

Absence Notification Policy

For Australian Small & Medium Enterprises

Template Version 1.0 | December 2024

Important Notice

This template is provided as a general guide only and should be customised to your specific workplace. Notification requirements may vary based on your modern award or enterprise agreement. We recommend reviewing your specific requirements.

1. Purpose

This policy establishes clear procedures for employees to notify [Company Name] of absences from work. Timely notification enables proper planning, ensures adequate staffing levels, and supports workplace operations.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All employees, including full-time, part-time and casual staff
- All types of absences, whether planned or unplanned
- All workplaces and work arrangements

3. Policy Statement

[Company Name] requires employees to notify their supervisor or manager as soon as practicable when they are unable to attend work. This applies to all absences, regardless of the reason.

4. Types of Absences

4.1 Planned Absences

Absences that can be scheduled in advance:

- Annual leave
- Long service leave
- Parental leave
- Planned medical appointments
- Jury duty
- Pre-approved personal leave

4.2 Unplanned Absences

Absences that cannot be scheduled in advance:

- Illness or injury
- Carer's responsibilities
- Family emergencies
- Unexpected personal matters
- Bereavement

5. Notification Requirements

5.1 Timing

Employees must notify their supervisor:

- As soon as practicable after becoming aware they cannot attend work
- Preferably before the start of their scheduled shift
- No later than [insert time, e.g., within 2 hours] of their rostered start time

If unable to contact their supervisor directly, employees should leave a message and follow up as soon as possible.

5.2 Method of Notification

Employees should notify their supervisor by:

- Phone call (preferred method)
- Text message (if phone call not possible)
- Email
- Company messaging system

Note: Having someone else notify on your behalf is acceptable in emergencies but should be followed up personally when possible.

5.3 Who to Contact

- Primary: Direct supervisor or manager
- Secondary: Department manager or HR
- If unable to reach anyone: Leave voicemail and send email

5.4 Information to Provide

When notifying of an absence, employees should provide:

- Their name and department
- Reason for absence (general category is sufficient)
- Expected duration of absence
- Contact details if different from usual

- Any urgent work matters that need attention

6. Continuing Absences

For absences extending beyond the initial notification:

- Employees must provide regular updates to their supervisor
- Updates should be provided at least daily unless otherwise agreed
- Expected return date should be communicated as soon as known
- Any change to expected return date must be notified promptly

7. Evidence Requirements

Evidence may be required for certain absences:

7.1 Personal/Sick Leave

- Medical certificate for absences of [insert number] days or more
- Medical certificate for any absence immediately before or after a public holiday or weekend
- Statutory declaration if medical certificate not available

7.2 Carer's Leave

- Medical certificate or statutory declaration
- Evidence of the illness, injury or emergency

7.3 Other Absences

- Bereavement: Death notice or funeral notice
- Jury duty: Court summons and attendance certificate
- Emergency services: Evidence of volunteer service

8. Failure to Notify

Failure to follow notification procedures may result in:

- Absence being recorded as unauthorised
- Non-payment for the period of absence
- Disciplinary action for repeated failures

Employees who fail to attend work and do not make contact for [insert number] consecutive working days may be considered to have abandoned their employment.

9. Recording Absences

[Company Name] will maintain accurate records of all absences including:

- Date and duration of absence
- Reason category
- Notification time and method

- Evidence provided
- Leave balances applied

10. Return to Work

When returning to work after an absence:

- Complete any required paperwork
- Provide outstanding evidence if required
- Participate in return to work discussions if applicable
- Discuss any adjustments needed with supervisor

11. Responsibilities

11.1 Employees

- Notify absences promptly following this policy
- Provide accurate information
- Keep supervisor updated on continuing absences
- Provide evidence when required
- Return to work as soon as fit to do so

11.2 Supervisors/Managers

- Receive and record absence notifications
- Arrange coverage for absent employees
- Follow up on absences as appropriate
- Maintain accurate attendance records
- Apply policy consistently and fairly

11.3 HR

- Maintain absence records
- Monitor absence patterns
- Provide guidance on policy application
- Support return to work processes

12. Privacy

Personal information collected as part of absence notification will be handled in accordance with [Company Name]'s Privacy Policy and relevant privacy legislation. Information will only be used for legitimate business purposes.

13. Review

This policy will be reviewed:

- At least annually
- When legislative changes occur
- When operational requirements change

Employee Acknowledgement

I acknowledge that I have read and understood [Company Name]'s Absence Notification Policy. I understand my responsibility to notify my supervisor promptly if I am unable to attend work.

Employee Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____