

Manager

Timescales and Deadlines: Every Procedure at a Glance

Use this alongside the relevant procedure document and manager guide. Timescales are in working days unless otherwise stated.

Contact the People Team before any Stage 2+ hearing, any meeting where dismissal is possible, all capability Stage 3 meetings, all terminal illness cases, and before withholding pay.

1. Disciplinary

Step	Action required	Timescale	Letter
Informal	Private conversation. Record actions agreed.	As soon as possible	None
Investigation	Fact-find proportionately. Appoint separate investigating manager.	No fixed deadline - keep it as short as possible	DISC1 (if formal inv. meeting needed)
Suspension	Confirm in writing. Full pay. Review regularly.	Same day - confirm immediately	DISC2
Hearing invite	Written invitation with allegation, evidence, possible outcomes, right to be accompanied.	At least 5 working days' notice	DISC3 or DISC4
Outcome letter	Confirm decision, reasons, improvement required, right to appeal.	Within 5 working days of hearing	DISC5, DISC6 or DISC7
Appeal	Received in writing. Heard by more senior manager not involved.	Colleague has 5 working days to appeal from outcome letter	DISC8 + DISC9

Warning duration: Verbal warning - 6 months. First written warning - 12 months. Final written warning - 12 months.

2. Grievance

Step	Action required	Timescale	Letter
Informal	Try to resolve before formal stage. Listen, acknowledge, agree resolution.	Immediately or as soon as practicable	None
Acknowledge	Written acknowledgement on receipt of formal grievance.	Within 5 working days	GR1
Meeting invite	Arrange grievance meeting. Right to be accompanied.	Within 7 working days of receipt - give 5 working days' notice	GR2
Investigation	Proportionate. Confidential. Update colleague if delays.	Within 14 calendar days of meeting where possible	GR3 (if delay)
Outcome letter	Address every issue raised. Three possible outcomes. Right to appeal.	Within 14 calendar days of meeting where possible	GR5, GR6 or GR7
Appeal	Received in writing. Heard by more senior manager not involved.	Colleague has 5 working days to appeal. Arrange within 14 calendar days.	GR8 + GR9

3. Capability (Performance)

Step	Action required	Timescale	Letter
Informal	Honest conversation. Specific feedback. Agreed actions in writing.	Before formal process - document immediately	None
Stage 1 invite	Written invitation. Specific concerns. Possible outcome: PIP. Right to be accompanied.	At least 5 working days' notice	CAP1
Stage 1 outcome	Confirm in writing: no action or first written PIP notice.	Within 5 working days of meeting	CAP2 or CAP3
PIP review period	Regular check-ins (at least monthly). Formal review at end of period.	Typically 6-12 weeks. Agree at outset.	CAP4 or CAP5
Stage 2 invite	Written invitation. Confirm final written PIP is possible outcome.	At least 5 working days' notice	CAP6
Stage 2 outcome	Confirm in writing: no action or final written PIP notice.	Within 5 working days of meeting	CAP2 or CAP7
Stage 3 invite	People Team mandatory. Written invitation. Confirm dismissal is possible outcome.	At least 5 working days' notice	CAP8
Stage 3 outcome	People Team mandatory. Confirm in writing with full reasons, notice entitlement, right to appeal.	Within 5 working days of meeting	CAP9
Appeal	Received in writing. Heard by more senior manager not involved.	Colleague has 5 working days to appeal.	CAP10 + CAP11

4. Sickness Absence - Short-Term and Persistent

Step	Action required	Timescale	Letter
Day 1 contact	Colleague contacts manager before normal start time.	Day 1 of absence	None
Self-certification	Colleague completes form on return for absences of 7 calendar days or less.	At return-to-work conversation	None
Fit note	Required for absences of 8+ calendar days.	As soon as colleague receives it	None
RTW conversation	Hold before colleague starts work - after every absence.	On day of return - no later	RTW Check Sheet
Trigger review	Meet with colleague to discuss trigger reached. Explore causes and support.	As soon as possible after trigger confirmed	None (informal)
Formal meeting invite	Written invitation. State stage, trigger, possible outcome, right to be accompanied.	At least 5 working days' notice	STS1
Outcome letter	Confirm in writing: no action, first written warning, or final written warning.	Within 5 working days of meeting	STS2, STS3 or STS4

Step	Action required	Timescale	Letter
Stage 3 invite	People Team mandatory. Dismissal is possible outcome.	At least 5 working days' notice	STS5 (via STS1)
Stage 3 outcome	People Team mandatory. Confirm in writing.	Within 5 working days of meeting	STS6
Non-attendance	Rearrange once within 1 week. If fails again, decide on available information.	Rearrange within 5 working days	STS7
Appeal	Heard by more senior manager not involved.	Colleague has 5 working days to appeal.	STS8 + STS9

Warning duration: First written warning - 12 months. Final written warning - 12 months.

5. Sickness Absence - Long-Term (4 weeks or more)

Step	Action required	Timescale	Letter
Keeping in touch	Agree frequency with colleague. Minimum fortnightly contact. Record every contact.	From start of long-term absence	None
Welfare meeting 1	First welfare review. Supportive. Discuss health, support, return timeline.	Shortly after 4 weeks of absence	LTS1
OH referral	Consider at or shortly after first welfare meeting.	Within first welfare meeting cycle	None (internal OH process)
Ongoing welfare meetings	Regular throughout absence. Frequency agreed with colleague.	Every 4-6 weeks as a guide	LTS1
Pre-return planning	Planning call. Confirm return date, duties, adjustments, deputy if needed.	10-5 working days before return	LTS7 (phased return plan)
Final welfare meeting	People Team mandatory. Dismissal possible. Must state this clearly.	At least 5 working days' notice	LTS2
Outcome - no dismissal	Confirm in writing. Agree next steps.	Within 5 working days of meeting	LTS4
Outcome - dismissal	People Team mandatory. Full reasons, notice, holiday pay, right to appeal.	Within 5 working days of meeting	LTS3
Appeal	Heard by more senior manager not involved.	Colleague has 5 working days to appeal.	LTS5 + LTS6

Phased return: typically 2-4 weeks. Confirm in writing. Does not permanently change terms.

