

**RCSI**

RCSI Sick Leave Policy

Purpose

RCSI aims to encourage all its employees to maximise their attendance at work while recognising that employees will, from time to time, be unable to come to work due to sickness. RCSI prioritises the health and wellbeing of our staff and considering the Covid-19 pandemic RCSI has committed to pay sick leave irrespective of staff length of service effective of the 18th August 2020. In line with RCSI and HSE guidelines we require all staff who believe there is a potential risk they have been exposed to or diagnosed with Coronavirus Covid-19 (hereon referred to as Covid-19) to refrain from coming onto campus in order to prevent the transmission of the virus to others.

It is RCSI's policy to support employees who are unfit to attend work due to genuine illness; those advised to self-isolate in accordance with up to date RCSI and HSE guidelines as a result of Covid-19 or those who have been diagnosed with Covid-19. This policy further outlines RCSI's policy and procedure relating to absence management and sick leave. It does not apply to agency workers or self-employed contractors.

This policy relates to sickness and Covid-19 related absence from work. Other policies are in place dealing with time off work for reasons other than sickness absence. In tandem with this policy, all reasonable accommodations and support will be made for any staff with a disability, chronically ill or undergoing treatment.

Scope

This policy applies to all members of RCSI staff.

Policy Statement

All absences due to sickness should, in the first instance be reported to your Line Manager by telephone as soon as is reasonably possible (and in any event no later than two hours after your start time on the first day of illness).

You should indicate the reason and likely duration of your absence. Only in most extreme cases, if you are unable to contact them yourself, then you should ensure that someone does so, on your behalf. It is not sufficient to leave a telephone/e-mail message. You should make all reasonable effort to speak directly to your line manager.

Line Manager Responsibilities

1. When a staff member is out sick (certified/uncertified), it is imperative that the Line Manager inputs the absence into the Core HR system and maintains the Core record for the duration of the absence.
2. When the absence is for three days or more, the Line Manager must inform the HR Partner and ensure any medical certificates are forwarded to the Human Resources Department – hrqueries@rcsi.ie .

Procedure

Uncertified Sick Leave

- Payment of uncertified Sick Leave will be paid to all staff from the first day of service.
- A medical certificate is not required to cover an occasional absence due to illness for less than 3 days (including part days). There is a requirement to produce a medical certificate on the third day of continued absence.
- If an employee has been diagnosed with Covid-19 or has been advised to self-isolate in accordance with the up to date HSE guidelines flexibility will be permitted in respect of production of a medical certificate. Please consult with your HR Partner to discuss individual cases.
- Uncertified Sick Leave will be monitored by the Human Resources Department in conjunction with the Line Manager.

Certified Sick Leave

- Payment during certified sick leave will be paid to all staff from the first day of service.
- All absences of 3 days or more (including part days) must be supported by a medical certificate, which must be produced not later than the third day of absence, and weekly thereafter unless otherwise agreed with HR Partner. A copy of your medical certificate must be sent to hrqueries@rcsi.ie. The certificate must be renewed at least on a weekly basis for the duration of the illness except where the HR Partner approves that a single Certificate may cover a longer period.
- If an employee has been diagnosed with Covid-19 or has been advised to self-isolate in accordance with the up to date RCSI and HSE guidelines, flexibility will be permitted in respect of production of a medical certificate. Please consult with your HR Partner to discuss individual cases.
- Medical certificates should contain the following details:
 - Date of examination by doctor
 - Date of issue
 - That the employee is unfit for duty
 - Nature of illness
 - Probable duration
- Doctor's signature, not a rubber stamp. While out on certified sick leave, you are entitled to your normal net basic pay less any Social Welfare Illness Benefit entitlement for up to six months. In practice this means that your take home pay from RCSI will be reduced to account for the amount of social welfare illness benefit you are entitled to receive. You must apply for this social welfare payment via the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection. This paid sick leave for up to six months will only apply on one occasion within a rolling three-year period. You may be eligible for Permanent Health Insurance after six months continuous absence. Please discuss with your HR Partner if you require further information.
- As both you and RCSI pay Social Insurance Contributions, you are required to claim the benefit to which these contributions entitle you.
- This is done by completing the Illness Benefit claim form (IB1 form available from your doctor). This form must be completed by your doctor.
- Forward the claim form to your local IntreoCentre, your local Social Welfare Office or post it to: Department of Social Protection, P.O. Box 1650, Dublin 1. This must be done within 7 days of becoming incapable of working. Any delays of more than 7 days may result in a loss of benefits.
- In the event of long-term sickness, you will continue to accrue statutory annual leave entitlement.
- You are not entitled to public holiday benefits if you were absent from work immediately before the public holiday and your absence is:
 - Over 13 weeks, due to lay off or some other reason and authorised by your employer.

