

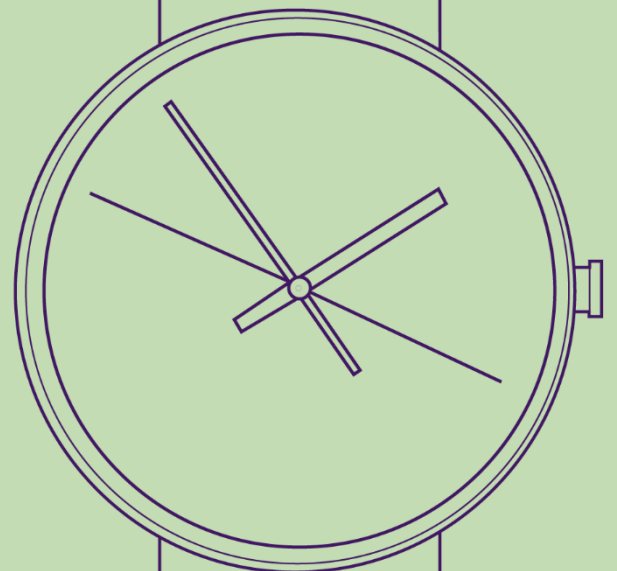
Sickness Absence Support Pack



We regularly update this document. Make sure you have the latest version by downloading it from the intranet.

Last update: 13 May 2022

This support pack is not contractual and is subject to change at the discretion of NatWest Group. It will be reviewed from time to time to make sure it continues to meet the Group's legal obligations and business needs.



Who's this for?

Managers and employees in **Great Britain, Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland and Offshore.**

If you work Offshore, you should also read the Offshore addendum, which has extra information on sick pay and medical certificates.

What do we expect?

This pack tells you exactly what we expect you to do – you need to follow it to make sure you're in line with our policy.

That means you should read it in conjunction with our sickness absence policy. The policy outlines our principles to make sure we're consistent in our decisions, as well as making sure we meet our legal and regulatory obligations.

If you're dealing with a complicated case or if you need more help, you can speak to HR.

How should you use it?

This pack's split into two parts:

- **Scenarios.** They're divided into what to do for managers and what to do for employees, so you should find what's relevant to you.
- **Information contents.** If you're not looking for what to do in a particular situation and you want information about something like sick pay, go to the information contents.

Change to policy due to the Coronavirus pandemic until 30 September 2020:

All absences need to be logged on Workday on the first day of absence. Non-Covid19 related absences should be logged as normal. If you need to log a Covid-19 related absence, in the Absence application, choose 'Global Pandemic' and choose the option that best suits your need from the drop-down menu:

- Choose 'Cold / Flu' if you're showing any cold or flu symptoms which are preventing you from working
- Choose 'COVID' if you have been tested for and diagnosed with COVID-19.
- Choose 'Emergency Care leave' if you've agreed with your Line Manager that you will be taking short term emergency leave as a result of COVID-19.
- Choose 'Self-isolating and unable to work' if you have been advised to stay at home, isolate or observe the bank's precautionary monitoring period and you are unable to work from home. This could be because you're not set up to work from home OR because it's not possible to do your role from home.

You can also record how long you'd estimate you'll be off for e.g. if you know you are to self isolate for 10 days then key for 10 days, or key what you think the duration will be if absent due to Covid-19, cold/flu or any other form of sickness. This can be edited once your period of absence has ended or once you know more about how long you will need to be off.

Absence due to ongoing ill health following COVID-19 ("Long COVID" or another form of COVID related or post COVID illness) - Most people who test positive with COVID-19 typically recover from the infection within 2-3 weeks at home and in line with the requirement to self-isolate for 10 days following a positive test result. Some symptoms can linger such as loss/change in taste and smell or tiredness. At this stage, most people will be able to return to work with possibly a short phase back in some cases. **If after 3 weeks (21 calendar days), you feel unable to return to work due to fatigue or other post viral conditions, the absence code should be changed in Workday at that time to the sickness absence category – Post Covid Illness. The ongoing absence from this point will now revert to BAU policy where absence triggers and Group sick pay will begin.**

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For managers	For employees
If someone's sick on a day when they're supposed to be working	If you're sick on a day when you should be working
<p>What you need to do</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Your employee should submit their absence on Workday at least half an hour before they're due to start work. Reach out to your employee to understand: 2. if they need any support 3. how and when you'll speak to each other while they're off. 4. If they think they could be off for more than seven calendar days (or four in Rol), they'll need to upload a fit note from their doctor to Workday(see Sick notes). 5. Review the absence details on Workday. You need to do this on the first day they're off. 6. Think about whether it's worth sending your employee a copy of our sickness policy and support pack (for example, if they're likely to be off for some time). 7. You also need to review their absence over the last year to see if there's any recurring illnesses, high levels of absence that we need to follow up on, any concerning patterns of absence or if they might run out of sick pay (see Sick pay and Sickness triggers). <p>When they come back to work</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Welcome them back and check they're up to speed with anything that's changed while they were away. 2. If you need to, have a return to work meeting. You might not need to if they've only been off for a short time, for example with a cold. But if they've been off for a while, you're worried about their wellbeing or they've been taking a lot of time off, then you'll need to do this. See Return to work discussions. 3. If you had a return to work meeting, record the discussion on the return to work form on Workday. 4. Make sure the absence dates on Workday are accurate, and amend if required. 	<p>What you need to do</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Go to Workday and submit your absence at least 30 minutes before you're due to start work. You should log the longest time period you think you'll be absent, this can be reduced should you return to work earlier than expected. 2. If you're going to be off for more than seven calendar days (or four days if you're in Rol) you'll need to upload a fit note from your doctor to Workday(see Sick notes). You may need to log your absence again (concurrently with previous dates) if it extends longer than initially expected. 3. Do everything you can to get yourself well again, like seeing your GP, looking after yourself and following medical advice. 4. Update your manager if anything changes. For example, if your reason for being ill changes, you think you'll be off longer, or your manager could help you with anything – especially if it may help you back to work. 5. If you're away from work when your payslip goes online, it will still be available to view on Workday. 6. When you're ready to return to work, let your manager know. They might organise a return to work discussion with you. Remember that there are lots of things we can do to help you if you're having trouble at work (like changes to your work environment). See How we support you. 7. Make sure your absence dates are correct on Workday and provide any details about your absence when prompted. This will trigger your manager to receive the discretionary return to work form.

