

Inefficiency Sickness Absence (Frequent Short Term Absence)

This user guide follows on from the 3.01, Sickness Absence user guide in this Handbook. Where the level of your sickness absence is giving cause for concern this guide sets out the process that will be followed in dealing with this issue. It also sets out the role of Line Management and Departmental HR.

Review points are used to identify the level and pattern of sickness absence that require closer examination. The Review points are 4 occasions or 10 working days in a rolling 12 month period. Review points will not apply to probationers, or to those appointed on a fixed-term or temporary basis where each spell of sickness absence will lead to a review and consideration of inefficiency action.

Departmental HR and/or line management, when reviewing your attendance record, may decide that formal inefficiency action is not required and you will be advised accordingly.

In summary:

Where your level of sickness absence reaches a review point and is considered unacceptable you will:

- Receive notification of a formal meeting to be held in relation to your sickness absence levels ([Step 1 Receive notification of a formal meeting to be held in relation to your sickness absence levels](#))
- Attend meeting held by Departmental HR or Line Management, as required. ([Step 2 Attend meeting held by Departmental HR or line management](#))
- Receive notification of the decision on Inefficiency Sickness Absence process ([Step 3 Receive notification of decision on Inefficiency Sickness Absence process](#))

If you decide to appeal against the decision of the formal meeting, you must:

- Lodge written notice of appeal with Departmental HR ([Step 1 Lodge written notice of appeal](#))
- Receive acknowledgement that appeal documentation has been received from HRConnect ([Step 2 Receive acknowledgement from HRConnect](#))
- Attend appeal meeting, where appropriate ([Step 3 Attend appeal meeting](#))
- Receive confirmation of the outcome of the appeal meeting from Line Management ([Step 4 Receive confirmation of outcome of appeal meeting from Line Management](#))

Line Management will:

- Consult with DHR in relation to whether to progress the case. In some Departments the line manager has responsibility for initiating the inefficiency process and will do so in consultation with DHR. In other Departments this responsibility rests with DHR. DHR will advise on the correct process for your Department. ([Step 1 Consult with DHR](#))
- Provide input to, or conduct the formal meeting, as required.. ([Step 2 Provide input to formal meeting](#))
- Advise the member of staff of the outcome of the formal meeting ([Step 3 Advise member of staff of the outcome of the meeting](#))

If the member of staff decides to appeal against the decision of the meeting, Line Management will:

- Provide input into the appeal meeting, if required ([Step 1 Provide input to appeal meeting](#))

- Advise the member of staff of the outcome of the appeal meeting ([Step 2 Advise member of staff of the outcome of the appeal](#))

Departmental HR will:

- Review individual sickness absence levels ([Step 1 Review sickness Reports](#))
- Consult with Line Management in relation to whether to progress the case. In some Departments the line manager has responsibility for initiating the inefficiency process and will do so in consultation with DHR. In other Departments this responsibility rests with DHR. DHR will advise on the correct process for their Department. ([Step 2 Consult with Line Management](#))
- Instruct HR Connect to instigate Inefficiency process ([Step 3 Instruction to HR Connect](#))
- Once instructed, HR Connect will invite the staff member to attend a formal meeting, if required ([Step 4 Invitation to attend formal meeting](#))
- Hold formal meeting, if required ([Step 5 Hold formal meeting](#))
- Instruct HR Connect on outcome of formal meeting ([Step 6 Record Decision](#))
- Decide on the payment of Compensation in dismissal cases ([Step 7 Decide on the payment of Compensation in dismissal cases](#))

If the member of staff decides to appeal against the decision of the meeting,

Departmental HR will:

- Receive written notice of appeal ([Step 1 Receive written notice of appeal](#))
- Hold the appeal meeting ([Step 2 Hold appeal meeting](#))
- Instruct HR Connect on outcome of appeal meeting ([Step 3 Outcome of the appeal](#))

In addition to this guide you may also wish to refer to the following, in this Handbook:

- [3.01, Sickness Absence policy](#)
- [6.06, Inefficiency Sickness Absence policy](#)

Inefficiency Sickness Absence (Frequent Short-Term Absence)

User guide for Staff

This guide sets out the process that will be followed in instances where the levels of your sickness absence require further consideration in accordance with the Inefficiency Sickness Absence process.

