

SICKNESS **GUIDE UK**



What's it about?

Almost everyone will be absent from work at some point due to illness. This may be for a few days or for a longer period, either way your health is important, and support is always available.

If you are ill, you need time to recover and recuperate. Speak with your manager or HR Business Partner, they will listen and discuss with you the support that is available for you.

The Features

- ▲ Firstly, and most importantly if you are feeling unwell, you must take time to recover and recuperate.
- ▲ Let your manager know ideally by 9am or as soon as practicably possible.
- ▲ Keep talking with your manager throughout, letting them know the reason for your sickness and how long you feel you will be away.
- ▲ All sickness absence is recorded in your PHR planner by your manager. It records the dates and the reason for your absence.
- ▲ Your manager will check in with you on your first day back at work to ensure you are fully recovered and to bring you up to date with anything you may have missed.
- ▲ If you have experienced several short-term sickness absences your manager and HR Business Partner may want to talk with you a little more about this to ensure you are making use of all of the support that is available to you.
- ▲ You will need to provide a Statement of Fitness for work, sometimes referred to as a Fit Note, from your GP if you are absent for more than 7 days. The fit note shows that you have been seen by your GP and they are either happy to confirm you are fit to return to work or they may confirm that you need further time to recover and recuperate.

The Features ...

- ▲ In terms of pay, everyone is entitled to receive statutory sick pay for a maximum of 28 weeks for any one period of sickness.
- ▲ As a company we choose to enhance this pay based on your length of service.

Length of service	Company Enhanced Sick Pay
< 6 months	4 weeks full
6-12 months	8 weeks full
1-3 years	18 weeks full
> 3 years	26 weeks full

- ▲ It is important to keep in contact with your manager and HR Business Partner during any length of sickness. Take a look at the detail section to get more information surrounding short-term and long-term sickness.
- ▲ Health Benefits, such as BUPA, Global Employee Assistance and UNUM can provide help for you in a variety of ways.

Please remember your health is important and you should always speak with your manager and HR Business Partner to ensure you are aware of the support that is available to you.

A little more detail

Let's take a look at some definitions and how they apply to this policy.

Statutory Sick Pay SSP

SSP is paid at the rate set by the Government and will be paid when you are absent from work due to sickness.

When SSP is payable SSP cannot be paid for the first 3 days of sickness, these are known as 'waiting days'. Payment usually starts on the 4th day of absence and continues for as long as you are absent, up to a maximum of 28 weeks in any one period of sickness. If you have regular periods of absence, SSP will be paid from the first day of absence where the periods of absence are linked.

Company Sick Pay (CSP)

CSP is a discretionary payment, meaning you are not legally entitled to it. This table shows how CSP can be paid. Once the discretionary CSP has expired there are no further entitlement to it.

Length of service	Company Enhanced Sick Pay
< 6 months	4 weeks full
6-12 months	8 weeks full
1-3 years	18 weeks full
> 3 years	26 weeks full

If a decision is agreed to withhold paying sick pay, then this will be discussed with you in advance of any adjustment being made to your salary.

If you are sick during disciplinary proceedings or any investigations CSP may be withdrawn and SSP paid if you are eligible. Likewise, if you are on paid suspension and fall sick you may then be eligible for SSP and not CSP.

A little more detail ...

Sickness absence is generally managed in line with the definition of either short term or long-term absence,

Short term absence is

- 4 periods of absence in a 6-month period and/or
- 10 or more self-certified sickness days within a 12-month period

Long term absence is

- 4 continuous weeks of absence and/or
- Intermittent absence of 20 working days.

Let's look at **short term absence management first.**

Your manager will always have a return-to-work chat with you when you have been absent through sickness. This is to ensure you are well enough to return, to see if you require any support and bring you up to date with anything you may have missed.

If you are sick for less than 7 days, you will not need to provide a statement of fitness to work from your GP. These days are considered as self-certified. This may change though should there be concerns raised around your level of sickness absence

Your manager may request a sickness review meeting with you if they have concerns around continual short-term sickness or a pattern of sickness days.

The intention of the meeting is to ensure there is a fully understanding of the reason(s) for your absence, consider and put in place support you may need and work toward an improvement in your attendance over an agreed period of time.

A formal review will follow if improvements are not seen. Your line manager and HR Business Partner will talk through the process for this should you ever arrive at this point.

A little more detail ...

There may be times where your **sickness is longer term**. Let's see what happens in this case.

Firstly, all long-term sickness absences are managed under the long-term sickness and capability process and in regard to the Equality Act 2010 and the Code of Practice on Disability in Employment where the reasons for absence are related to an underlying medical condition or disability

Long term sickness is defined as 4-week continuous absence, or intermittent absence of 20 working days or more in a 12-month period (pro rata for part time employees)

Your manager and HR Business Partner will speak with you regularly throughout any period of sickness to ensure you are receiving all the necessary support that is available, that you are up to date with anything of importance that you may have missed and ultimately to establish and facilitate a return to work. This may involve a meeting with our occupational Health provider.

The intention is always to work with you to enable you to return to work and conversations may take place regarding phased return to work and alternative duties, let's look at these.

Phased Returns

If you are recovering from illness and it is considered that a phased return to work would be beneficial, your manager will discuss this with you.

A phased return allows you to return to work starting on reduced hours for a short period and gradually building up to your normal working hours. You will receive normal pay during this phased return which would be up to a maximum of four weeks.

A little more detail ...

