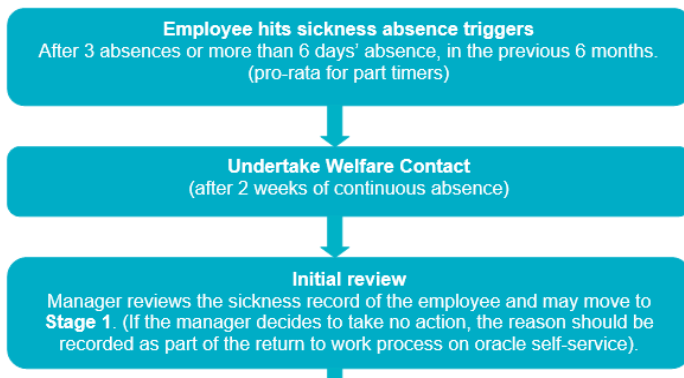


Sickness Trouble?

We have noticed an increase in the number of members being called into formal sickness meetings. We understand that there is a clear direction for Managers to by-pass the Council's own policy and not consider applying discretion before beginning formal procedures. Below is an extract of the Council's policy, that clearly outlines that Management should consider whether it is necessary to begin the formal sickness absence policy.

Sickness absence management flowchart



Sickness Absence policies can lead to dismissal when they reach Stage 3 and therefore they should be taken seriously, even at the first stage.

The reason for the discretion being in the policy was for good sense to be employed by management when considering an individual's sickness record. With the idea being that if someone has not had any sickness in the last few years, and they are off with a planned operation, or are unfortunate to trigger the targets because they catch chicken pox, a manager can make a sensible decision.

Conversely, if the individual has a poor sickness record this is a reason why the manager "may move to Stage 1."

Line Manager's please note – it is your decision whether to begin formal proceedings or not.

Members please note – you have a right to representation at Stage 1 of the sickness absence policy. We recommend all UNISON members arrange representation as soon as you have any date for a Stage 1 meeting. Simply speak to your local UNISON steward or call 0121 569 5996.

Troubled Tories heading for Brum

The Tories are holding their annual conference in Birmingham on week beginning 29 September. Midlands TUC and the People's Assembly have called a demonstration outside their conference.

Deeply divided over Brexit, the Tories have been tearing each other apart. Meanwhile the cuts to local government continue despite the increasing pressures from Children's social care and Adults social care. Not only has Tory-run Northamptonshire Council gone bust, but 20 more Councils face financial difficulties.

The cuts must stop. For that to take place, we need to stop the cutters. Whether a deal or no-deal over Europe, whether it's Theresa or Boris in charge, the Tories look set to continue the cuts to our Councils and schools.

Join the Midlands TUC/People's Assembly demo in Brum to say, 'enough is enough'.

**Assemble 12 noon,
Victoria Square,
Birmingham
Saturday 29 September**

Not in UNISON, then join today

UNISON

Sandwell's biggest trade union

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or call 0121 569 5996