

ATTENDANCE POLICY (*Non-Teaching Staff*)

POLICY

Dublin & Dun Laoghaire ETB is committed to providing a comprehensive high quality service. To this end the regular and punctual attendance of staff is essential. A positive approach to absence management is required by all so as to enable the ETB to achieve its educational goals.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to

- (a) Outline the standards required in relation to attendance at work;
- (b) Standardise the ETB's approach to the management of absence; and
- (c) Ensure that all staff are treated fairly and consistently in the area of absence management.

SCOPE

This policy is applicable to all employees (temporary and permanent, whole-time and part-time) irrespective of length of service

TIME-KEEPING

- Regular and punctual attendance is required. Any staff member who is absent from work should notify his/her line manager as early as possible but no later than 10:00 a.m.
- Staffs are required to be in attendance throughout the day and should seek prior approval should they need to leave the premises. Staff on flexi time should 'clock-out' before leaving the building, including smoking breaks.
- The starting/finishing time for staff who are not on flexi-time is 9:15 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.
- Admin Staff on flexi-time should commence work no later than 10:00 a.m. and finish no earlier than 4:00 p.m.
- A serious view will be taken of persistent lateness/early leaving.

Persistent Poor Timekeeping

Persistent poor timekeeping may result in disciplinary action, sanctions for which may be:

- (a) deferral of increments; and/or
- (b) for staff on flexitime, may result in withdrawal of privileges of the scheme.
- (c) Unauthorised absences may also result in disciplinary action.

Before initiating disciplinary action the staff member will be met by his/her line manager.

SPECIAL LEAVE

For special leave such as Bereavement/Compassionate Leave, Parental Leave (Force Majeure Leave), Special Leave with or without pay, application should be made to Human Resources. These types of leave should be taken in the first instance as Annual Leave and amended accordingly when approval is received.

SICK LEAVE AND ANNUAL LEAVE / PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

Self-Certified Sick Leave

Dublin & Dun Laoghaire ETB's Sick Pay Scheme provides for 7 days Self-Certified Sick leave in any rolling 2 year period counting backwards from the latest self-certified sick day. The following procedures will apply:

- Staff should contact their Line Manager before 10:00 a.m. by telephone (not by text message or e-mail).
- Not more than three days may be taken consecutively.
- Self-Certified Sick Leave may not be taken on a Friday followed by a Monday, or in the case of a bank holiday weekend, a Friday followed by a Tuesday.
- Self-Certified Sick Leave may not be taken immediately before or after Annual Leave, or immediately after Certified Sick Leave.
- Failure to follow these procedures may result in non-payment for the days in question.
- In the interest of keeping staff informed a letter will be issued from the HR Department to staff who have in excess of 5 Self-Certified Sick Leave days in a 2 year period.

Certified Sick Leave

In the case of certified sick leave, the following procedures shall apply:

- Staff should contact their Manager/Principal/Centre Manager before 10:00 a.m.
- A Medical Certificate is required, no later than the fourth day of illness. *The Certificate should be from a registered Medical Practitioner detailing the nature of the illness and likely duration.*
- If a staff member is on certified sick leave prior to annual leave, they should inform their Head of Department/Principal and HR Department (prior to the commencement date of their planned annual leave) whether they are to remain on certified sick leave or commence their annual leave as planned.
- If a staff member is sick during annual leave or on a public holiday (as defined in the Organisation of the Working Time Act, 1997) and have a medical certificate for the days they were ill, they will be entitled to take these days again within one month to be agreed with the Head of the Department/Principal and HR. Staff on certified sick leave during annual leave or on a public holiday should inform their manager/HR and provide medical certificate no later than the 4th day of illness.
- Failure to submit medical certificates on time may result in a staff member being marked as 'leave without pay'.
- Staff paying Class A PRSI are eligible for Social Welfare Benefits and the ETB's Recoupment of Social Welfare Disability Benefits Policy shall apply.

If a staff member attends work but falls ill during the day and requests to leave work, sick leave will be recorded as follows:

- If the staff member attends work for over 3 hours 30 minutes, a half day's sick absence will be recorded. Otherwise a full day will be recorded.

Social Welfare Benefit

Members of staff in insurable employment (e.g. PRSI Class A1) are expected to claim State benefit when absent through illness. This benefit must be claimed and surrendered to the ETB in lieu of sick pay.

The relevant social welfare benefit claim form is available from your GP. Section 6 (i.e. Payment Method) should be completed as follows:

- Tick the box that directs the disability benefits due under the Social Welfare Acts directly to Dublin and Dun Laoghaire ETB by electronic funds transfer.

The ‘Social Welfare Benefit Claim Form’ should be sent to the Department of Social Protection or to your local Social Welfare Office.

If a staff member fails to claim a social welfare payment, that is a breach of the attendance/sick leave policy and the equivalent amount will be deducted from the individual’s salary. Should a staff member continuously fail to claim social welfare benefits, this is a breach of the attendance/sick leave policy and may result in the following action; withdrawal of sick pay and/or referral of the matter under the ETB’s disciplinary procedures. Social welfare claims must be submitted within 6 months.

Annual Leave

- Annual leave should be applied for in advance.
- Under the Organisation of the Working Time Act, 1997, a minimum of 1,365 hours is required (i.e. excluding sick leave) during a leave year to avail of full leave entitlement. Annual Leave can only be granted on a pro-rata basis where staff work less than this minimum.

RETURN TO WORK ‘INTERVIEW’

To facilitate a staff member who is returning to work, following a prolonged period of absence, an initial meeting will take place with his/her line manager. The purpose of the meeting is to provide all necessary support to the staff member making the transition back to work.

In some circumstances it may be necessary to confirm a staff member’s fitness to resume duties and in this regard, he/she may be required to attend the ETB’s medical officer/occupational therapist for a professional opinion before resuming work.

RECURRING ABSENCES

Should a staff member establish a pattern of recurring absences a meeting will be held with his/her line manager so as to establish what the problem may be and what supports, if any, can be provided. If the absence is due to an underlying health issue the staff member may be referred to the ETB’s medical officer/occupational therapist.

ETB's Medical Officer

The ETB reserves the right to refer any staff member to the ETB's medical officer/occupational therapist following a lengthy period of illness or under any other circumstances as it sees fit.

Role of the HR Department

- Provide advice and support to Line Managers in their efforts to optimise levels of attendance.
- Provide advice and support to individual members of staff.
- Assist Line Managers in discussions and informal/formal interviews as required.
- Advise, monitor and communicate attendance levels through regular reporting mechanisms.

This policy document has been formulated so as to ensure that staff are aware of the standards expected, in terms of regular and punctual attendance and to ensure that any difficulties which may arise are dealt with in a fair and supportive manner.