Step 1 Receive notification of a formal meeting to be held in relation to your sickness absence levels

Where it has been decided by Departmental HR or Line Management that further consideration in relation to your sickness absence levels is necessary, you will be issued with written confirmation from HRConnect of the decision to consider the matter formally and details of the formal meeting you will be required to attend. This will include:

- Date, time and venue of meeting
- Purpose of meeting
- Who will attend meeting
- Your right to be accompanied by a Trade Union representative or work colleague.

Once you have received written confirmation of your meeting, you must confirm your availability to attend this meeting along with details of your nominated companion. Details of how to do this will be included in the letter you receive from HRConnect.

If you are unable to attend the meeting, you must contact the person named on the letter immediately giving reasons why you are unable to attend. An alternative meeting date and time may be arranged and confirmed in writing.

Step 2 Attend meeting held by Departmental HR or Line Management

You must attend this meeting on the date confirmed. Failure to attend this meeting may result in a decision being made in your absence.

Prior to the meeting, you and your nominated companion will receive an information pack from HRConnect.

The meeting will be held by Departmental HR or Line Management. The purpose of the meeting will be to:

- Ensure that all aspects of the case are presented by the officer holding the meeting
- Give you the opportunity to respond to the evidence presented and present any mitigating factors or other information which you feel is relevant in the management of your case.

Minutes will be taken during the meeting and should be agreed by you following the meeting. Where minutes are not agreed, your comments will be appended to the summary of the meeting.

In the event that additional evidence or documentation is required at the meeting, the meeting may be adjourned and re-convened at a later date or even later in the day, if appropriate. In the event that the meeting is to be re-convened later in the day, you will be informed by the officer holding the meeting. In the event that the meeting is to be re-convened at a later date, you will be notified of the date, time and venue by HRConnect.

Step 3 Receive notification of the decision on Inefficiency Sickness Absence process

Following the meeting HRConnect will issue a letter to you, your line management and DHR providing you with the details of the outcome of the meeting you had in relation to your attendance, Your Line Management will be in contact with you as soon as possible thereafter to arrange to meet with you to discuss/ confirm the outcome of the meeting which may include the following:

- A written or final written warning (which will include details of warning periods)
- Dismissal
- No further action

The letter will also include notification of your right to appeal against the decision of the meeting and details of the appeals process and time limits within which an appeal must be lodged.

There may be situations where it is more appropriate for Departmental HR to inform you directly by writing, telephone or by meeting with you instead of the Line Manager, dependent on circumstances.

The internal appeal process

Step 1 Lodge written notice of appeal

If you wish to appeal against the decision of the Inefficiency action, you must submit written notice of appeal to Departmental HR. Your appeal must be made within the time limits specified in the above letter and contain the grounds on which you wish to appeal.

Step 2 Receive acknowledgement from HRConnect

If your notice of appeal is received outside of the specified time limit Departmental HR will consider whether to accept your appeal based on any exceptional circumstances. You will be informed in writing by HRConnect of this decision. If it is felt that there are no acceptable grounds for the appeal being received late this will end the internal appeals process.

If your appeal is to be heard, you will receive a letter from HRConnect confirming details of your appeal meeting. This will include:

- Date, time and venue of your appeal meeting
- The purpose of the appeal meeting
- Who will attend the appeal meeting
- Your right to be accompanied by a Trade Union representative or work colleague
- If applicable, the reason for accepting the late appeal

Once you have received written confirmation of your appeal meeting, you must confirm your availability to attend this meeting along with details of your nominated companion. Details of how to do this will be included in the letter you will receive from HRConnect.

If you are unable to attend the appeal meeting, you must contact the person named on the letter immediately giving reasons why you are unable to attend. An alternative date and time may be arranged and confirmed in writing.

Step 3 Attend appeal meeting

You must attend this meeting on the date confirmed. Failure to attend this meeting may result in a decision being made in your absence.

Prior to the appeal meeting, you and your nominated companion will receive an information pack from HRConnect.

The appeal must be heard by an officer independent of those who made the decision and should be at least one grade higher than the decision making officer. Occasionally, it may be necessary for an officer at the same grade, not previously involved in the case, to hear the appeal.

The purpose of this meeting will be for you to state the grounds of your appeal against the decision of the Inefficiency action. Minutes will be taken during the meeting and should be agreed. Where minutes are not agreed, your comments will be appended to the summary of the meeting.

In the event that additional evidence or documentation is required at the appeal meeting, the meeting may be adjourned and re-convened at a later date or even later in the day, if appropriate. In the event that the meeting is to be re-convened later in the day, you will be informed by the officer holding the meeting. In the event that the meeting is to be re-convened at a later date, you will be notified of the date, time and venue by HRConnect.

