



Absence Policy

Compressed Air Solutions Limited is committed to improving the health, wellbeing and attendance of all employees. We value the contribution our employees make to our success. So, when any employee is unable to be at work for any reason, we miss that contribution. This absence policy explains the following:

- What we expect from managers and employees when handling absence
- How we will work to reduce levels of absence to no more than 5 days per year per employee

This policy has been written following research and written guidance by ACAS and we welcome the continued involvement of employees in further developing this policy.

Key Principles:

Compressed Air Solutions Absence Policy is based on the following principles:

1. As a responsible employer, we undertake to provide payments (SSP) to employees who are unable to attend work due to sickness.
2. Regular, punctual attendance is an implied term of every employee's contract of employment – we ask each employee to take responsibility for achieving and maintaining good attendance.
3. We will support employees who have genuine grounds for absence for whatever reason. This support can include:
 - A. Special leave for necessary absences not caused by sickness
 - B. A flexible approach to the taking of annual leave
 - C. Access to counsellors where necessary
 - D. Rehabilitation programmes in cases of long-term sickness absence
4. We will consider any advice given by the employees GP on the 'Statement of Fitness to Work'.
If the GP advises that an employee may be 'fit to work' we will discuss with the employee how we can help them get back to work – for example flexible hours or altered duties if the role permits.
5. We will use an occupation health advisor (Forge Healthcare), where appropriate to:
 - A. Help identify the nature of an employee's illness
 - B. Advise the employee and their manager, where applicable, on the best way to improve the employee's health and wellbeing
6. The company's disciplinary procedures will be used if an explanation for absence is not forthcoming or is not thought to be satisfactory.
7. We respect the confidentiality of all information relating to an employee's sickness. This policy will be implemented in line with all data protection legislation and the Access to Medical Records Act 1988.



Notification of Absence

If an employee is going to be absent from work, they should notify their relevant Manger/Supervisor or Company Director (Mark Scott or Lisa Blockley) within an hour of their normal start time. They should also:

- Give a clear indication of the nature of the illness and
- A likely return to work date

CAS management will check with employees if there is any information they need about their current work. If the employee does not contact the relevant member of CAS management within an hour of their normal start time, an attempt will be made to contact the employee at home.

An employee may not always feel able to discuss their medical problems with CAS management. All management will be sensitive to individual concerns and make alternative arrangements, where appropriate. For example, an employee may prefer to discuss health problems with a person of the same sex.

Evidence of Incapacity

Employees can use self-certification arrangements for the first seven days absence. Thereafter a 'statement of fitness to work' is required to cover every subsequent day.

If absence is likely to be protracted, i.e. more than four weeks continuously (a period of absence of four weeks or more can be deemed long-term), there is a shared responsibility for CAS and the employee to maintain contact at agreed intervals. Employers are required to maintain a reasonable amount of contact with an employee who is on sick leave to get regular updates on the employee's recovery and prognosis and to keep the employee up to date with what is going on in the workplace. Therefore, following a continued absence of four weeks, employees are asked to contact the relevant Director at the end of each following week (phone or email). If the employee does not make contact with the relevant Director by the end of each following week, the relevant Director will ask the Health & Safety Officer to contact the employee during the course of the following week to ensure both parties are updated on developments.

'May be fit for some work'

If the GP advises on the Statement of Fitness to Work that an employee 'may be fit for work', the Directors will discuss with the employee ways of helping them get back to work. This might mean talking about a phased return to work or amended duties. The advice given by the doctor is not legally binding and is provided as guidance to the employer. CAS is not obliged to put in place the alterations recommended but will accommodate the adjustments where it is possible to do so.

Due to the nature of the business of CAS, certain roles within the business (pipefitting/compressor engineer), it may not be possible to provide the support an employee needs to return to work e.g. by making necessary workplace adjustments; or, the individual employee feels unable to return. In these circumstances the statement will be used in the same way as if the GP advised that the employee was 'not fit for work' and the 'may be fit to work' automatically reverts to 'not fit to work note'.

Where deemed applicable to the employee's usual duties, the Directors may require returning employees to undertake a Safety Critical Worker Assessment and appointments will be made via the Health and Safety Officer. The Directors may also request, with the employee's permission, a medical report from the employee's GP. Where a GP report and occupational health assessment are provided, both will be used to arrange an appropriate course of action as one may refer to the



employee's condition and another may be more specific to the work of the employee. Where there may be a difference of opinion in the GP report and health assessment, CAS may seek clarification and possibly legal advice, before taking any decisions.

Where an employee believes they are fit to return to work, before the expiration of their 'not fit to work' note, the employee does not need to go back to the doctor before doing so. In such cases the Directors and the employee can agree between them that the employee will return before the 'fit to work' note expires.

If the 'not fit to work' note has not expired and the employee feels they are fit to return to their usual duties but the Directors disagree, the Directors are permitted to enforce the 'not fit to work' note whilst it is still active. Such decisions will be made with careful consideration as to the health and safety of the employee and the usual duties carried out.

Return to Work Discussions

CAS management will discuss absences with employees when they return to work to establish:

- The reason for, and cause of absence
- Anything the management or company can do to help
- That the employee is fit to return to work

If an employee's GP has advised that they 'may be fit for work', the return to work discussion can also be used to agree in detail how their return to work might work best in practise.

Short term discussions will be completed by the Health & Safety Officer within 48 hours of the employees return to work, outcomes will be shared with the CAS Directors. Employees will be provided with a return to work form that will be completed in conjunction with the Health & Safety Officer.

More formal reviews will be triggered by:

- Frequent short-term absences
- Long-term absence

This review will look at any further action required to improve the employee's attendance and wellbeing and will be carried out by the CAS Directors. These trigger points are set by the Directors.

To determine reviews triggered by short term absences, the Directors will consider the Bradford Factor (Index) as a guide only, this is a simple formula that will allow the Directors to apply a relative weighting to employee unplanned absences (sickness, Doctors appointments, emergency childcare, etc). The Bradford Factor supports the principal that repeat absences have a greater operational impact than long term sick.

The Bradford Factor uses three scales:

Concern (BF 45): Sufficient days for a manager to show concern and advise on possible disciplinary or financial actions, should more absences occur during an identified period.



Concern (BF 100): Sufficient days for a manager to start disciplinary action (oral warning, written warning, formal monitoring etc)

Concern (BF 900): Sufficient days for a manager to consider dismissal.

Absences relating to the disability of an employee or to pregnancy will be kept separate from sickness absence records. Employees should refer to the CAS Equality Policy.

CORONAVIRUS ABSENCE

The Directors are aware of the impact of the Coronavirus and the implications it can have on employees, their families and the business. All employees are required to adhere to the control measures in place within the CAS buildings, at customers premises and when going about their daily lives outside of work, in order to reduce the possibilities of absence as a result of the virus. Should an employee test positive for the virus, the Directors are committed to ensuring employees receive their full wage payments for the ten-day isolation period required by the government.

Should employees have to self-isolate as a result of a test and trace notification, received from social interactions (e.g. at restaurants and bars), the Directors will look to consider employees working from home if possible; otherwise payments will be statutory, any additional payments will be subject to Directors discretion. If an individual within an employee’s household is isolating, the employee is not required to isolate unless the member of their household either tests positive or shows signs and symptoms of the virus.

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis and disseminated to employees and other interested parties as required.

Signed

Mark Scott, Managing Director

Date: 14TH October 2021

Reviewed By:	CS/MS/LB	CS/MS/LB	CS/MS/LB			
Date:	12/09/19	18/09/20	14/10/21			