For managers	For employees
<p>If someone's going to be off sick for more than 14 days</p>	<p>If you're going to be off sick for more than 14 days</p>
<p>If someone's off sick for 14 continuous calendar days, it's called 'long-term sickness absence'. There are two main types:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planned absence: for example, when your employee has a scheduled operation. (Also see If someone's having scheduled surgery for a medical reason.) Unplanned absence: for example, if someone has an accident or is ill due to depression. <p>But how you manage both is similar.</p> <p>What you need to do</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Find out when their absence will start, and how long they'll be off for. Remember that if it's an unplanned absence then they might not be able to tell you this. If the employee is able to, ask them to record the absence on Workday, including the date they plan to come back to work. If the employee is unable to you can open this on their behalf. The absence needs to be opened on the first day they're off. HR People Services might get in touch with you to let you know if your employee can get extra support. Agree how and when you'll speak to each other while they're off to see how they're getting on. It might be that weekly calls (or even less) are enough – whatever feels right in the situation. If they're off for more than two weeks and you don't have a return date, it's usually a good idea to organise a face-to-face meeting. Regardless, you should always try to meet with them within the first four weeks of their absence. (See How to arrange a meeting with an employee on long-term sickness.) But use your discretion. Remember this meeting is a supportive measure. It's not just about finding out when the employee can return to work. It's also about keeping in touch, showing we care and keeping employees informed about what's happening in the Group whilst they're off. 	<p>What you need to do</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Go to Workday and submit your absence, including the start date and when you'll be coming back (if you know). Remember to include any recuperation time. For planned absence try to give your manager as much notice as you can. HR People Services might get in touch with you or your manager to let you know if you can get extra support. Agree how and when you'll speak with each other while you're off. If you're going to be off for more than two weeks, your manager will talk to you about meeting up. If you're off for longer, you and your manager can agree how often to speak and meet up. Make sure you upload any paperwork such as a medical certificate or fit note on Workday (see Sick notes). They'll also tell you how much sick pay you're entitled to. If you want to access your payslips while you're off, you can view these on Workday. Think about if there's anything your manager can do at work to make it easier for you to come back, for example a gradual return to work, or changes to your working environment. Your manager will be in touch to talk about this. (See How we support you.) Make sure you update your manager and Workday if anything changes, especially if you agreed a date for coming back to work and you don't think you'll be able to make it. If you want to keep system access whilst you're off, you need to inform your manager that you wish to do this. Your manager will update the group control system to keep access, and you will need to log in at least once every 90 days to keep your remote access active.

7. Make sure you have the right paperwork from them uploaded onto Workday – like a medical certificate or fit note (see [Sick notes](#)). This makes sure we have it in case we need it in the future.
8. If your employee's been off for four weeks or more then their GP might also have referred them to Fit for Work – a GB government-funded initiative that helps people in work with health conditions and sickness absence. They might send you a return to work plan for the employee. If this is the case, contact HR to find out what to do (HR > Contact HR).
9. Work out their sick pay (see [Sick pay](#)). Make sure you tell them how much they're entitled to, and how long for. You should also let them know that it can run out, and that we might stop or withhold sick pay if they don't do what we expect of them (like keeping in touch). You will receive a notification from HR when your employee's sick pay is due to run out. It's your responsibility to let them know when that's going to happen.
10. Talk to them about any changes we can make at work to help, for example a gradual return, or workplace adjustments (See [How we support people](#).)
11. If their absence was planned, and they end up needing more time off than they originally said, you should arrange to talk about this. Contact HR to find out whether a referral to Occupational Health could help.
12. If someone's been off sick for a long time and they've had an up-to-date medical assessment that says they won't be able to come back to work any time soon, contact HR for what you need to do next.
13. You should discuss with your employee if it's appropriate to maintain system access whilst they're off and agree how system access will be maintained. You will need to allow access through the group controls UER SLX, and remind the employee to log in to the system at least once every 90 days to keep their remote access active.

When they come back to work

1. Ask the employee to close the absence on Workday on the first day they're back at work.
2. Consider if you want to have a return to work meeting with them (see [Return to work discussions](#)). You will receive the return to work content in your Workday inbox to action to record any discussions you have.
3. If their Group sick pay stopped while they were off, it will start again automatically when you close their absence.

When you're back

1. Close your absence on Workday and provide brief details about your absence or needs on return.
2. Your Manager may have a return to work meeting to discuss your absence, they will complete the form on Workday with you.

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Make sure you've stored all documentation about the absence on Workday so we have it for future reference, including return to work forms, rehabilitation plans and medical certificates. 5. Follow up on anything you agreed during the return to work meeting. 	
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For managers	For employees
If someone's ill while they're at work and needs to go home	If you're ill while you're at work and need to go home
<p>What you need to do</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If your employee needs to go home early (or comes in late because they weren't feeling well), it still needs to be recorded on Workday. A decision should be made if it's appropriate to log the absence as full or half day depending on the time the employee leaves. 2. Where appropriate the employee should open the absence with the expected date of return. If the employee can't log their absence, you can do this on their behalf. 3. If it's happening often then you should arrange a <u>return to work discussion</u> to talk about it. See <u>If someone's taking a lot of time off sick</u>. 	<p>What you need to do</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tell your manager what's wrong and that you're leaving (if they're not available, speak to someone else who can pass the message on or send an email). 2. You will need to record it on Workday with the expected date of return. If you can't log your absence, the manager can do this on your behalf. You should agree with your manager if the day you go home is to be recorded as a full or half day depending on the time you leave. 3. On your first day back, close down your absence and log any information about your absence. 4. If you're taking a lot of time off, your manager might want to have a <u>return to work discussion</u> with you when you come back.

For managers	For employees
If someone's taking a lot of time off sick	If you're taking a lot of time off sick
<p>What you need to do</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Check your employee's past days off when you're opening or closing their most recent absence on Workday. 2. Also see if they're near or have reached any sickness triggers. 3. When they're back at work, ask them to close their absence on Workday and arrange a meeting to talk about what you can both do to help. 4. Try to find out if there are any non-health related issues that are stopping them coming into work that you can help with. Are they stressed about their workload? Or having problems at home? If so, tell them about the support we have from Wellbeing, our Employee Assistance Programme, and read How we support people to find out more about how to help. Just remember to treat each case individually. 5. If they have health problems read the scenario that fits their situation. 6. If you're very concerned about how much they're off, then you might need to move to disciplinary action. If you're considering this, contact HR and read What to do if you're considering disciplinary action. 	<p>What you need to know</p> <p>Your manager might need to investigate this. They'll check your number of days off and if it's reached one of our sickness triggers, they'll talk to you about why you've been off so much, and to see if there's anything they can do to help.</p> <p>If there are continuous problems with the amount of time you're off, they might have to start disciplinary action. Speak to your manager if you have any questions.</p>

For managers
If someone has an accident at work and is now off sick
<p>What you need to do</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If they're off sick because of an accident at work you should follow the advice in this pack. 2. You should also get more information about health and safety and incident reporting on the intranet (HR > HR Information).

For managers	For employees
If someone needs to take time off but they're not sick	If you need to take time off but you're not sick
<p>For example, if their child is ill, they need to go to a medical appointment or make arrangements for a dependent.</p> <p>What you need to do</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. You need to follow our Holiday and Other Leave policy (HR >Absence). 	<p>For example, if your child is ill, you need to go to a medical appointment or make arrangements for a dependent.</p> <p>What you need to do</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Speak to your manager and they'll start using our Holiday and other leave policy, rather than our sickness absence one (HR > Absence). 2. Make sure you're really clear with your manager about why you need the time off because they will want to make sure they give you the right kind of leave.