The officer hearing the appeal will then consider all relevant factors and decide whether or not the decision of the initial meeting was appropriate.

Step 4 Receive confirmation of outcome of appeal meeting from Line Management

Following the appeal meeting, Line Management will contact you to arrange a meeting to confirm the outcome of the appeal meeting and issue you with written confirmation. This confirmation will state:

- the original decision to issue a Written Warning or Final Written Warning is upheld; or
- the original decision is set aside.

There may be situations where it is more appropriate for Departmental HR to inform you directly by writing, telephone or by meeting with you instead of the Line Manager, dependent on circumstances.

This concludes the internal appeal process.

Inefficiency Sickness Absence (Frequent Short-Term Absence)

User guide for Line Management

As set out in the [3.01, Sickness Absence user guide](#) in this Handbook, you are required to monitor and review individual sickness absence levels on a regular basis.

This guide sets out the steps you should follow where a staff member's absence levels are considered unacceptable.

Step 1 Consultation with DHR before formal meeting

In some Departments the line manager has responsibility for initiating the inefficiency process and will do so in consultation with DHR. In other Departments this responsibility rests with DHR. DHR will advise you on the correct process for your Department.

Departmental HR will consult with Line Management before instructing HR Connect to organise the formal meeting.

Step 2 Provide input to or conduct formal meeting

Where it has been decided by Departmental HR or Line Management that further action in relation to a member of staff's sickness absence levels is necessary, the member of staff will be issued with written confirmation from HRConnect. The letter will inform them of the decision to consider the matter formally and provide details of the formal meeting they will be required to attend.

The formal meeting will be held by Departmental HR or Line Management, dependent on the process for your Department. Prior to the meeting, you will receive an information pack from HRConnect, if appropriate.

Step 3 Advise member of staff of the outcome of the meeting

If you have held the meeting you should notify HRConnect of the outcome on the Meeting Outcome Form (HR-INSA 1.19) to enable them to update the system and generate the appropriate correspondence.

When you receive the correspondence (copied to the member of staff and DHR) from HRConnect confirming the outcome of the meeting, you must arrange a meeting as soon as possible with the member of staff to discuss/confirm the action to be taken. This may include one of the following:

- A written or final written warning (which will include details of warning periods)
- Dismissal
- No further action

This meeting will normally be held by a Line Manager Level 2 or above.

This letter will also notify the member of staff of their right to appeal against the decision of the meeting and details of the appeals process and time limits within which an appeal must be lodged.

Dependent upon circumstances there may be situations where it is not appropriate for decisions to go through line management. For each case HRConnect will check with Department HR to confirm the appropriate method of communication.

The internal appeal process

Step 1 Provide input to appeal meeting

In the event that a member of staff wishes to appeal against the decision of the initial meeting, Departmental HR or Line Management will conduct the appeal meeting.

Input to the appeal meeting will normally be provided by a Line Manager Level 2 or above

Step 2 Advise member of staff of the outcome of the appeal

You will be sent a copy of the correspondence setting out the decision of the appeal meeting from HRConnect.

You will be required to contact the member of staff to arrange a meeting to notify them of the outcome of the appeal meeting and issue them with written confirmation. This confirmation will state:

- the original decision to issue a Written Warning or Final Written Warning is upheld; or
- the original decision is set aside.

This meeting will normally be held by a Line Manager Level 2 or above

Dependent upon circumstances there may be situations where it is not appropriate for decisions to go through line management. For each case HRConnect will check with Department HR to confirm the appropriate method of communication.

This concludes the internal appeal process.

Inefficiency Sickness Absence (Frequent Short-Term Absence)

User guide for Departmental HR

As set out in the [3.01, Sickness Absence user guide](#) in this Handbook, Departmental HR, as well as Line Management, is required to monitor and review individual sickness absence levels on a regular basis.

This guide sets out the steps to be followed where a staff member's sickness absence levels are considered unacceptable and the case has been referred to the Inefficiency Sickness Absence process for further consideration.

Step 1 Review Sickness Reports

As well as periodic departmental reports, Departmental HR will also have access to reports of individuals who have reached pre-determined absence review points.

Step 2 Consultation with Line Manager before formal meeting

Departmental HR will consult with Line Management before instructing HR Connect to organise the formal meeting.

Step 3 Instruction to HR Connect

You should inform HRConnect of the action to be taken by completing the [Instruction to instigate Inefficiency Sickness Absence](#) form HR SAB 1.39 and forwarding this to HRConnect.

