absence at work is adopted throughout the organisation.

2. Principles

- 2.1 The organisation recognises its responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of its employees and therefore will provide employees with a safe working environment. All employees will be treated in a responsible and caring manner, and be encouraged to provide the highest standards of attendance possible.
- 2.2 The organisation will formulate standards, provide procedural guidelines and ensure line managers receive appropriate training for managing attendance and absence at work. It is the responsibility of line managers to identify and monitor the causes of absences and where possible to develop a programme of preventative measures. Employees will be afforded the opportunity to be accompanied by a trade union representative or a colleague where appropriate.
- 2.3 All employees including trainees and apprentices will be made aware of the terms of this policy and will be treated in a fair and consistent manner. All employees will be encouraged to seek help with any health issues they are experiencing, which are resulting in non-attendance at work. The organisation provides access to a Company Health Plan which includes direct access to physiotherapy, chiropractic, health screening and 24 hour access to counselling services. Employees may seek assistance from the company health plan provider Simplyhealth (Telephone Number 0800 975 3356).

3. Absence Reporting Procedures

3.1 Reporting absence

Employees reporting absence are required to phone their line manager as soon as practicable - this should be within 1 hour of the normal starting time, text messages are not acceptable. If your line manager is not available then another manager should be contacted. Employees must give the reason for the absence, expected duration of the absence, expected date of return and confirm their contact details.

If it is impossible for employees to get to a phone on day one of their absence they should ensure that someone else calls on their behalf.

3.2 Keeping in Touch

The responsibility lies with the employee to keep their manager informed on a daily basis for the first three days of absence. If the absence continues beyond three days, the employee must contact their line manager on each seventh day thereafter, unless exceptional circumstances prevent the employee from doing so. Where employees fail to keep in touch as outlined above, ng2 Ltd reserves the right to initiate and maintain contact with the employee. Please note that on occasion during an employee absence, management may contact the employee with work related questions/requirements. Such contact will only be where it is essential for continuity of service delivery.

3.3 Absence Certification

An employee can self-certify where the absence lasts 7 calendar days or less. Where an absence period lasts more than 7 calendar days, medical certificate (Fit Note) issued by an appropriate healthcare professional is required. This should be forwarded to the employee's line manager as soon as possible. If the employee's absence continues, further medical certificates must be provided to cover the whole period of absence.

If an employee's doctor or healthcare professional provides a Fit Note stating that they "may be fit for work" they should inform their line manager immediately. All recommendations contained within the Fit Note will be discussed with the employee

in an attempt to facilitate a return to work. If the recommendations cannot be accommodated the reasons for this will be confirmed to the employee and they will remain on sick leave. If the absence continues a review meeting will take place.

3.4 Failure to Comply

Where the employee does not follow reporting, certification, or agreed keeping-in touch arrangements we may proceed with disciplinary action in accordance with the ng2 Ltd disciplinary procedure.

3.5 Return to Work

On every occasion when an employee returns to work after an absence of any kind, the line manager or another senior member of staff will meet the employee at the start of their day/shift, or as soon as practically possible on that day, to discuss the reasons for the absence, and offer help where appropriate before countersigning the return to work form (self certificate). This document should be sent to the HR Department.

4. Absence Reporting Procedures

4.1 A fundamental feature of good attendance and absence management is the accurate and timely recording of all absences. This is essential in terms of the requirements of the Statutory Sick Pay arrangement. 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 can be achieved for employee and employer alike. Any potential concerns would be discussed at return to work meetings.

4.2 Keeping good quality, up to date records also means that:

- Concise data is available for each employee during the year
- Problems are identified at an early stage
- Employees are treated fairly and consistently
- Trends and underlying causes can be more easily identified
- Relevant Health & Safety issues can be identified in a timely manner and addressed appropriately

- Attendance rates may be improved
- Managers are better able to explain decisions relating to poor attendance
- The Board are kept aware of attendance levels

4.3 Line managers must record the absence on the Notification of Absence Form as soon as notification is received and also notify the HR Department by email. The HR Department will update the employee's attendance record for the purposes of statistical recording.

4.4 The ng2 Ltd Board will receive quarterly reports on employee absence.

5. Attendance Management

5.1 This refers to dealing with unacceptable levels of attendance, with no reference to reasons for absence or medical condition.

We will aim to assist employees in maintaining a good attendance record. This will involve maintaining good records, ensuring return to work meetings are completed and, helping investigate and address any identified underlying causes of absence.