- Due to a strike
 - After the first 13 weeks of [carer's leave](#)
- Payment of which will occur as and when the public holiday falls.
- Where an employee is on long term sick leave and is unable to take any or all of his or her annual leave during a leave year, the employee can carry over such accrued annual leave for a period of 15 months after the end of the leave year in question. An employee on long term sick leave may apply to take accrued annual leave entitlement while absent. The annual leave dates must be approved in advance by your Line Manager. Holidays approved prior to the period of illness will be considered cancelled unless the employee requests specifically in advance to retain them.

Workplace injuries

In the event that a staff member is absent due to a workplace incident or injury, they must comply with the following procedure

- Report the injury immediately to your Line Manager and the RSCI Health and Safety office – safety@rcsi.ie
- RSCI Health and Safety will advise on obtaining medical treatment however if in doubt seek medical treatment immediately
- Complete the RSCI Injury /Incident Report Form outlining the circumstances of the injury and return same to your Line Manager and the RSCI Health and Safety office – safety@rcsi.ie
- Where applicable provide details of any potential witness and RSCI Health and Safety will follow up

In the event that payments (sick leave payment and or other) are made in the case of a work related injury you will be asked to sign a statement to the effect that you understand that such payment is not an admission of liability or negligence on the part of RCSI. Payment under these circumstances will commence on the 1st day of absence.

Other Accidents and Sick Leave

When a staff member is paid while absent on sick leave arising from physical injury caused by an accident outside/unrelated to the work place, RCSI should be informed of the following:

- The circumstances in which the accident occurred; and
- Whether the staff member intends to claim damages from any other person for such injury. If a staff member receives any compensation payments from a third party, then the salary whilst on sick leave must be repaid to RCSI.

Communication and Maintaining Contact

RCSI recognises the need to be proactive in respect of employees' absence and subsequent rehabilitation. Keeping in touch with an employee who is off sick on a long-term basis may be vital for the employees' wellbeing and to avoid feelings of isolation and rejection. Line managers should normally arrange to make regular contact with sick employees throughout any lengthy period of absence. The form of contact should always be agreed with the employee.

The purpose of the contact is to keep in touch, provide support and manage the re-integration into work when appropriate. Contact should be maintained using a sensitive and non-intrusive approach, and may be delegated, ideally to a trusted colleague or friend of the absent employee.

Social Welfare

Please ensure to review the Revenue 2020 document located in the **Appendix** of this document which outlines the different payment thresholds. It is the employee's obligation to notify the payroll team of any change to social welfare claim outside of the standard rate applied. If you are unsure of what social welfare should be applied to your payroll please do not hesitate to contact the RCSI payroll team at payroll@rcsi.ie

Return to Work

You have a responsibility to return to work at the earliest date possible commensurate with good health and safety. Before returning to work from a sick leave absence of three days or more or a workplace injury, you may be required to provide a certificate of fitness to work from your GP confirming that you can safely return to work. RCSI, via Human Resources in conjunction with Health and Safety, reserves the right to have you examined by our own medical practitioners / Occupational Health at RCSI's expense.

In that case, please note that RCSI must receive satisfactory evidence of your fitness to return to work and a return to work date must be agreed in advance between you and RCSI.

Illness during Annual Leave

When a period of medically certified illness occurs during your annual leave, this period will not be deemed to be part of your annual leave.

You must notify your Line Manager immediately and production of a medical certificate is required. Managers are obligated to amend the CoreHR portal to reflect this change of annual leave to a sick leave absence.

Failure to Follow Sick Leave Procedures

Where you fail to comply with the sick leave procedures or have an unsatisfactory absence record, you may be invited to a meeting with your Line Manager and/or HR Partner. Unsatisfactory absence record could result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Where abuses of the sick leave policy have been committed, RCSI reserves the right to initiate disciplinary proceedings, up to and including dismissal.

RCSI sick pay benefits may be disallowed or suspended for any of the following reasons (please note this list is not exhaustive):

- Failure to provide valid medical certificates weekly (or if another timeframe is agreed with the HR Partner).
- Disability or illness arising from injury suffered as a result of failure to abide by company safety rules.
- Injury resulting from circumstances normally excluded by standard insurance conditions e.g. self-inflicted injury, extreme sports etc.
- Failure to undergo examination by an RCSI appointed doctor.

Additional Information

- This policy will be reviewed periodically by RCSI, and will be updated in accordance with organisational and legal changes.
- RCSI reserves the right to obtain at any time a second medical opinion.
- RCSI may require an absent employee to be examined by an occupational health consultant or company doctor.
- All medical certificates and medical reports will be treated in the strictest of confidences. RCSI reserves the right to amend the above Sick Leave Policy at any time.

Getting Further Help

The Human Resources department is available to support any member of staff in understanding or implementing the content of this policy and procedure.

HR Partners

- Cathy Buffini (01) 402 5138 or cathybuffini@rcsi.ie
- Maire Ryan (01) 402 2505 or maireryanhr@rcsi.com
- Mark O'Dea (01) 402 2754 or markodea@rcsi.com
- Rachel Hipwell (01) 402 2522 or rachelhipwell@rcsi.com

Policy Review

The Human Resources Department will ensure that this policy will be monitored and kept under review.