

Fit notes when off sick

Getting a fit note or self-certifying

Employees might need a fit note when they're off sick. A fit note is an official statement from a registered healthcare professional giving their medical opinion on a person's fitness for work. Fit notes used to be called sick notes.

Healthcare professionals who can provide fit notes are:

- doctors
- nurses
- occupational therapists
- pharmacists
- physiotherapists

Whether an employee needs a fit note depends on how long they're off sick.

Self-certification when off sick for 7 days or less

If someone is off sick for 7 calendar days or less (including weekends), they do not need a fit note.

They can tell their employer they're not well enough to work. They do not need to provide medical evidence.

This is called 'self-certifying' their sick leave. They should still be paid the amount of [sick pay](#) they're entitled to.

Getting a fit note when off sick for more than 7 days

If an employee is off sick for more than 7 calendar days, they should get a fit note from a registered healthcare professional.

This is the case even if the employee was not supposed to be at work for some of the 7 calendar days. For example if:

- they work part time
- some of the 7 calendar days were a weekend, when they do not work

The healthcare professional can provide the fit note by email or as a printed copy.

The employee should give the fit note to their employer on the 7th day of their absence, or as soon as possible after this.

If there's a delay getting a fit note

If there's a delay getting a fit note, the employee should contact their employer to explain:

- why there's a delay – for example, difficulty booking a doctor's appointment

- when their employer will get the fit note

An employer should only ask their employee for a fit note from the 7th day of absence. A healthcare professional might refuse to provide a fit note before the 7th day.

What a fit note says

The healthcare professional has to tick whether the employee:

- [is not fit for work](#)
- [might be fit for work](#)

Contact the Acas helpline

If you have any questions about fit notes or self-certification, you can [contact the Acas helpline](#).