Where this fails to secure a required improvement, we will invoke the terms of the absence management and disciplinary procedure. Unsatisfactory attendance reviews can result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

If at any stage during this process it becomes apparent that an underlying health condition is involved, medical information will be sought, and further discussion will take place prior to deciding on any appropriate action.

5.2 Attendance Review Triggers

An Attendance Review Meeting will be arranged when an employee's absence record falls into the following categories of 'rolling' absence, with the following potential outcomes:

Stage	Trigger	Outcome
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 occasions of absence within a 12 month period (this includes short or long-term absences) 12 continuous days or more within a rolling 12 month period (10 working days for full time Monday-Friday staff, 8 working days for 4on/4 off staff, and pro rata for part time staff) Clear absence pattern identified 	Informal Attendance Review Meeting
2	1 further occasion of absence within a 6 month period from when the last action was taken	First Written Warning
3	1 further occasion of absence within a 6 month period from when the last action was taken	Final Written Warning
4	1 further occasion of absence within a 12 month period from when the last action was taken	Dismissal

Any period of unauthorised absence may be dealt with under ng2 Ltd's Disciplinary process.

The employee should be advised in writing of the purpose of the meeting and of their right to representation at formal meetings. At the meeting the manager should outline that the main purpose is to discuss the absences, the employee's general health and/or any underlying problems they may have. Where possible the organisation will offer assistance in the form of professional counselling

or if appropriate arrange for a second opinion through Occupational Health.

- 5.3 The Attendance Review Form should be completed, at each stage, at the meetings and then signed by both the employee and the line manager. A copy of this form will be placed in the employee's file. The line manager should confirm the outcome of the meeting in a timely manner, in writing, to the employee and detail any agreed action.

5.4 Stage 1

An informal Attendance Support Meeting will take place in the following circumstances:

- 3 occasions of absence within a 12 month period, this includes short or long-term absences
- 12 continuous days or more within a rolling 12 month period i.e 10 working days for full time Monday-Friday staff, 8 working days for 4 on/4 off staff, and pro-rata for part time staff
- Clear absence pattern identified

The employee will also be advised at this meeting of their expected level of attendance and the triggers which apply if they have further absences.

5.5 Stage 2

The first Formal Attendance Review Meeting should take place if the employee has one further occasion of absence within a six month period from when the last action was taken. The employee may be issued with a First Written Warning at this meeting and be advised of the triggers which apply if they have further absences. This meeting will be carried out by a ng2 Ltd Supervisor.

5.6 Stage 3

The second Formal Attendance Review Meeting should take place if the employee has one further occasion of absence within a six month period from when the last action was taken. The employee may be issued with a Final Written Warning at

this meeting and be advised of the triggers which apply if they have further absences. This meeting will be carried out by a ng2 Ltd Senior Supervisor.

5.7 Stage 4

A third and final Formal Attendance Review Meeting should take place if the employee has one further occasion of absence within a twelve month period from when the last action was taken. This meeting will be carried out by a ng2 Ltd Director as this may result in the employee being dismissed with contractual notice.

5.8 Employee's have the right to appeal any formal warning at any stage of the process, including dismissal.

Appeals at Stages 2, 3 and 4 should be intimated to the HR team in writing within 7 days of receipt of the written confirmation of the decision, clearly setting out the grounds for appeal. The HR team will then co-ordinate the appeal process.

5.9 Employees with absences related to pregnancy or with underlying health issues who are protected under the Equality Act 2010, will be required to attend absence review meetings in line with the triggers above, in order to provide support. Staff members in this position will not be issued with formal warnings, however, consideration may be given to the capability process as outlined in section 9.

6. Absence Management

6.1 ng2 Ltd will adopt a sympathetic approach to employees with a long-term and/or underlying health condition. If an employee finds themselves in such a position they should be confident that their line manager will support them.

The following points will always be considered in relation to long-term absence:

- The nature of the illness and any contributing factors
- The likely duration and/or frequency of the absence(s)
- Any actions that can be taken by the employee
- Any reasonable adjustments that we could make
- Any possible redeployment opportunities
- The nature of the duties in relation to the employee's health conditions

- Our business needs and the impact that the absence may have upon these
- The employee's entitlement to statutory sick pay

6.2 If a medical professional makes suggestions for any reasonable adjustments, these will be discussed prior to an employee returning to work to determine if these can be accommodated, along with any suggestions the employee or we may also have made. Although we are not bound by the doctor's suggestions, we will make all possible efforts to support the employee's prompt return and good attendance. If we agree, any reasonable adjustments, we will also set timescales and reviews to assess if they are still required and suitable.

6.3 If a referral to Occupational Health is sought and agreed, we expect the employee to fully participate in the process. If an employee fails to attend an agreed appointment or cancels within 2 days then they may be required to pay the related charge for that consultation.

6.3 When managing a long-term absence, it is possible that termination of employment for the reason of ill health capability may be considered where all other options have been exhausted, and the organisation can no longer sustain the absence. We will ensure that we seek the appropriate advice if and when necessary.

6.4 Any period of absence due to sickness or injury caused by an accident in the course of employment will be managed appropriately.

If an employee's absence is the result of an accident at work resulting from their deliberate misconduct, we will investigate it under the disciplinary procedure. Where an employee disagrees, the grievance procedure is available to use.

7. Long-Term Absence

7.1 Long-term absence is defined as any single period of absence amounting to 20 or more calendar days.

- 7.2 If the absence is likely to last longer than 20 calendar days, the line manager will contact the employee to arrange a meeting to be held during week four of the absence, unless it is deemed medically inappropriate. This meeting can be held in either the workplace, at the employee's home or at some other mutually agreed location. Where a meeting is required they will be given a minimum of 48 hours notice. The main purpose of this meeting is to discuss the absence, the employee's general health and/or any underlying problems they may have. Where possible, in order to facilitate a return to work, the Association will offer assistance, in the form of professional counselling etc. If the likely duration of the employee's absence is still unclear, then a referral to Occupational Health may be made.
- 7.3 The line manager will continue to monitor the effects of long-term absences on their service and recommend appropriate action to cover and protect service delivery.
- 7.4 Throughout the duration of the employee's absence it will be expected that they will keep in touch at least once per week, by phone, and advise of progress, unless it is deemed medically inappropriate. Depending on the reason for absence, contact agreements can be mutually agreed between the staff member and the manager.

Line managers, in conjunction with the HR team, will also seek to obtain medical reports as required during the absence and will arrange to discuss these with the employee when received. Where the employee disagrees with the nature of any medical reports, they will be free to seek and offer alternative medical reports. Where the prognosis is such that a prolonged absence is likely then the case may be regarded as one of capability. Full discussions with the employee will take place and they will be afforded the opportunity to express views on such a course of action.

- 7.5 Having established and maintained contact with the employee, the line manager will discuss working options to support their return. These may include a phased return, reduction in hours, limiting the range of duties undertaken for a set period

and redeployment. Where a phased return to work is agreed and, if the employee returns to work on a phased basis, we will only pay salary for the hours and days actually worked. The days and hours that are not worked will be taken either from the employee's own leave or taken as unpaid leave.

- 7.6 Where there is no foreseeable return to work date, there are no contractual benefits for which the employee may be eligible and there are no reasonable adjustments that can be made to facilitate the employees return to work, as a last resort, dismissal on the grounds of capability may at that stage be appropriate. In this situation the process outlined in section 9. Capability will apply.

Employees will be given the right of appeal against dismissal on the grounds of long-term ill health absence.

8. Sickness During Annual Leave

- 8.1 If during an authorised period of annual leave you fall ill and you produce an appropriate fit note, we may count the period as sick leave and not as annual leave, providing the absence reporting procedure has otherwise been complied with. Employees must speak to their line manager on the first day of their return to work or earlier if possible and provide them with the necessary documentation.
- 8.2 If an employee is on sick leave and they wish to go on holiday, they should contact their line manager beforehand to seek authorisation, with the support of the HR team, to let them know how long they will be away and to ensure communication resumes upon their return.

9. Capability

- 9.1 As part of the ongoing dialogue between the line manager and employee, Review Meetings will explore options of a phased return, or a return to alternative duties, or where possible a redeployed post. The employee will be entitled to representation at these meetings. The line manager will chair the Review Meetings. The Final Review Meeting, at which a decision regarding capability dismissal will be

concluded, will be held by a ng2 Ltd Director.

- 9.2 Termination on the grounds capability may be considered where all other options have been explored but have not been successful and termination on the grounds of capability will be the only course of action available.

In such circumstances there will always be a right of appeal against any decision to dismiss an employee on the grounds of capability. Appeals against dismissal should be made directly the Director within 7 days of receipt of written confirmation of the decision. Any appeals will be heard by the ng2 Ltd Chair.

- 9.3 If termination is a possible course of action the line manager must have discussed this option with the employee at an earlier stage and confirmed this to the employee in the letter(s) issued after the Formal Attendance Review Meeting (if the absence is categorised as short-term) or Review Meetings (if the absence is categorised as long-term). Occupational Health will be consulted prior to a capability decision being made.

