

Sickness Absence Policy

Scope : This policy applies to the following AG Barr business divisions :

Barr Soft Drinks	FUNKIN Cocktails
✓	✓

Purpose: To strike a reasonable balance between the needs of colleagues to take time off work for illness-related absence, and the needs of the Company.

Why Do We Need This?: To deal positively and sympathetically with colleagues who are off work due to sickness, to avoid operational difficulties by maintaining effective staffing levels, and to deal fairly and reasonably with colleagues who have frequent or extended periods of sickness absence.

1. PROCEDURE FOR NOTIFICATION AND CERTIFICATION OF ABSENCE

If you are absent from work, you should notify your people leader as soon as possible and no later than 1 hour after the time when you are normally expected to start work. . You should provide details of the nature of your sickness, the expected length of your absence from work, your contact details, and any outstanding or urgent work that requires attention. It is important that you are able to answer these questions to allow for other colleagues to resource plan properly and consider any support they can give you.

It is expected that you and only you will contact your people leader with regards to any absence, and only in exceptional circumstances may someone else call on your behalf. Furthermore, it must be a phone call that you make; leaving voicemails is acceptable only to leave your contact details for your people leader to get back in contact with you. The expectation is that you make contact every day that you are off to maintain contact with your people leader. However, your people leader may come to an alternative arrangement with you directly.

It is important to note that failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action.

1.1 Sickness - Part Shift

If you come into work and need to leave due to sickness, you should inform your people leader. If they are unavailable, then you should inform the next most appropriate person. If you have to go home after completing part of a shift, this will not count towards any absence monitoring process. However, if this becomes frequent (3 times in a 12-month rolling period), then an investigation may be conducted. **1.2 Absence Types**

Absence up to 7 calendar days	A self-certification form must be completed and given to your people leader, unless a medical certificate has already been received on your return to work
-------------------------------	--

Absences longer than 7 calendar days	You must provide a statement from an eligible healthcare professional stating that you are not fit for work and the reason(s) why. You should advise your people leader when you are likely to return and ensure this is done before the statement runs out. The Company may agree to you returning to work before the statement runs out, subject to a wellbeing conversation
Pregnancy-related absences	These absences will not be included when looking into formal action. The notification process should still be followed.

2. RETURN TO WORK

When returning to work, it is important that you feel supported and fully ready to return. Your people leader will invite you to a Return-To-Work Interview which will be carried out on your first day back. If this is not possible due to operational reasons then it will be conducted at the next possible time. You should be open and honest and discuss anything further than may hinder your attendance levels. This is so that your people leader can support you in the best way possible.

In certain circumstances, an Occupational Health referral may be made. Following an Occupational Health assessment, recommendations may be made as to any reasonable adjustments we may need to make in order to support you in your role. You may be asked to agree to provide any report in connection with a medical examination required by the Company. If you do not consent to this we may have to make a decision regarding your future employment based on the information we have readily available to us.

3. SICKNESS AND ANNUAL LEAVE

If you are absent from work due to sickness, you will continue to accrue your contractual holiday entitlement and will be given the opportunity to take this at a later date. In cases of long-term sickness, you may request to book annual leave. Your people leader will discuss with HR if holiday pay will be paid rather than sick pay for the days agreed. If you are on annual leave and become unwell you must notify your people leader of how much annual leave was impacted and submit a written request no longer than 5 days after returning to work setting this out.

4. COMPANY SICK PAY

The Company operates a contractual sick pay scheme that is an enhancement of statutory sick pay (“SSP”) to ensure you will be supported properly if you fall ill:

Service	Company Sick Pay Eligibility
0-6 Months	Nil
6 months - 2 years	10 weeks in a rolling 12-month period
>2 years	20 weeks in a rolling 12-month period

The Company reserves the right to withhold or suspend company sick pay at its discretion. Circumstances in which the Company may do this include, but are not limited to, failure to comply with the absence procedure, providing false or misleading information, or if you have given notice to end your employment. Please note that in these circumstances SSP would usually still be paid unless the Company is not satisfied that you are ill and there has been no evidence of sickness provided.

Payments under the Company’s scheme will be calculated by reference to your basic salary only (contractual weekly hours) and any payments made under the Company’s scheme are inclusive of any entitlement to SSP for the same period of absence.

5. MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS

These should be arranged outside of working hours. However, the Company recognises that this is not always possible. If you give your people leader enough notice and it does not become a regular occurrence, then you would be granted this time off. It is at the discretion of your people leader whether you receive payment for this time, and you may be asked to make up the time if permission is granted.

The Company reserves the right to ask you to reschedule an appointment if its timing would cause business disruption.

If you are pregnant and need to attend antenatal appointments, this is permitted and the time at these appointments will be paid. Furthermore, the partner can also take up paid time to accompany the person who is pregnant at two antenatal appointments.

6. ATTENDANCE IMPROVEMENT PROCEDURE

6.1 Trigger points for short-term absence

It is possible that you may occasionally be absent from work due to sickness. The issue is if this becomes unsustainable and your attendance levels drop below the standards of attendance required by the Company. If this is the case, your people leader will advise you in writing of a formal absence review meeting that will be held to consider your absences. These are in place to support people leaders in addressing absences and ensure they are managed consistently and fairly. The stages of absence review are set out below:

Stage	Trigger	Potential Sanction
Stage 1 Absence Review	3 occasions of absence; or total number of days/ shifts absent equal to or greater than 2 contractual working weeks in the previous 12 months; or any pattern or duration of absences which gives cause for concern	Stage 1 absence warning of 6 months’ duration Stage 2 absence warning of 12 months’ duration
Stage 2 Absence Review	Further absence(s) during Stage 1 warning period	Stage 2 absence warning of 12 months’ duration
Stage 3 Absence Review	Further absence(s) during Stage 2 warning period	Stage 3 absence warning of 2 months’ duration
Stage 4 Absence Review	Further absence(s) during Stage 3 warning period.	Dismissal

6.2 Procedure for absence review meetings

Suitable notice will be given to you to set out the date, time and place of your absence review meeting. This will be confirmed to you in writing and the concerns regarding your absences will be included in the letter. The meeting will be conducted by your people leader and may be attended by a Company witness. You have the right to be accompanied by a trade union representative or a fellow colleague. You should ensure you make every effort to attend these meetings. If you do not, this could result in disciplinary action.

The purpose of the meetings is to discuss your absences including, but not limited to, the reasons for your absence, the likelihood of further absences, and any support needed going forward. Any decisions made will be confirmed to you in writing.

6.3 Appeal Process

If you wish to appeal against an absence review decision you should contact your people leader in writing within 5 working days of receipt of the decision. The appeal should set out the grounds on which you believe that decision was unfair.

Once a date, time and place has been agreed you will be contacted in writing confirming the arrangements. Again, you will have the right to be accompanied in this meeting.

The outcome will be communicated in writing. There will be no right to further appeal.

7. LONG-TERM ABSENCE

The Company is committed to dealing fairly and sympathetically with colleagues who are absent from work for long periods of time. The Company aims to support colleagues back into the workplace. However, the Company needs to be able to maintain its operations, and long periods of absence can have an impact on business and on other colleagues.

It is the responsibility of both you and your people leader to maintain contact to ensure the correct support is maintained throughout a long-term absence.

Regular meetings, or home visits if necessary, will be held with you, your people leader and HR. The purpose is to support you as much as possible, discuss time frames and possibly advise on support mechanisms such as occupational health.

The Company will always be sympathetic when you are ill. However, it should be noted that, due to long-term illness, injury or incapacity, it may not be possible for you to continue at work. This may result in the termination of your employment contract. This will be considered only after:

1. Full consultation with you
2. Medical assessment reports
3. Consideration of reasonable adjustments including an alternative role, duties and/or hours.

8. ILL-HEALTH RETIREMENT

Retirement on the ground of ill health would be considered where:

- It appears unlikely from the medical advice that you on long-term sickness absence will be able to return to their role and;
- You are entitled to a Company pension

Consent for ill-health retirement must be obtained from the trustees of the pension scheme and would be considered on an individual basis.

9. CONFIDENTIALITY

We respect the confidentiality of all information relating to your health. This policy will be implemented in line with all data protection legislation, the Access to Medical Reports Act 1988 and Access to Health Records Act 1990. Access to your sickness absence records will be restricted to relevant managers and the HR Department only.

Last Reviewed: June 2024	Last Updated : June 2024
---------------------------------	---------------------------------