For managers	For employees
If someone's ill when they're on holiday	If you're ill while you're on holiday
<p>What you need to do</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Your employee should let you know as soon as they're ill (as long as it's practical). You should agree who will open the absence on Workday depending on the circumstances. (See If someone calls in sick on a day when they're supposed to be working to find out what to do.) 2. Let the employee take the holiday another time (follow the Holiday and Other Leave policy at HR > Absence). 3. If you need to, have a return to work meeting when they come back. See Return to work discussions. 4. The employee will need to close the absence on Workday and provide details about their absence. Remember that they need to complete this even if you don't have a return to work meeting. 5. This is called 'self-certification' and the employee needs to do it for any sick leave – it doesn't matter how long they're off for. 	<p>What you need to do</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If you're on holiday and you're ill to the extent that you wouldn't have been able to come into work, tell your manager as soon as you can. They can arrange for you to take the holiday days another time. (Follow the Leave policy at HR > Absence). 2. You will need to agree who will open the absence on Workday. 3. See If someone calls in sick on a day when they're supposed to be working for what to do. 4. If you're sick for more than seven calendar days (or four for the RoI), you'll need to upload a medical certificate or fit note to Workday. 5. Your manager might organise a return to work discussion with you when you get back 6. Make sure your absence is closed on Workday and provide details about your absence.

For managers	For employees
If someone's having scheduled surgery for medical reasons	If you're having scheduled surgery for medical reasons
<p>What you need to do</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Your employee should let you know about their operation as soon as they can. Talk to them about what time they'll need off work, the expected recovery time and what you can do to support them. Occupational Health can also give you advice on what to expect and make recommendations on how to support them back to work. See How we support people. 2. If it's appropriate, give them information about our Employee Assistance Programme. 3. Make sure the absence is recorded on Workday. This needs to be done on the first day of absence by the employee, or if they're unable to you can open it on their behalf. 4. Make sure you stay in regular contact with your employee. You might do this over the phone, or you could go to see them if they're likely to be off for more than a couple of weeks (see If someone's going to be off sick for more than 14 days). 5. When they come back to work, make sure they have closed their absence on Workday, and provided details about their absence. 6. If required have a return to work meeting and record this on Workday. 7. Follow up on anything you told them you'd do. <p>What you need to know</p> <p>We count surgery that's part of a gender transition, preventative surgery or surgery supported by the NHS as surgery for medical reasons.</p> <p>Anyone taking time off for fertility treatment should use the Leave policy (HR> Absence> Leave).</p>	<p>What you need to do</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Let your manager know as soon as you can that your doctor (or other medical practitioner) has said you need an operation. There might be some extra support they can give you before or after your operation. 2. Let them know when you think you'll be able to come back to work (remember to include any recuperation time), and if there's anything they can do to make this easier. For example a gradual return to work, or changes to your workplace environment. See How we support you. 3. Open your absence on Workday, including the expected return to work date. 4. Your manager will stay in contact with you whilst you are off. 5. When you return to work, you need to close your absence on Workday and provide details about your absence. 6. If required, your manager will have a return to work meeting with you when you come back. <p>What you need to know</p> <p>We count surgery that's part of a gender transition, preventative surgery or surgery supported by the NHS as surgery for medical reasons.</p> <p>Anybody taking time off for fertility treatment should use the Leave policy (HR>Absence>Leave).</p>

For managers	For employees
<p>If someone's having surgery that isn't for medical reasons</p>	<p>If you're having surgery that isn't for medical reasons</p>
<p>For example, if they're having cosmetic surgery.</p> <p>What you need to do</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. People need to take holiday or unpaid leave or a combination of both – you need to decide with your employee which to choose, so you'll need to consider their wellbeing when you make this decision. If you need help, contact HR. 2. Find out from them how long they'll need to be off work for (remember to include any recuperation time). 3. Ask the employee to record the holiday or unpaid leave following the usual process on Workday. 4. Make sure you stay in regular contact with your employee. You might do this over the phone, or you could go to see them if they're likely to be off for more than a couple of weeks (see If someone's going to be off sick for more than 14 days). 5. When they come back to work, have a return to work discussion to understand if they need any further support. 6. Make sure the employee has closed the absence types on Workday. 7. Follow up on anything you told them you'd do. <p>What you need to know</p> <p>We count surgery that's part of a gender transition, preventative surgery or surgery supported by the NHS as surgery for medical reasons. See If someone's having scheduled surgery for medical reasons for information about these.</p> <p>If your employee becomes unexpectedly unwell after their surgery and are going to be off for longer than expected they should contact you. We'd treat this as sickness absence rather than leave.</p>	<p>For example, if you're having cosmetic surgery.</p> <p>What you need to do</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. You need to take holiday or unpaid leave or a combination of both for these types of procedures. Talk to your manager about how long you'll need off from work, including any recuperation time. Remember that they can decline requests for unpaid leave if they might be detrimental to the business – so it's important you speak to them about this as early as possible. 2. Make sure you record your absence on Workday, and close this when you come back. 3. Your manager may organise a return to work discussion for you when you come back to discuss any further support you may need. <p>What you need to know</p> <p>We count surgery that's part of a gender transition, preventative surgery or surgery supported by the NHS as surgery for medical reasons. See If someone's having scheduled surgery for medical reasons.</p> <p>If you become unexpectedly unwell after your surgery and are going to be off for longer than expected then contact your manager to let them know. We would then treat this as sickness absence rather than leave.</p>

For managers	For employees
If someone's taken time off but hasn't kept in touch, or isn't doing what we expect while they're off sick	If you take time off without telling your manager, or don't do what we expect while you're off sick
<p>If someone's taken time off but hasn't kept in touch: what you need to do</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Try to speak to your employee to find out why they haven't come to work. You should do this as soon as you can on the first day they don't come in – try phoning them first to check that nothing serious has happened to them. 2. Keep trying to reach them, including through their emergency contact. Make sure you keep a note of exactly how and when you tried to get in touch. (See Keep records.) 3. If you still can't get hold of them, send them an unauthorised absence letter (HR > Absence > Template letters). 4. If you don't get a response to this, contact HR as you might need to stop their sick pay, and start the disciplinary process. (See Sick pay limits and What to do if you're considering disciplinary action.) <p>If someone isn't doing what we expect while they're off sick: what you need to do</p> <p>If someone's off sick, there are things they need to do, like keeping in touch with you as agreed, getting medical help or going to Occupational Health assessments.</p> <p>If they're not doing this, then you might need to stop their sick pay. Don't do this without speaking to HR first– they'll help you decide if it's the right thing to do and whether there's anything else you should do.</p> <p>Take a look at Sick pay limits and What to do if you're considering disciplinary action.</p>	<p>If you take time off without telling your manager</p> <p>Go to workday and submit your absence at least 30 minutes before you're due to start. (See If someone's sick on a day when they're supposed to be working.) If you don't do this they'll try to get in touch with you by phone, including speaking to your emergency contact.</p> <p>If they can't get in touch with you, they'll send you an unauthorised absence letter. If you don't respond to this they might stop your Group sick pay and start disciplinary action.</p> <p>This could lead to you losing your job so it really is important that you keep in touch with your manager and let them know when you expect to be back.</p> <p>Take a look at How sickness affects pay and benefits.</p> <p>If you don't do what we expect while you're off sick</p> <p>When you're off sick, there are certain things you need to do, like keeping in touch with your manager, getting medical help or going to Occupational Health assessments.</p> <p>If you're not doing this, then your manager might look at stopping your sick pay or starting disciplinary action. See If you're sick on a day when you should be working to check what you need to do when you're off sick.</p>

For managers	For employees
If someone's off sick and their sick pay is going to end soon	If you're off sick and your sick pay is going to end soon
<p>What you need to do</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It's up to you to keep track of how long someone should be getting sick pay for, and when it should stop (see Sick pay limits). You need to give them at least four weeks' notice if it's going to stop. If you can't, for example if they only have four weeks' sick pay, you should give them as much notice as you can. 2. If your employee has a non-standard working pattern (like compressed hours or a non-standard week) you should still use the HR sick pay calculator to work out when sick pay will stop. 3. You don't need to fill in any forms to stop sick pay. It will happen automatically. But if you think sick pay shouldn't stop yet, needs to stop earlier, or you haven't given them notice of sick pay stopping, you will need to contact HR. 4. If both Group sick pay and statutory sick pay are coming to an end, and the employee isn't ready to come back to work, you can talk to them about using any holiday they've built up if they want to. This can give them more time with full pay before their sick pay stops completely. Remember this means they won't be able to take this holiday when they come back to work so they might want to think about if this leaves them enough time off when they come back. 5. You should also tell them to get in touch with the Department of Work and Pensions as there might be some state benefits they're entitled to. 	<p>What you need to do</p> <p>You should keep track of your sick pay entitlement. Your manager will let you know four weeks before your sick pay is due to stop or at the very earliest opportunity.</p> <p>If both Group sick pay and statutory sick pay stop</p> <p>If this happens and you're not ready to come back to work, you might want to talk to your manager about using any holiday – that could give you some paid time off before your sick pay stops.</p> <p>Remember this means you won't be able to take this holiday when you come back to work so you might want to think about if this leaves you enough time off when you come back.</p> <p>You might also want to get in touch with the Department of Work and Pensions. You could be entitled to state benefits.</p> <p>What you need to know</p> <p>You'll keep getting some benefits, and others you won't. See After sick pay ends.</p>

For managers	For employees
If someone's off with a mental health or musculoskeletal issue	If you're off with a mental health or musculoskeletal issue
<p>For example back issues or stress or depression.</p> <p>What you need to do</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Speak to them and point them towards the Wellbeing pages (HR > Wellbeing). You'll also find the information you need to help them there. 2. You can always contact HR if you're not sure what to do. 3. Make sure you let them know that we'll do whatever we can to help. Have a read of How we support people to see what we can do. 	<p>For example back issues or stress or depression.</p> <p>What you need to do</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Talk to your manager as soon as possible. They might be able to help you with some extra support or changes to your workplace. (See How we support you.) <p>We have lots of things in place which can help you get back on track. Like Wellbeing (HR > Wellbeing), which has information on things like handling stress.</p> <p>We'll do whatever we can to help.</p>

For managers	For employees
If someone's off with peri-menopausal or menopausal symptoms	If you're off with peri-menopausal or menopausal symptoms
<p>For example night sweats, insomnia/fatigue, anxiety or mood changes</p> <p>What you need to do</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Speak to them and point them towards the Wellbeing pages (HR > Wellbeing). You'll also find a Moments that Matter document on menopause to help them there. 2. You can always contact HR if you're not sure what to do. <p>Make sure you let them know that we'll do whatever we can to help. Have a read of How we support people to see what we can do.</p>	<p>For example night sweats, insomnia/fatigue, anxiety or mood changes</p> <p>What you need to do</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Talk to your manager as soon as possible. They might be able to help you with some extra support or changes to your workplace. (See How we support you.) 2. Have a look at our EAP page [Insert link] 3. We have lots of things in place which can help you get back on track. Like Wellbeing (HR > Wellbeing), which has information on things like handling menopause. Moments that matter 4. If you have Private Health Care with Aviva you can utilise the Mental Health Pathway that they provide <p>We'll do whatever we can to help.</p>

For managers
If someone seems to be struggling with their mental wellbeing
For example if you think they're in danger of harming themselves, contact HR as soon as possible. They'll help you decide what's the best course of action, how you can help them and what support you can get for them and for you. Also see Who to speak to when you need support .

For managers	For employees
If someone's off sick with a serious illness	If you're off with a serious illness
<p>What you need to know</p> <p>It can be stressful and upsetting if one of your team is seriously ill. If you need help with what to do contact HR.</p> <p>Make sure the absence is logged on Workday – agree with the employee if they will do this, or you will do it on their behalf.</p> <p>You, and your employee, can get support from our Employee Assistance Programme</p> <p>See Who to speak to if you need support.</p> <p>You might also want to have a look at our Moments that matter guides (HR > Wellbeing > Moments that matter). The Wellbeing pages also have lots of information to help you.</p> <p>If you want information on what you need to do if someone's on long-term sick</p> <p>See If someone's going to be off sick for more than 14 days.</p>	<p>What you need to do</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Let your manager know and agree who will log the absence on Workday 2. Take a look at the Wellbeing pages for support. <p>What you need to know</p> <p>Your manager will want to keep in touch with you during your illness. It will help if you can keep them up to date and let them know when it's best for them to speak to you.</p> <p>If you want to find out what benefits you've elected for health care, critical illness or accidents, you can contact HR.</p>

For managers	For employees
If someone's pregnant and needs to take time off	If you're pregnant and need to take time off
<p>What you need to do</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. You should have done a new and expectant mothers' risk assessment when your employee told you they were pregnant. If you haven't, please check the information on our health and safety pages. 2. You should also check whether there's any support we can give them during their pregnancy. (See How we support people.) 3. Not everyone will be able to go through pregnancy without needing time away from work. Some of this will be planned, like antenatal appointments, while some of it might be unexpected. If they're unexpectedly ill, you should follow the usual process for absence (just find the scenario you need). 4. If someone based in Great Britain, Northern Ireland or Offshore needs to take time off because of a pregnancy-related illness within four weeks of their expected week of childbirth (that's the week in which their due date falls – it's on their MATB1 which they'll get from their doctor or midwife), their maternity leave will automatically start on the day after their first day of absence. (If they're already off and it runs into the four weeks before, their maternity leave will automatically start too.) 5. If they're based in the Republic of Ireland, their maternity leave automatically starts two weeks before the due date. So you should treat any absence up until that point in the usual way. <p>What you need to know</p> <p>There's more information in the Maternity Line Manager Support Packs (HR> Absence)</p> <p>It's also worth knowing that we wouldn't normally take disciplinary action because of sickness during pregnancy but, if you do have concerns, you can contact HR.</p>	<p>What you need to do</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If you have an appointment with your doctor or at an antenatal clinic, let your manager know as soon as you can that you'll need to take time off – this won't be treated as sickness absence. 2. If you're feeling ill due to your pregnancy, follow the guidance in If someone's sick on a day when they're supposed to be working. 3. If you're based in Great Britain, Northern Ireland or Offshore and need to take time off because of a pregnancy-related illness within four weeks of your expected week of childbirth (that's the week in which your due date falls – it's on your MATB1 which you'll get from your doctor or midwife), your maternity leave will automatically start on the day after your first day of absence. (If you're already off and it runs into the four weeks before, your maternity leave will automatically start too.) 4. If you're based in the Republic of Ireland, your maternity leave automatically starts two weeks before your due date. <p>What you need to know</p> <p>If you need any support while you're pregnant, please speak to your manager. They can talk to you about adjustments we can make for you while you're at work.</p>

For managers	For employees
If someone has a disability, or a recurring or long-standing medical condition	If you have a disability, or a recurring or long-standing medical condition
<p>What you need to do</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If someone has a disability or a medical condition, speak to the employee in the first instance to understand what impact their condition has on their work and if there's anything they think that would help. Look at the HR web pages on workplace adjustments. 2. You can also ask for a workplace adjustment or rehabilitation plan for the employee yourself if you think it might help them. See How we support people. 3. If you agree a workplace adjustment, you and your employee should both keep a record of this on a workplace adjustment form. This will help them if they move to another job because it will show their new manager the support we've agreed to give them. 4. It's really important that you regularly review any adjustments to see what's working and what isn't. You can also make changes to what you originally agreed if their condition gets better, worse or if anything changes. If you agree a change to a workplace adjustment, you and your employee should both keep a record of this on the workplace adjustment form. 5. If you need help you should contact HR. They might suggest a referral to Occupational Health (OH). <p>If someone's hours change</p> <p>If someone's hours change temporarily because of a rehabilitation plan or workplace adjustment, you'll need to contact HR for guidance on how to record this on Workday. If there's a permanent change, you should arrange for a change of contract.</p>	<p>What you need to do</p> <p>If you have a disability or a medical condition that makes it difficult for you to work, talk to your manager about it. There might be some support or adjustments that they can offer that will help you.</p> <p>In some cases they might refer you to Occupational Health.</p> <p>If you can think of changes that might help you</p> <p>You should speak to your manager about them.</p> <p>Between the two of you, you can work together to find something which will help you at work.</p> <p>If you have workplace adjustments</p> <p>You and your manager should both keep a record on a workplace adjustment form. This will help you if you move to another job because it will show your new manager the support we've agreed to give you.</p> <p>It's really important that you regularly review any adjustments to see what's working and what isn't. You can also make changes to what you originally agreed if your condition gets better, worse or anything changes.</p> <p>If you don't think your adjustments are helping, please speak to your manager.</p>

Information for managers

Part 1. Who to contact and when

When to speak to HR People Services

If you can't find the answer to your question in this pack, the 'HR Help' box on the HR Intranet pages is a good place to start. You can search some frequently asked questions, or contact HR.

To contact HR click on the 'Contact HR' icon on the HR homepage when:

- an employee has reached an absence trigger point and you need advice on what to do
- an employee has given you a fit note or medical note (in RoI) saying they're fit for 'some work' and you need advice or you can't make the adjustment they need
- you need advice on how to manage an employee's absence, because they have no expected return date or you're concerned about their wellbeing
- you want to involve Occupational Health
- you want to stop sick pay, or need advice on pay during an employee's rehabilitation
- you're concerned about the amount of time your employee's been off sick
- your employee's had more than one long-term absence
- your employee tells you their illness is because of work
- you're considering disciplinary action
- you need advice on managing a complex absence case
- an employee wants to use their holiday entitlement whilst long term sick.

What is a complex absence case?

Complex absences are situations like:

- when someone's off with a life-threatening illness
- when the illness is related to something at work – like going off with stress because of a difficult relationship with a colleague
- when someone's off while they're facing disciplinary action for misconduct, or have raised a grievance themselves.

It's important for you to manage these types of absence correctly and confidently. So always contact HR People Services if you need advice or support.

Who to speak to if you need support

You can speak to one of the consultants through our confidential Employee Assistance Programme. They can help you with situations that you're finding difficult or give you advice on dealing with sensitive issues.

Call them on 0808 234 5303 in the UK, 1800 938 707 in Ireland or 00 44 203 936 1239 if you're in Gibraltar.

You can also go online. You'll need these details:

- Employee Assistance Programme
- External access: www.guidanceresources.com
- Web ID: NATWEST
- Change the flag icon to choose your location

You can also download the app which will provide 24/7 access to support and information. Search for "GuidanceResources" in your app store to install the mobile app.

Web ID: NATWEST

Part 2. When an employee is sick (extra information)

Keep records

This doesn't just mean filling in the right forms. It also means keeping notes of phone calls, meetings, and also times you've tried and failed to get in touch with them. So no matter how the first conversation goes, make sure you're keeping factual records.

Remember to keep your notes based on fact and your conversation. Sometimes notes can start to stray into opinion and that can blur the facts.

If an absence becomes complicated or you get a complaint, you'll need good records to refer back to. Your records can be uploaded to the absence on Workday to prevent local records being kept.

While they're off

It's important for you to know:

- how long they think they might be off for
- if their reason for absence has changed
- if there is any support we can give them

If the reason they're off has changed, make sure you record it on Workday. It helps us to make sure they get the right support.

Sick notes – certifying an employee's absence

Your employee needs to upload a photo of the note to Workday. Always prompt your employee to upload this if they've not done this within a reasonable timescale.

We need a sick note or medical certificate because it's how we confirm they're not well enough to work. Sometimes it lets us know when they might be fit for work or if we can make some adjustments to help them.

If you've tried a few times but the employee still hasn't sent one, keep a note of when you've contacted them to ask for it. Also see [If someone's taken time off but hasn't kept in touch or isn't doing what we expect while they're off sick.](#)

GB and NI

Employees who've been off for more than seven calendar days should get a fit note from their GP. In some areas the GP will issue the note electronically and therefore no wet signature will be available. This will still be sufficient for WorkDay.

Rol

Employees who've been off for four calendar days or more should get a medical certificate from their GP.

Offshore

The medical certificate process is different for Offshore employees. You'll need to check the Offshore addendum to see how it works.

How being off sick affects holiday

Does holiday stop building up while an employee's off sick?

No. It'll keep building up like normal.

Can they take holiday while they're off on long-term sickness?

Yes, but they have to log their holidays on Workday to record them being used and to ensure payment is made. If they don't return to work following a period of holiday, another absence will need to be opened on Workday.

Taking holiday while they're off can give them some extra time at full pay, if they're close to running out of (or have run out of) sick pay. It's important they understand they won't be able to take this holiday when they come back to work so they might want to think about if this leaves them enough time off when they come back.

What should they do with the holiday they've built up?

Once they come back to work, they'll need to take the holiday time they've built up while they were off as soon as it's practical, or carry forward a maximum of 28 days (including Bank Holidays) into the following calendar year.

In ROI it's different. In ROI they can carry forward a maximum of 20 days (including Bank Holidays) into the following calendar year.

We won't make one-off payments for the holiday people don't use. Refer to the Leave policy for more information (HR>Absence)

Part 3. Sick Pay

How sickness affects pay and benefits

We give our employees sick pay while they're off ill. Group Sick pay:

- is discretionary
- can run out
- includes Statutory Sick Pay
- doesn't affect pensions and benefits until it runs out or is stopped
- If you have any further questions, contact HR.

Sick pay works differently in our Offshore locations

The Offshore addendum explains the differences.

It's up to you to check how long they'll get Group sick pay for

First you need to find out:

- How long they've worked here. You'll see this on Workday.
- How many times they've been off in the last 12 months. You'll see this on Workday. (You'll have to add up all the days they've missed. This is because sick pay can run out over a rolling 12 month period – depending on how many days the employee has been off)
- How many hours they work a week.

We treat anyone who works non-standard hours (like part time or compressed hours) exactly the same. The sick pay calculator will work out what they're entitled to.

We treat term-time workers (who do annualised hours) exactly the same when we're finding out their sick pay. The sick pay calculator will help you find their sick pay entitlement too.

If you have an employee who changes their contracted working hours, or you have an employee who works different hours every week, then contact HR who will help you calculate their sick pay entitlement.

In Rol we deduct Illness Benefit from pay

If an employee's off for seven days or more (excluding Sundays), their doctor will give them a form to claim Illness Benefit from the government. It's called the MC1 form – sometimes they'll also get an MC2 form and a final certificate.

Your employee needs to fill these in and send them to the Department of Social Protection. (The contact details are on the form.)

It's really important they do this correctly and send it in on time, because we'll assume they have by taking Illness Benefit out of their pay.

Sick pay limits – when sick pay stops

It's up to you to keep track of how many weeks your employee is getting Group sick pay. This is because you need to give them at least four weeks' notice that it's going to stop. If you can't, for example if they only have four weeks' sick pay, you need to give them as much notice as you can.

If your employee works a non-standard working pattern (like compressed hours or a non-standard week) then you should still use the HR sick pay calculator to work out when sick pay is due to stop. This is because the notifications are based on a standard working pattern of Monday to Friday (or part-time equivalent).

Group sick pay will stop automatically – you don't need to fill in any forms.

That's why it's really important that Workday is updated with correct absence dates.

You'll only need to contact HR if you need help working out when sick pay should stop, you don't think that sick pay should stop yet or you think it needs to stop earlier.

For employees in Great Britain

When they started working here	How many years they've worked here	How long we'll pay Group sick pay
On or before 30th September 1989	N/A	Up to 52 weeks' pay
On or after 1 October 1989	Less than one year	Up to four weeks' pay
On or after 1 October 1989	More than one year but less than five years	Up to 12 weeks' pay
On or after 1 October 1989	Five years or more	Up to 26 weeks' pay

For employees in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland

Their contract	How many years they've worked here	How long we'll pay Group sick pay
Ulster Bank Contract	Less than one year	Up to four weeks' full pay, then four more weeks at 50% pay
Ulster Bank Contract	More than one year	Up to 26 weeks' full pay, then 26 more weeks at 50% pay
Legacy First Active Terms and Conditions	Less than one year	Up to four weeks' full pay, then four more weeks at 50% pay
Legacy First Active Terms and Conditions	More than one year	Up to 26 weeks' full pay Employees on the First Active Pension Scheme are eligible to apply for Permanent Health Insurance

Other reasons we might stop sick pay

We might do this if an employee:

- when sick pay has run out over a rolling 12 month period
- has a disciplinary warning for attendance
- doesn't show up for medical assessments or referrals to Occupational Health
- doesn't follow the processes we expect.

If you think you need to withhold sick pay, but you want to discuss it first, go to 'Contact HR' tab on the HR pages on the Intranet.

If someone isn't doing what we expect, see [If someone's taken time off but hasn't kept in touch or isn't doing what we expect while they're off sick.](#)

After sick pay ends

What stops and what carries on?

When sick pay ends your salary and any fixed or shift allowances will stop.

These things **will continue**:

- Benefit funding where applicable
- Pension funding
- RBSelect elections (see below for more information)
- Pension Funding (see below for more information)
- Building up holidays
- Job Need Car
- Discretionary Bonus (if eligible and pro-rated where applicable)
- Season Ticket Loan – If your pay is not enough to cover this you'll need to set up a direct debit or you can give the ticket back.

For RBSelect elections

- If you do know when your employee will be back, all RBSelect elections will continue. Just make sure you put the employee's return date on the 'stop sick pay' form.
- If you don't know when the employee will be back at work, RBSelect elections continue except for child care or shopping vouchers. They'll stop until the employee comes back to work.
- When your salary stops your pay might not be enough to cover your RBSelect elections any more. If so, you'll need to go into RBSelect and reduce some of your elections.

Defined Benefit Pension Plan & Retirement Savings

If you're in the DB Pension Plan or making contributions to the Retirement savings plan, your membership will be unaffected and, unless you elect otherwise your contributions will continue.

They might still get Statutory Sick Pay (SSP)

- An employee can't get SSP for the first three days they're off.
- They must have given a fit note for any more than seven calendar days of illness (or a medical certificate for more than four days if they're in Rol).
- They can only have up to 28 weeks of SSP. (For example, if they've had 26 weeks of Group Sick Pay, including SSP, they may still get two more weeks of SSP.)

How much SSP can they get?

Their entitlement to SSP resets after they've been back at work for a full eight weeks. Payroll will calculate this and pay them any SSP they're owed – you or your employee don't need to do anything. You should refer them to the HMRC website if they want more information.

Sometimes both Group Sick Pay and SSP stops

See [If someone's off sick and their sick pay is going to end soon.](#)

How to get pay slips to someone who's off for a long time

Your employee can access their payslips on Workday from any personal or work device. They just need to download and activate the app on their preferred device.

Part 4. How to arrange a meeting with an employee on long-term sickness

If they're off for more than two weeks and you don't have a return date, it's usually a good idea to organise a face-to-face meeting. Regardless, you should always try to meet with them within the first four weeks of their absence.

Agree when and where to have the meeting

It could be at their home, work or some other location that's quiet and private. The important thing is that it's somewhere you both agree on.

Use your discretion as their manager to make this as appropriate as possible.

Make sure they know that the meeting's about giving support

It's not about 'checking up' on them. Let them know that, if they want, they can have a family member or friend sit in on the meeting.

Take a colleague with you

You might want someone to take notes – that way you can both focus on the conversation, while someone else is noting down what you need to follow up on.

Make sure the employee knows you'll have an extra person with you and let them know they'll get a copy of the notes too. It could be worth telling them that the notes won't say everything – they're just to pick up the main points of information and any actions you've agreed.

If you've got any questions, please contact HR.

Part 5. When an employee returns to work

Return to work discussions

If your employee's been off ill for a long time, is about to reach a sickness trigger and you're concerned about how much they've been off, or if you have concerns about their wellbeing you should have a return to work discussion. It's a chance to discuss what you can both do to make coming back easier.

If they were off with a simple cold, you might decide you don't need a meeting. You could just have a chat and fill out their return to work form on Workday.

No matter what you decide, you should always welcome your employee back to work. And if you're not about, you should ask someone else to do it for you.