- 9.4 Where an employee indicates that a return to work is possible but requires more time to complete their recovery then this option should be considered prior to a decision being made to terminate employment on the grounds of capability.

10 Other Provisions

10.1 Contact with Infectious Diseases

An employee, who is deemed to be incapable for work and is prevented from attending the place of employment because of contact with a notifiable infectious disease, as per HSE, will be required to advise their line manager immediately. In such circumstances, the employee shall be eligible for full pay for the duration of the infectious period, as per the organisation's internal procedure at that time. ng2 Ltd will seek guidance from Occupational Health with regards to the management of this absence.

10.2 Doctor/Dental/Optical Appointments

Doctor, dental and optical appointments should be arranged outwith working hours. If it is not possible, the employee should request time off from their line manager. Arrangements could include using annual leave or unpaid leave.

Emergency, on the day, appointments will be managed sympathetically and appropriately.

10.3 Hospital Appointments

ng2 Ltd understands that hospital appointments cannot always be rearranged and paid time off will be granted for an appropriate length of time for the appointment. Employees should provide medical cards or evidence of their appointments.

10.4 Cosmetic Procedures

Absence due to cosmetic procedures (whether carried out in the UK or abroad) will not fall under the sick leave or pay provisions unless it is recommended by health professionals. Employees should therefore request time off and agree with their line manager how the absence will be processed, e.g. annual leave or unpaid leave.

10.5 Fertility Treatment

ng2 Ltd are fully supportive of staff who go through fertility treatment and understand that this can be a demanding time and there may be a high level of appointments. As this will vary from person to person, the employee should discuss with their line manager how time off for treatment can be accommodated. As with all aspects of absence these conversations will be treated as sensitive and confidential.

10.6 Stress Management

Stress can result from an illness or lead to one but it is not an illness in itself. The same relates to 'nervous debility' or any other diagnosis of that type. If an employee goes off sick with stress, the line manager will endeavour to find out the underlying cause so that appropriate action can be taken (if any) and in particular to determine whether conditions at work cause or contribute to stress and whether

something could be done to help the situation. Employees may seek assistance, including 24 hour access to counselling services, through the company health plan provider Simplyhealth (telephone number 0800 975 3356).

10.7 Conduct whilst off Sick

When on sick leave employees are still bound by their contract of employment and all of ng2 Ltd's policies including the Code of Conduct. The organisation also expects that employees do not participate in activities that would be at odds with their medical condition. Any breach in respect of this will be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure. This includes conduct on social networking sites and any other publicly made remarks regarding ng2 Ltd, its customers, work colleagues, partners and anyone else who is connected with us.

10.8 Reason for Absence

If any employee gives false reasons for their absence, the Association may investigate the allegation that the absence has been dishonest, under the ng2 Ltd disciplinary procedure e.g. an employee reporting sick after an annual leave request has been refused. Such matters will be dealt with through the organisation's disciplinary procedures and in serious/repeated cases this may lead to dismissal.

10.9 Management of Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absence may be dealt with under ng2 Ltd's disciplinary procedure.

11. Good Attendance Award

- 11.1 ng2 Ltd will apply a fair and consistent approach in managing attendance. The organisation also recognises that positive measures should be put in place for those employees with good attendance. Employees who have had no absences at all in a 12 month period will be awarded with 2 additional days off. Account will be taken of exceptional diagnosed conditions that require time off to ensure that employees who find themselves in this position are not discriminated against.

12. Other Related Policies and Procedures

- Data Protection Policy
- Dignity at Work Policy
- Code of Conduct for Staff
- Health and Safety Policy
- Recruitment Policy
- Discipline and Grievance Procedures
- Stress and Mental Wellbeing at Work
- Staff Terms and Conditions of Employment

13. UK General Data Protection Regulation 2021

- 13.1 The organisation will treat personal data in line with our obligations under the UK General Data Protection Regulation 2021 (UK GDPR) and our own Data Protection Policy. Information regarding how personal data will be used and the basis for processing your data is provided in our Fair Processing Notice.

14. Policy Review

- 14.1 This Policy will be reviewed every three years or earlier in line with regulatory or legislative guidance / changes or good practice guidelines.

15. Equality Impact Assessment

- 15.1 This Policy is equally applicable to all and has no detrimental impact on protected characteristic groups as specified within the Equality Act 2010.

Specific provisions have been put in place at sections 5.9, 6.1, 6.2 and 7.6 which support employees with disabilities or underlying health issues.

17. Managing Absence Flowchart