Alternative Duties

If you are not considered fit to undertake your normal duties, for example in cases of a broken limb, and you are being paid sick pay, you may be requested to undertake other appropriate work. Such requests will only be made in consultation with independent medical advice and where appropriate following a risk assessment.

Sickness review meetings may need to take place so that everyone is up to date and clear on the next steps.

Long Term Sickness Review Meeting

After four weeks continuous absence or intermittent absence that amounts to 20 working days (pro rata for part time staff) within a rolling 12-month period your manager will write to you and arrange a sickness review meeting.

The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss your sickness absence and identify any support we can provide This may include

- Seeking medical advice
- Arranging a phased return,
- Changing your work pattern, hours or
- Making other reasonable adjustments.

You may be asked to attend a meeting with our Occupational Health provider. You will be given a copy of any medical reports received and these will be discussed with you.

Follow up Sickness Review Meetings (monthly)

After 8 weeks continuous absence or intermittent absence amounting to 40 working days (pro rata for part time staff), your manager will write to you to give you notice to attend a further sickness review meeting.

A little more detail ...

You will be given at least 5 working days written notice to attend a meeting. The purpose of follow up review meetings is to:

- Discuss your health.
- Consider any medical advice received.
- Review any actions which have been discussed.
- Consider any further support including reasonable adjustments.
- Identify a possible return to work date.

If you are not able to return to work within the CSP time frame the company offers Group Income Protection

The insurance is designed to provide you with an ongoing income during absence due to illness or injury, subject to acceptance of the claim by the insurer and a minimum of 3 months service.

For more information on this insurance, please visit the Reward space within the HR Hub.

Health Capability Review

This process will only be applicable if you do not have a claim pending or accepted for Group Income Protection.

If you are on long term sick leave and it becomes evident at any stage that a return to work is unlikely or that you will be unable to fulfil your role effectively for health reasons, you may be invited to attend a capability hearing and a potential outcome may be that employment is ended due to reasons of ill health.

Before any decision is taken about your employment situation, we will seek medical advice and consider other action short of dismissal.

A little more detail ...

Your manager will advise you if your employment may be at risk and will carry out a capability review before further action is taken. In some cases of long term continuous or intermittent sickness absence, we will need to consider your capability / fitness for work where:

- There is no predicted date of return; medical evidence indicates that you are permanently unfit for work.
- A return to work may be unlikely within a reasonable timescale.
- There is a high level of intermittent absence.
- You are not able to fulfil your job role effectively (after appropriate interventions to facilitate your return or improve your attendance).
A capability review will consider whether:
 - Further investigation is required, for example, if recovery is taking longer than predicted or there has been a recent deterioration in relation to health or a disability.
 - Further medical advice and relevant specialist reports may be requested to ensure any decision considers up to date medical information.
 - Reasonable adjustments have been made where this is appropriate and whether there are any further reasonable adjustments such as changes to the job role/support through the Access to Work scheme.
 - Phased return, alternative duties, or flexible working have been discussed and considered where appropriate.
 - Redeployment may be appropriate if there are other suitable job opportunities on a permanent or temporary basis that you may fulfil.

A little more detail ...

- Early retirement (where this is cost neutral) or ill health retirement may be an option if you are a member of an occupational pension scheme and meets the relevant criteria for retirement under the scheme rules.

Your manager and HR will meet with you to discuss, the options available to you review these options and listen to your thoughts and feelings about the situation and the options available to you. You have the right to be accompanied to this meeting by a Trade Union representative or a colleague.

A possible outcome of this meeting is that you will be invited to a capability hearing which will consider your future employment situation with the Company.

Holding a Capability Hearing

The purpose of the capability hearing is to consider your sickness absence and decide about your employment situation. Your manager will prepare an absence report detailing the history, including all relevant documentation and medical advice received.

You will be given 5 working days written notice of the meeting and copies of the information which will be considered at the hearing in deciding about your continued employment with the Company. Your level of sickness absence, which may be intermittent absence or a continuous period of long-term sickness absence, will be considered; the impact this has had on the business, work colleagues, the support, actions, or adjustments which have been taken so far; whether redeployment or early retirement has been discussed where appropriate; and a decision will then be made about your employment situation.

A little more detail ...

A potential outcome of this meeting is that your employment will be ended with notice.

At the capability hearing you will have the opportunity to state your case and have the right to be accompanied by a trade union representative or a work colleague from within the Company. Your companion may assist you in stating your case but may not answer on your behalf. It is in your best interests to attend such meeting; however, you may submit a written representation if you are unable to attend in person.

If you do not attend the hearing, your case, and any documentation you have submitted may be reviewed and a decision reached in your absence. The meeting will be held by a senior manager within your team or another senior manager from within the Company with a HR representative.

You will be notified of the decision as soon as possible and this will be confirmed in writing within 5 working days. Right of Appeal If your employment is terminated on the grounds of ill health capability you have the right to appeal.

You should write to the Chief HR Officer stating the grounds for your appeal within 5 working days of receiving the decision of the capability hearing. Your appeal will be heard by a senior manager who has not been involved in the case management, together with a representative from HR. The manager will normally be senior to the manager who authorised the dismissal. If you do not wish to attend the appeal, you may submit the grounds for your appeal in writing.

You will be notified of a decision within 5 working days of the meeting and the appeal decision is final.



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This document is intended as a helpful guide for employees and summarises the principal Sickness Absence Leave and Pay provisions for Imagination's UK based employees, it does not constitute a comprehensive policy statement.