

ABSENCE POLICY – COVID -19 ADDENDUM

Date policy adopted: 01/06/21

Date of last review: 01/06/21

1. Purpose and Scope

The Covid-19 pandemic impacting the UK during 2020 resulted in some temporary alterations to the way in which Statutory Sick Pay was calculated. This policy document lays out the temporary measures in place to deal with sickness related to the pandemic for all employees of the Ethical Standards Commissioner (ESC).

This policy applies to all employees regardless of working pattern or nature of employment contract. It will not apply to others carrying out work on behalf of ESC (agency staff, contractors etc) who will be governed by the contract under which they have been employed or contracted.

2. Implementation, monitoring and review of the policy

Overall responsibility for policy implementation, monitoring and review lies with ESC. Everyone covered by the scope of the policy is obliged to adhere to, and facilitate implementation of the policy. Appropriate action will be taken to inform all new and existing employees and others covered by the scope of the existence of the policy and their role in adhering to it. The policy will be reviewed at such times as legislation or a change to the ESC policy position requires it. The policy will be made available to the general public.

3. Arrangements

As of March 2020, all employees were moved to emergency working from home arrangements.

Government advice during the pandemic is that any individual who experiences symptoms of Covid-19 must self-isolate for at least 10 days or until they feel well.

If someone in their household has tested positive for Covid-19, all members of the household must self-isolate for 10 days.

As all employees of ESC are working from home, if any employee has to self-isolate but feels fit and well, they should continue to work as usual.

If any employee develops symptoms of Covid-19 and does not feel well enough to work, they should contact their line manager in the usual way on the first day of feeling unwell. The line manager will make arrangements to keep in contact and check on how the employee is feeling, providing support where possible.

From 13 March 2020 statutory sick pay is paid on day 1 of any employee being sick with Covid-19 symptoms, rather than the usual day 4. This will not make any practical difference to employees.

Any employee who does not feel able to work for longer than 7 days due to Covid-19 symptoms would usually be expected to provide a fit note from their doctor. Due to the requirement to self-isolate, this fit note may be provided in retrospect, once it is safe for the employee to leave their home.

For any employee who is off on long term sickness absence, home visits will be suspended for the duration of the pandemic and alternative forms of keeping in touch will be arranged with their line manager.

It is recognised that a proportion of people who contract Covid-19 develop significant ongoing “long Covid” symptoms. ESC is committed to supporting any employee who finds themselves to be in this situation, in line with the Equality Act 2010.

Equality Impact Assessment

Does this policy comply with the general Public Sector Equality Duty (s149 Equality Act 2010)?

This policy applies to all employees. Its impact was considered when drafting and particular consideration was given to those who are disabled with provision built in to the policy in order to protect them. We consulted with all employees prior to publication to identify and address any issues.

Data Protection Impact Assessment

Have we considered any effect the policy may have on the collecting, processing and storing of personal data?

The records generated by this policy will contain personal data and may contain sensitive and special category personal data. Suitable retention and destruction policies are in place to manage this material.

Information Security Impact Assessment

Have we considered the impact any policy may have on our cyber-resilience?

This policy should have no impact on our cyber-resilience.

Records Management Impact

Have we considered the impact any policy may have on our ability to manage our records?

This policy should have no impact on our ability to manage our records.

Version	Description	Date	Author
1.0	First draft	01/06/21	Public Appointments Officer