



Sickness and Absence Policy

1. Introduction

Upton Parish Council is committed to promoting the health, safety, and wellbeing of its employees. This policy sets out the procedures for reporting, managing, and supporting sickness absence. It supplements the contractual provisions contained in the National Joint Council (NJC) Green Book and must be read alongside the employee's contract of employment.

Where this policy conflicts with the Green Book, the Green Book takes precedence.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees of Upton Parish Council. The Clerk and other employees employed under NJC terms are entitled to the sickness provisions set out in the Green Book.

3. Reporting Sickness Absence

3.1 First Day of Absence

Employees must notify the Chair (or designated line manager) as soon as reasonably practicable, and no later than the start of the working day, stating:

- the reason for absence
- expected duration (if known)

If the Chair is unavailable, the Vice-Chair should be contacted.

3.2 Ongoing Absence

Employees must keep the Council updated regularly, normally every 3–5 days unless otherwise agreed.

4. Certification Requirements

4.1 Self-Certification

For absences of up to 7 calendar days, employees must complete a self-certification form on return to work.

4.2 Fit Notes

For absences of 8 calendar days or more, a medical certificate (“fit note”) must be provided.

4.3 Additional Medical Evidence

The Council may request further medical evidence where reasonable and will meet any associated costs.

5. Occupational Sick Pay (OSP)

In accordance with Section 10 of the NJC Green Book, employees are entitled to the following occupational sick pay:

Length of Service	Full Pay	Half Pay
During 1st year	1 month	2 months
During 2nd year	2 months	2 months
During 3rd year	4 months	4 months
During 4th & 5th years	5 months	5 months
After 5 years	6 months	6 months

These entitlements are inclusive of Statutory Sick Pay (SSP).

Payment of OSP is conditional upon compliance with this policy and the Green Book.

6. Medical Referrals and Occupational Health

6.1 Occupational Health Referral

The Council may refer employees to an occupational health practitioner to:

- assess fitness for work
- advise on reasonable adjustments
- support rehabilitation

6.2 Consent

Employees are encouraged to cooperate with medical referrals. Failure to engage may limit the Council’s ability to support a return to work and may affect decisions regarding continued employment.

7. Managing Sickness Absence

7.1 Return-to-Work Meetings

A return-to-work meeting will be held after every period of sickness absence, regardless of duration, to:

- confirm fitness to return
- discuss any support needs
- identify any underlying issues

7.2 Short-Term Absence

Where patterns of short-term absence cause concern, the Council may:

- review attendance
- set improvement expectations
- offer support or adjustments
- initiate formal procedures where necessary

7.3 Long-Term Absence

Absence lasting four weeks or more will be treated as long-term. The Council will:

- maintain regular, sensitive contact
- consider occupational health advice
- explore phased return or adjustments
- consider redeployment where appropriate

8. Reasonable Adjustments

The Council will make reasonable adjustments for employees with disabilities or long-term health conditions, in line with the Equality Act 2010.

9. Home Visits

Where appropriate and with reasonable notice, the Council may arrange a home visit or meeting at a neutral venue to discuss support and progress.

10. Phased Return to Work

A phased return may include:

- reduced hours
- amended duties
- temporary adjustments

Any temporary reduction in hours will normally be on full contractual pay for a short, defined period, subject to occupational health advice.

11. Capability and Employment Decisions

Dismissal on the grounds of ill health will only be considered after:

- full medical investigation
- consultation with the employee
- consideration of reasonable adjustments
- exploration of redeployment options

The Council will follow the NJC capability framework and ACAS guidance.

12. Annual Leave During Sickness

Employees continue to accrue statutory annual leave during sickness absence. Carry-over will be permitted where sickness prevents leave being taken.

13. Data Protection

All medical information will be handled confidentially and stored in accordance with data protection legislation.

14. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if legislation or NJC terms change.

Adopted: March 2026

Review: