

Sick Leave Policy

Overview

Sick leave is traditionally paid time off for an employee who is ill or needs medical attention. In some regions it is required by law, but many places have yet to pass a paid sick leave law.

Most organizations offer sick leave anyway, paid or unpaid, and have some form of sick leave policy. These policies need sound design and proper planning, which is not the norm everywhere.

Purpose and Scope

Each employee is allotted [Number of days](#) days of sick leave every year, starting on 1 January. A sick leave policy sets out the organization's guidelines for when an employee falls sick and cannot attend work. Factors to consider include the work culture, the company's leave policy and the effect of the job on employee well-being.

- Staying home when sick is best for both the individual and the company.
- For the individual, the added stress of travel and work can slow recovery and hurt productivity in the short term, while rest improves physical and mental well-being in the long run.
- For the organization, an employee who rests recovers faster, which can reduce the total sick days taken. It also stops the employee from spreading illness to colleagues, which protects overall productivity.
- For mild sickness, the employee can work from home, where that applies. It is a good middle ground for everyone.

Employees with Disabilities

Employees with disabilities, temporary or permanent, must be eligible for extended leave. Most organizations handle requests for extended leave case by case, at the discretion of the manager, team leader, supervisor or HR.

If an employee is hospitalized for 24 hours or more, they may be asked for a fitness certificate before resuming their duties, whether or not they have a disability.

Procedure

The traditional definition of sick leave is time off for illness or medical attention, but the definition has widened over time. Sick leave can typically be taken for:

- Recovery from an existing illness
- Recovery from an accident
- Health check-ups related to illness
- Caring for an ill family member

- An employee who takes sick leave should tell their supervisor, HR or another relevant senior person at least half an hour before their scheduled start time.
- They may be asked for a physician's certificate if HR or the manager considers it necessary.
- The supervisor or HR may deny sick leave when they consider it necessary.
- An employee who has used all their sick leave may use vacation leave as sick leave. Sick leave can never be used as vacation leave.

Accumulated Sick Leave

Employees may carry forward up to [Number of leaves](#) sick leaves, to be used within [Number of years](#) years, as management considers reasonable. If an employee is terminated or leaves, they cannot encash accumulated sick leave, because it is a perk and not part of compensation.

Preventing the Abuse of Sick Leave

To reduce abuse of sick leave and the number of leaves taken, organizations can offer additional perks, for example:

- Carrying forward a percentage of unused sick leave to use later
- Giving a bonus or reward to employees who take fewer than a set number of sick days

Disclaimer

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