Before the meeting

1. Plan time in your diary and make sure you have a private room or area to speak in. Try to book the meeting for their first day back so they feel welcomed and to have a chance to discuss any concerns they might have straightaway.
2. Get together the documentation for all their absences within the past 12 months on Workday, such as medical certificates (or fit notes), Occupational Health reports, rehabilitation plans and previous return to work forms.
3. Prepare something to update them on anything they've missed while they were off.
4. Work out if they've reached, or are about to reach, an absence trigger. (See more about them in [Sickness triggers](#).)
5. Find out how much sick pay they're still entitled to. Will it stop if they're off sick again? See [Sick pay](#).

During the meeting

1. **Welcome your employee back:** ask how they're feeling and check with them that they feel well enough to be back at work.
2. **Discuss why they were off:** ask them to share any information about their absence, including any medical condition, treatment or support they're getting.
3. **Ask what they need:** find out if there's anything they might need, like time off for hospital appointments, physiotherapy or anything else. As well as seeing if we can support them – see [How we support people](#).
4. **Talk about work issues:** if you think you need to, ask them if there are any work issues that might be affecting their attendance or how well they can work.
5. **Update on anything they've missed:** fill them in on any news, activities or changes they might not know about, including learning modules.
6. **Discuss Group Sick Pay:** if their pay stopped while they were off ill, make sure they know it'll start again from today. If they are returning on a rehabilitation plan you'll need to tell the employee that they be paid for the hours they work during the plan. They will not receive less pay on a rehabilitation plan than they would if they had remained off sick. If NatWest Group Sick pay might stop the next time they go off ill, make sure they understand this might happen.
7. **Take notes:** You can use these to complete the return to work form on Workday.

After the meeting

1. Upload any relevant documents related to the absence on Workday – this could be rehabilitation plans or notes of conversations.
2. If Group Sick Pay stopped while they were off ill:
 - a. Close the absence on Workday and this will automatically restart their pay. If you close the absence after payroll cut off pay will restart in the following month and will include any back payments or,
 - b. If the employee is returning on a rehabilitation plan and working reduced hours you will need to Contact HR for advice so they only get paid for the hours they work.
3. Follow up on anything you agreed.

4. Once the employee has been back at work for a while you might want to use the Great Place to Work check in tool with them. It's another great way of having a conversation to understand their needs and motivators.

If your employee gave you a fit note saying they're fit for 'some work' and you need some advice on how to help them or you want advice on a rehabilitation plan, contact HR .

Part 6. How we support people

Occupational Health

Occupational Health (OH) can give us a medical opinion when health issues are affecting someone at work, or stopping them from coming in.

When an employee has a long-term illness or an illness that affects their work, you can contact HR.

They might suggest a referral to OH if you need advice on

- whether they're fit for their job
- how long they might be off
- a rehabilitation plan or workplace adjustments to help them come back to work
- whether they might be eligible for one of our long term sickness benefits after Group Sick Pay stops – you can find out about them in our Long Term Disability and Disability Cover support packs (HR > Absence > Long term sickness).

What OH will do

They'll:

- call or meet your employee to discuss their health
- take them through a health assessment
- give their advice on the employee's condition
- make recommendations about what you can do to support them

Sometimes they'll ask for medical reports from a GP or a treating specialist to help them give the right advice.

Workplace adjustments

Sometimes an employee isn't fit to do their job or their job is having an impact on their health. When this is the case, you might need to help them with a workplace adjustment or a [rehabilitation plan](#) or both.

You'll know you need a [rehabilitation plan](#) or a workplace adjustment (or both) when:

- the medical certificate or fit note from the employee's GP suggests it
- Occupational Health recommends you to put one in place
- you and your employee have talked about health issues and you think it might help.

Sometimes you might want to look into it, if you're concerned about an employee's health or wellbeing. Contact HR if you want to learn more before talking to the employee about it.

Supporting people with workplace adjustments is the right thing to do, but in some cases we need to do it for legal reasons. If you're not sure you can give your employee what they need, contact HR.

Workplace adjustments could be

- A temporary or permanent change to their working hours.
- Changes to duties and targets.
- Short breaks during the day.
- Working from a different Group office or working from home.
- Giving them technology or equipment to help.

Once you agree, you both need to record it on a workplace adjustment form. You also need to agree how often you'll review them.

This will help you if they move to another job because it will show their new manager the support we've agreed to give them. It also helps when you regularly review things to see what's working and what's not, as well as if their condition gets worse or better or changes in any way.

Rehabilitation plans

The aim of the plan is to help your employee back to work.

You need to include these things on a rehabilitation plan

- A start and end date.
- Hours and days they'll work during the plan.
- What duties they'll do and/or what they don't do.
- What we'll do to help them get back to fully doing their job again (their temporary workplace adjustments).
- A timeframe to get them back to their full duties.
- What we'll pay them.
- When you'll review their progress
- Any advice from Occupational Health or GP/Consultant.

There are a few situations where you might need a rehabilitation plan

It could be if they were off for a long time (around four weeks or more). Or if they're not completely fit, but can come back to do some work and expect they'll be fully fit soon.

Each case is different though, so use your judgment. If you're dealing with a more complex case, contact HR.

A plan should never last longer than the absence

It's reasonable for a plan to last one week for every month they've been off, but normally it would never be over 12 weeks. So if someone's been off for three months they should have a plan that lasts three weeks.

If you or your employee thinks they need longer, contact HR.

We'll keep paying them during their plan

If we didn't stop Group Sick Pay while they were off, they'll get paid like normal during their plan.

If we did stop Group Sick Pay while they were off, you'll need to tell the employee:

- they'll be paid for the hours they work during the plan
- if they want to, they can use some holidays if they want some time at full pay. Remember they won't be able to take this holiday when they come back to work so they might want to think about whether this leaves them with enough time off when they do return.

You'll need to contact HR for advice on how to adjust pay so that they only get paid for the hours they work.

Wellbeing – where to go for more help

If you want to know more about Wellbeing, you can visit the site at [HR>Wellbeing](#). There's advice for you and your employee

Part 7. Sickness triggers

What is a trigger point?

Sickness or absence trigger points help you to know when you need to take extra action to manage an employee's absence.

It's up to you to track when your employee has reached a trigger. You'll know when by looking back at their past absences when you're opening or closing their absence on Workday. You should be looking for patterns as well.

The three types of absence trigger

1. Short term or frequent
2. Long term
3. Probation

Short term or frequent

For GB and Offshore:

- The fifth time an employee is off ill over the last 12 months.
- Over 14 continuous calendar days of absence.
- Two or more occasions of absence totalling more than ten working days in the last 12 months.

We adjust these numbers if they work part-time or compressed hours:

Number of working days a week	5	4	3	2	1
Pro-rata absence trigger	10	8	6	4	2

If they work a non-standard working day (for example, four hours), we still treat it as a working day.

For NI and Rol:

- The fifth time an employee is off ill over the past 12 months.
- A total of 14 working days or more in a rolling 12-month period.
- Over 14 continuous calendar days off.

Long-term

In all regions, the long-term absence trigger is any continuous absence lasting longer than 14 calendar days.

For more information on what to do with long-term absence go to [What to do if someone's taking a lot of time off sick](#) for short term or frequent absence or [What to do if someone's going to be off for more than 14 days](#) for long term absence.

Probation

For GB and Offshore, the triggers for employees on probation are:

- the second time they've been off
- if they're absent for more than five working days.

