

Creating absence policies

As an employer you should make it clear what's expected of you and your employee if they need time off work. Having policies about different types of absence is a good way to do this.

It's up to you whether you have one policy or separate policies to cover different types of absence.

What your absence policies should cover

Your policies should cover how you deal with planned absence that you will authorise in advance. For example:

- [holiday](#)
- [maternity, paternity, adoption or parental leave](#)
- time off for medical or hospital appointments

You should also include how you deal with absences that cannot be planned in advance. For example:

- [sickness](#)
- [time off for dependants](#)
- [time off for bereavement](#)
- [when there's extreme weather or travel disruption](#)

What to consider

In any policies about absence, you should consider including:

- how employees should book planned absences
- how employees should report unplanned absences, including who they should contact and when
- whether you use a [trigger point](#) system and how this works
- how and when to [keep in touch during absence](#)
- support you'll offer your employee while they're off
- what to do if someone needs [time off for reasons related to a disability](#)
- support available for employees [returning to work after absence](#)
- what you'll pay your employee during absence, for example if they'll get [sick pay](#) or [holiday pay](#)

For some areas related to absence you must follow what the law says. For example:

- [statutory sick pay \(SSP\)](#)
- [fit notes and proof of sickness](#)
- [time off for dependants](#)

Get more advice and support

If you have any questions about absence policies, you can [contact the Acas helpline](#).

Acas also provides:

- [tailored support for employers](#)
- [training on managing absence](#)