Step 4 Invitation to attend the formal meeting

On receipt of an instruction from DHR the staff member will be issued with written confirmation from HRConnect of the decision to consider the matter formally and details of the formal meeting they will be required to attend.

Once the staff member receives details of the meeting, they must contact you to confirm their availability to attend this meeting along with details of their nominated companion.

Prior to the meeting HRConnect will provide Departmental HR with case papers for reference during the meeting.

Step 5 Hold formal meeting

The formal meeting will be conducted by DHR or Line Management.

The purpose of the meeting will be to:

- Ensure all aspects of the case are presented by the officer holding the meeting
- Provide the member of staff with the opportunity to respond accordingly, as well as presenting any mitigating factors or other evidence they feel is relevant to the management of the case

Minutes will be taken during the meeting and should be agreed. Where minutes are not agreed, the officer's comments will be appended to the summary of the meeting.

At the end of this meeting, the officer from Departmental HR is responsible for ensuring case papers are returned to HRConnect.

Step 6 Record Decision

Departmental HR should record their decision on the Outcome of Meeting Form (INSA 1.38) and return to HRConnect for processing as soon as possible.

In the event that additional evidence or documentation is required at the appeal meeting, the meeting may be adjourned and re-convened at a later date or even later in the day, if appropriate. In the event that the meeting is to be re-convened later in the day, Departmental HR should notify the member of staff directly. In the event that the meeting is to be re-convened at a later date, Departmental HR should notify HRConnect who will then send out written notification of the date, time and venue of the meeting to the member of staff.

Dependent upon circumstances there may be situations where it is not appropriate for decisions to go through line management. For each case HRConnect will check with Department HR to confirm the appropriate method of communication.

Step 7 Decide on the payment of Compensation in dismissal cases

Departments have discretion to pay compensation in cases of dismissal on grounds of inefficiency. DHR will consider whether compensation should be paid and, if so, how much. In doing so they will assess in percentage terms the extent to which the inefficiency is caused by factors beyond the officer's control and the efforts the officer made to remedy the inefficiency and / or the underlying causes of it.

Further information on assessing compensation can be found in the Inefficiency Sickness Absence policy, section 9.

The internal appeals process

Step 1 Receive written notice of appeal

Where a member of staff decides to appeal against the decision of the Inefficiency action, they will do so in writing and forward this to Departmental HR. The appeal notice must be checked to ensure it is received within the specified time limit.

If the notice of appeal is received outside of the time limits, Departmental HR will consider whether there are acceptable grounds for the late receipt of the appeal. If it is believed there are no sufficient grounds on which to accept the appeal, HRConnect must be informed in writing on the "Instruction on appeal form" (INSA 1.27) and they will inform the member of staff of this decision. This will end the internal appeal process.

If the appeal is to be heard the "Instruction on Appeal" form should be completed, as soon as possible, with details of who will hold the appeal meeting,

HRConnect will update the staff member's record to show that an appeal has been lodged against the decision of the initial meeting and will confirm the details of the appeal meeting, in writing.

Step 2 Hold appeal meeting

Prior to the appeal meeting HRConnect will provide the officer holding the appeal, with case papers for reference during the meeting.

The purpose of the appeal meeting will be for the member of staff to state the grounds of their appeal against the decision of the initial meeting. The officer holding the appeal will consider all relevant factors including a review of the procedure followed and the fairness of the original decision. Using this information the officer must decide whether or not the decision of the initial meeting was appropriate. Minutes will be taken during the appeal

meeting and should be agreed. Where minutes are not agreed, the officer's comments will be appended to the summary of the meeting.

In the event that additional evidence or documentation is required at the appeal meeting, the meeting may be adjourned and re-convened at a later date or even later in the day, if appropriate. In the event that the meeting is to be re-convened later in the day, Departmental HR will notify the member of staff directly. In the event that the meeting is to be re-convened at a later date, Departmental HR will notify HRConnect who will then send out written notification of the date, time and venue of the meeting to the member of staff.

At the end of this meeting, the officer hearing the appeal is responsible for ensuring all case papers are returned to HRConnect.

Step 3 Outcome of the appeal

The officer who held the appeal meeting is responsible for deciding the action to be taken. The officer should record the decision of the appeal meeting on the Outcome of Appeal form (INSA 1.38) and return it to HRConnect for processing, as soon as possible.

Dependent upon circumstances there maybe situations where is it not appropriate for decisions to go through line management. For each case HRConnect will check with Department HR to confirm the appropriate method of communication.

This concludes the internal appeal process.