



MICHAEL LONSDALE GROUP

The Michael Lonsdale Group inclusive of (Michael Lonsdale Ltd, Michael J Lonsdale Limited, Michael J Lonsdale (Electrical) Limited and MJL Midlands Limited):

Managing Short Term Sickness Absence Guidance and Procedure Policy

1. This section gives more information about managing short term absence, including return to work meetings, trigger points and absence review meetings.
2. When you come back to work your manager will arrange a return to work meeting with you, it will normally take place on your first day back in the office. If your manager is not available, then another manager should meet with you.

Return to work meeting

3. The return to work meeting is an informal part of the absence process. It allows us to make sure you are well enough to be back at work and gives us the opportunity to discuss your absence, confirm how many days you have been absent taking account of your working pattern and offer any support you may need to ensure you successfully return to work.
4. The return to work meeting also plays an important part in helping us to manage your absence and attendance in line with the policy. Your manager can take the opportunity to review and discuss with you the level, frequency, duration and reasons for your absences. They may talk to you about any patterns in your absence and whether you have any underlying medical conditions so we can look at how we can support you. Your manager may suggest that you consult your doctor for further medical support.
5. Your manager may also discuss any concerns they have about your absence levels and will tell you if you are starting to approach the trigger points (which are set out below).
6. In the event that there is an underlying medical condition, or you need particular support, you and your manager may agree to have regular meetings to discuss your medical condition and any agreed adjustments without waiting for a further return to work meeting or for you to reach the sickness absence trigger points. This is important in ensuring that we support you in implementing any advice and guidance from your GP.





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Trigger Points

7. Trigger points are prompts that we use to review absences and decide whether an absence review meeting is needed. They help us to monitor absence levels fairly and consistently across the organisation and allow us to manage high levels of absence.

The trigger points for full time staff are:

- 6 or more episodes of sickness absence in any 12 month period or
 - 2 or more episodes resulting in a total loss of 10 or more working days in any 12 month period.
8. If you work part time, we will pro-rata the trigger points based on your working hours and make sure you are treated equally and fairly if you reach the trigger point.
9. If you reach these trigger points within a 12 month rolling period you will normally be invited to attend an absence review meeting to discuss your sickness absence levels. There are a number of possible outcomes as set out below.

Absence review meeting

10. As set out above, the meeting is held when you reach trigger points and is designed to explore your sickness absences and bring about an improvement in attendance levels. The meeting will be held with your manager and the purpose of the meeting is to:

- discuss the reasons and frequency of your absences
- offer support, and discuss any reasonable adjustments that we can put in place to help improve your absence levels
- ensure that you are aware that your absence record is a potential cause for concern
- decide whether any action needs to be taken as a result of your absences.

11. We will advise you that an absence review meeting will take place at your return to work meeting and will confirm in writing giving you at least three working days' notice of the date. In the letter we will:

- explain the reason for the meeting
- confirm who will be attending
- list the dates and number of days of your absences
- enclose copies of the documents we will be discussing, such as fit notes, occupational health reports and sickness absence form
- confirm that you have the right to be accompanied at the meeting
- enclose a copy of the sickness absence policy – you should read this before the meeting
- inform you of possible outcomes of the meeting.





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12. You have the right to be accompanied to your absence review meeting. You can bring:
 - any colleague who is employed by the Michael Lonsdale Group
 - a trade union official – the official must either be an employee of a trade union or be certified as being able to act as a companion in sickness hearings.

13. They have an important role in supporting you through the meeting. They can participate fully in the discussion and ask any questions. You may also choose to speak privately during the meeting and can ask for a break at any time to do this. They cannot answer questions on your behalf.

14. Your manager will discuss each period of absence with you. You will have the opportunity to provide any additional information that may not have been covered during the return to work meeting.

15. Areas of discussion may include some of or all of the following as appropriate.
 - Advising you to see your GP or a specialist if you have an underlying medical condition for advice and guidance on how to manage and control your condition and reduce your absence levels.
 - Offering any support and assistance that may help you improve your attendance, including considering any adjustments to your role.
 - Considering any mitigating circumstances that might be affecting attendance levels.
 - Discussing the impact of your absences and putting monitoring periods in place and setting expectations of improvements.
 - Confirming the improvements, the Michael Lonsdale Group expects in your attendance levels and what the next step will be if you do not reach the required level of attendance.
 - Identifying whether your absences indicate a more serious long-term health problem.
 - Discussing the option of a referral to occupational health.
 - Discussing the possibility of redeployment.
 - Exploring whether the reasons for your sickness absence fall within the definition of a disability under the Equality Act 2010.

Meeting Outcomes

16. Your manager will consider a range of options, they may decide to:
 - take no action but we will continue to monitor trigger points as usual
 - set a monitoring period to help improve your absence levels
 - make a referral to occupational health
 - agree adjustments to the workplace, hours or role – if this is a temporary measure, timescales will be provided along with review points if needed





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- issue a warning (see below for details about levels of warning) – a warning is more likely to be issued if there is no underlying medical condition attributable to the absences and no adjustments are necessary based on the recommendations of your doctor.

Warnings

Stage 1 – First written warning

17. The first stage will be to issue you with a first written warning. This will be recorded on your personal file. It will remain 'live' for six months from the date of the formal absence meeting. Your absence will be monitored for six months and any further sickness absence within this period may mean you are invited to another absence review meeting where a further warning may be issued.
18. If your next absence falls just outside of the six month monitoring period, your manager will decide whether a further monitoring period will apply and if an absence review meeting should be held.

Stage 2 – Final written warning

19. If you have any further sickness absence within six months of the date the first written warning was issued, you will be invited to an absence review meeting to discuss your absences and a final warning may be applied. If a final written warning is issued, it will be recorded on your personal file and remain 'live' for 12 months.

Stage 3 – Dismissal

20. If you have further absences within 12 months of the final written warning, and if the overall pattern of your absence over the last 12 months has not improved to an acceptable level in the short term, we may consider dismissal. We will also consider dismissal if you have had two or more final written warnings. If a decision is made to dismiss, we will give you the appropriate notice in accordance with your contract of employment.

Appeal

21. If you are issued with a warning at any stage, you have the right to appeal. Your appeal must be in writing, and you must make sure we receive it within five working days of the date you received the warning letter. Your letter of appeal should set out the grounds on which you are making the appeal and should include as much information as possible.





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22. You will be invited to attend an appeal hearing in writing as soon as possible. The appeal hearing will normally be conducted by a manager more senior than the individual who conducted the sickness absence review meeting.
23. The appeal decision will be confirmed in writing and there will no further right of appeal once that decision is made.

Name **Gary Herbert** For and on behalf of the MLG Board of Directors.

Signed

Position **Chief Executive Officer**

Date **10th January 2023**