6. Flexible Working

Step	Action required	Timescale	Letter
Request received	Record date immediately. Two-month statutory clock starts NOW. Diarise.	Day of receipt	None
Acknowledge	Written acknowledgement.	Within 5 working days	FW2
Decision meeting invite	If meeting needed. 48 hours minimum notice.	Within 10 working days of receipt	FW3
Outcome	Approve, approve with modifications, or decline with statutory grounds.	Within 10 working days of meeting - and within 2-month total deadline	FW6, FW7 or FW8
Appeal	Heard by more senior manager not involved. 48 hours' notice minimum.	Colleague has 5 working days to appeal. Arrange within 10 working days.	FW11 + FW12
Trial period	Confirm length (typically 8-12 weeks) and review date in writing.	Agreed at time of approval	FW9 or FW10 (at end of trial)

STATUTORY DEADLINE: The entire flexible working process including appeal must be completed within 2 months of the date of receipt.

7. Probation

Step	Action required	Timescale	Letter
Initial meeting	Set objectives, standards, and review dates at start of probation.	Week 1	None
Probation review (mid-point)	Use Probation Review Form. Acknowledge progress. Set improvement actions if needed.	Around week 6	None
Final formal review	Assess full probation period. Decide outcome.	Weeks 10-12	PROB1 (pass) or PROB2 (extend)
Extension period	Up to 1 month. Set written targets. At least one interim check-in.	During extension	PROB2
Outcome meeting invite	Written invitation. State dismissal is possible. Enclose evidence.	At least 5 working days' notice	PROB3
Outcome letter	Confirm in writing. Notice/PILON if dismissed.	Within 5 working days of meeting	PROB4 or PROB5
Appeal	Heard by more senior manager not involved.	Colleague has 5 working days to appeal.	PROB6 + PROB7

From 1 January 2027: unfair dismissal rights apply after 6 months for anyone hired after 1 July 2026 (Employment Rights Act 2025). All probation dismissals must be procedurally fair from day one.

8. Unauthorised Absence

Step	Action required	Timescale	Letter
Day 1 - no contact	Attempt contact by phone, text, email. Check welfare if concerned. Record everything.	End of day 1	None
Day 2 - written notification	Send unauthorised absence letter by first-class post and email.	Day 2 of absence	UA1
Day 2+3 - await response	Give 3 working days for colleague to respond to UA1.	3 working days from date of UA1	None
Investigation meeting	If contact made but explanation unsatisfactory, hold brief investigation meeting.	As soon as possible after contact	None
Disciplinary invite	If no contact within 3 days of UA1 or investigation warrants it.	Give at least 48 hours' notice	UA2
Outcome letter	No further action, formal warning, or dismissal.	As soon as possible after meeting	UA3, UA4 or UA5
Rearranged meeting	If colleague unable to attend - rearrange once.	Within reasonable time	UA6
Appeal	Heard by more senior manager not involved.	5 working days to appeal.	Standard disciplinary appeal

9. Leavers

Step	Action required	Timescale	Letter
Resignation received	Acknowledge in writing. Confirm notice period and last day.	Within 2 working days	LEV1
Notice period	Colleague works normally. All policies apply. Agree handover plan.	Duration of contractual notice	None
Garden leave	If applicable - confirm in writing. Full pay continues.	At time of decision	LEV2
Notice extension	Agreement of both parties required.	Before end of original notice	LEV3 (variation of contract)
Early release	Pay in lieu of notice if ending early.	At time of decision	LEV4
Return of property	Laptop, phone, ID, keys, access cards - on or before last day.	Last day at latest	Checklist in LEV1
Final pay	Calculate accrued holiday, deductions, PILON if applicable.	Next available payroll	LEV5 (if redundancy)
Exit interview	Voluntary. Offer to all leavers.	Before or on last day	None / LEV6

10. Return to Work (long-term absence - 4 weeks or more)

Step	Action required	Timescale	Letter
Phase 1 - Pre-return planning	Planning call. Confirm return date, duties, adjustments, deputy if absent on day 1.	10-5 working days before return	LTS7
Phase 2 - Day one	Welcome meeting within 30 mins. Walk-through. Agreed duties only. Mid-shift check-in. End-of-day debrief.	Day of return	RTW Check Sheet
Phase 3 - Reintegration	Daily check-ins week 1. Every other day week 2. Structured handover from cover (up to 5 days). Formal review at end of week 2.	Days 2-10	RTW Check Sheet
Phase 4 - Ongoing support	Wellbeing item in monthly 1-2-1s. Named HR contact in writing. Three-month formal review.	Months 1-3	None

Golden Rules

1. Document everything. If it is not written down, it did not happen. 2. Contact the People Team before any formal stage - especially where dismissal is possible. 3. Always give the required notice before any formal meeting. 4. The right to be accompanied applies at every formal hearing and most formal meetings. 5. Every formal outcome must be confirmed in writing with the right to appeal. 6. Welfare first - always consider whether a health condition, disability or personal circumstance is relevant before taking formal action. 7. Equality Act 2010 - reasonable adjustments must be considered before issuing any formal warning where a disability may be relevant. 8. Pregnancy-related absence must never be counted towards trigger points or used as a basis for any warning or dismissal.

This is a summary aid only. Always refer to the relevant full procedure document.

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