For NI and Rol, the trigger is the second absence.

If your employee's on probation and reaches a trigger point, you need to talk to them about their attendance and tell them you'd like to see it get better. You'll also need to tell them we could terminate their contract if they take more time off sick.

Contact HR before deciding to terminate someone's contract. We'll look at each case before making a decision. (See [What to do if you're considering disciplinary action](#))

What to do if you're considering disciplinary action

Sometimes we need to move to disciplinary action for absence. Remember this is about encouraging improved attendance but also to formally warn employees when their attendance isn't acceptable.

It's not always the right thing to do, and you should only think about it if there's a problem. You might start to consider it if:

- your employee doesn't keep in touch how you agreed while they're off
- they don't send in their sick notes or other medical forms
- their attendance is unacceptable because of the amount of time they've had off
- they've gone over a trigger, we've talked to them, given them help, but they still keep taking a lot of time off.

You probably wouldn't consider it if:

- they've had time off for treatment that will help them improve their attendance in the future or
- if they're off sick when they're pregnant.

And you wouldn't always if they reach a sickness trigger. Triggers are there so you know when to take extra action. In lots of cases that might just be having a conversation to see what help they need, rather than starting disciplinary action.

You should see if they need extra support and make any workplace adjustments to try and help.

If you're not sure if you should move to disciplinary action, contact HR.

Here are some example situations and how to approach them:

An employee's had three periods of absence, totalling 12 days, all related to back pain

1. Arrange to meet with them.
2. Talk to them about how much time they're having off, that you'd like to see it get better, and that there are things we can do to help.
3. Ask them what treatment they're getting.
4. Do a workstation assessment.
5. Contact HR to ask if they'd recommend an Occupational Health assessment.
6. Encourage them to let you know if they need more help.
7. Don't start disciplinary action but tell them that you are hoping to see an improvement and that you'll keep reviewing their absence

An employee's been off for three weeks with depression, and it's the first time they have been off

1. Arrange to meet with them to see if they need any support now they're back.
2. Contact HR if you need advice from Occupational Health
3. Look at our Wellbeing site.
4. Don't start disciplinary action for absence this time – focus on supporting them and helping them return to work.

An employee always calls in sick on a Monday always saying they have a migraine.

1. Arrange to meet with them.
2. Let them know there's a pattern that's concerning you.
3. Ask them if there's a reason for it.
4. Agree what you'll both do to improve their attendance.
5. If there is a reason and they need support, make sure you point them in the right direction. This could be to our Wellbeing site.
6. If you think their reason isn't acceptable (for example they go out late every Sunday), you could consider disciplinary action. Speak to HR if this is the case.

An employee's already on a disciplinary warning for absence, but you're seeing little or no improvement in their attendance.

1. Have a return to work meeting.
 - Go over their time off.
 - Ask why they're still taking so much time off – has anything changed?
 - Ask what they're doing to help improve the situation.
 - Ask whether there's anything else we can do.
2. Depending on their answers, you could consider moving to the next step of disciplinary action.
3. Contact HR for support or advice.

Information for employees

Part 1. Illness Benefit – for employees in Rol only

In Rol, most people can get Illness Benefit if they're off sick for seven days or more (excluding Sunday). Even if you weren't supposed to be at work on these days.

The Department of Social Protection pays Illness Benefit.

Make sure you give them all the right information

It's your responsibility to claim for the right benefit and get all the paperwork right.

We'll assume you've applied for Illness Benefit, so we'll take the standard rate of Illness Benefit from your salary, whether you've claimed it or not. We'll carry on taking it for however long you're off.

If the amount of benefit you get is different from what we've deducted from your salary, speak to HR to let us know. But if the difference comes from an error you've made (like giving the wrong information on your form), we'll treat it as though you've had the right amount of Illness Benefit.

How to apply for Illness Benefit

1. Get an application form from your GP. In the first week you're off, you'll need the MC1 form. After the first week, you'll need the MC2 form and a final certificate. (You can't get any online.)
2. Complete and sign these documents, saying whether you want us to pay you by direct credit or cheque.

You'll need this information to fill out the form:

- Employee ID number, which you can find on your payslip.
 - Employer name, which is The Royal Bank of Scotland (not Ulster Bank).
 - Employer's address: HR Pay and Benefits, 3rd Floor, 1 Hardman Boulevard, Manchester, M3 3AQ, England.
 - Employer's registration number, which is the PAYE reference number on your payslips.
3. Send the form to the Department of Social Protection, P.O. Box 1650, Dublin 1, within your first seven days off.
 4. Until you're well enough to return to work, keep sending in medical certificates (MC2).

Illness Benefit counts as income for tax purposes. So we'll mark it separately from your gross salary on your monthly payslips and on end of year P60s.

Part 2. How being off sick affects holiday

Does holiday stop building up while you're off sick?

No. It'll keep building up like normal.

Can you take holiday while you're off on long-term sickness?

Yes, but you should contact HR to let them know, and ensure payment is made.

Taking holiday while they're off can give them some extra time at full pay, if they're close to running out of (or have run out of) sick pay. It's important they understand they won't be able to take this holiday when they come back to work so they might want to think about if this leaves them enough time off when they come back.

What should you do with the holiday they've built up?

Once you come back to work, you'll need to take the holiday time you've built up while you were off as soon as it's practical or carry forward a maximum of 28 days (including Bank Holidays) into the following calendar year. We don't make payments for the holiday people don't use. Refer to the Leave policy.

What if you're sick on holiday?

See [If someone's ill when they're on holiday](#).

Part 3. How we support you through sickness

If you've been off sick a lot, your line manager will review it to figure out how they can help. They might decide to:

- make some workplace adjustments
- refer you to Occupational Health

Workplace adjustments

If you have a medical condition that affects your work, let your line manager know. This helps you both figure out realistic ways of making work easier.

What workplace adjustments could you have?

- A temporary or permanent change to your working hours.
- Changes to duties and targets.
- Short breaks during the day.
- Working from a different Group office or working from home.
- Giving you technology or equipment to help.

Rehabilitation plans

Depending on the circumstances, your line manager might give you a rehabilitation plan for when you're well enough to return to work.

To find out about pay, how long they last and what they could look like, speak to your manager.

Occupational Health assessments

There are lots of things that you and your manager might be able to do before you need Occupational Health but your GP might suggest an assessment. If that happens speak to your manager and they'll get in touch with HR.

Your manager might also suggest it. Before they refer you, they'll ask for your permission.

Part 4. Who to contact if you need more support

For more support, it's always best to speak to a professional support organisation.

You can speak to one of the consultants through our confidential Employee Assistance Programme. They can help you with situations that you're finding difficult or give you advice on dealing with sensitive issues.

Call them on 0808 234 5303 in the UK, 1800 938 707 in Ireland or 00 44 203 936 1239 if you're in Gibraltar.

You can also go online. You'll need these details:

- Employee Assistance Programme
- External access: www.guidanceresources.com
- Web ID: NATWEST
- Change the flag icon to choose your location

You can also download the app which will provide 24/7 access to support and information. Search for "GuidanceResources" in your app store to install the mobile app.

Web ID: NATWEST