



Sickness Absence and Sick Pay Policy

(Employee Policy – Updated for April 2026 UK Employment Legislation)

Startin Group recognises that employees may occasionally be unable to attend work due to illness, injury or a health-related condition.

This policy sets out the procedures employees must follow when reporting sickness absence and explains the sick pay arrangements available.

The Company aims to:

- Support employees during periods of ill health;
- Ensure absence is reported correctly and recorded accurately;
- Encourage employees to return to work safely as soon as they are able;
- Maintain fair and consistent management of sickness absence; and
- Comply with UK employment law and good HR practice.

This policy applies to all employees of Startin Group across all sites and departments.

Reporting Sickness Absence

If you are unable to attend work due to sickness or injury, you must notify your line manager personally by telephone as soon as possible and before your normal start time on the first day of absence.

When reporting sickness absence you should provide:

- The reason for your absence;
- When the illness or symptoms began;
- How long you expect to be absent, if known; and
- Details of any urgent work or responsibilities that may require covering.

If you are too unwell to contact your manager personally, someone may contact the Company on your behalf. They should provide their name, contact details and relationship to you.

Failure to follow the reporting procedure without reasonable justification may result in the absence being treated as unauthorised.

Keeping in Contact During Absence

Employees are expected to maintain reasonable contact with their manager during periods of sickness absence.

Managers may request updates regarding:

- Your condition
- Likely return to work date
- Whether any workplace support may be required



Where a Fit Note is issued, you must contact your manager before the certificate expires to confirm whether you intend to return to work or whether further certification has been issued.

Medical Evidence

Employees must provide medical evidence for sickness absence as follows -

- **Absence of 7 days or fewer** - Employees must complete a self-certification form when returning to work. (available on the .gov website)
- **Absence of more than 7 calendar days** - Employees must provide a Fit Note from a healthcare professional confirming they are either:
 - Not fit for work; or
 - May be fit for work with adjustments.

Where adjustments are recommended, the Company will discuss these with the employee and consider whether they can reasonably be accommodated.

Return to Work Meetings

Following any sickness absence, employees will normally be required to attend a Return-to-Work Meeting with their manager.

The purpose of the meeting is to:

- Confirm the reason for absence;
- Ensure absence records are accurate;
- Confirm that the employee is fit to return to work;
- Identify whether support or adjustments are required; and
- Discuss any attendance concerns where appropriate.

Return to work meetings are intended to be supportive and are part of the Company's approach to employee wellbeing.

Statutory Sick Pay (SSP)

Eligible employees will receive Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) in accordance with UK legislation. From 6 April 2026:

- SSP is payable from the first full day of sickness absence.
- SSP eligibility is not restricted by the lower earnings limit.
- SSP is paid at 80% of average weekly earnings or the statutory weekly rate (whichever is lower).
- SSP is payable for a maximum of 28 weeks, subject to statutory eligibility rules.



Company Sick Pay Scheme

In addition to SSP, Startin Group operates a non-contractual discretionary Company Sick Pay Scheme.

Eligibility is based on length of continuous service:

Length of Service	Company Sick Pay Entitlement
Less than 6 months	No Company Sick Pay
7 months – less than 2 years	2 weeks full pay and 2 weeks half pay
2 years – less than 5 years	4 weeks full pay and 4 weeks half pay
5 years or more	6 weeks full pay and 6 weeks half pay

Conditions of the scheme include:

- Entitlement applies to one continuous sickness absence in a rolling 12-month period;
- Subsequent absence during this period will attract SSP only;
- Company Sick Pay includes any SSP payable;
- Payments are based on basic contractual pay only.

This scheme is discretionary and the Company reserves the right to amend or withdraw it at any time.

Any variations or exceptions to this policy shall be made solely at the discretion of the Directors.

Sickness During Annual Leave

Where sickness occurs immediately before, during or after annual leave or public holidays, the Company will require medical evidence before treating the period as sickness absence for eligibility for company sick pay. SSP will apply if conditions are met in line with UK legislation.

Misuse of Sickness Absence

Any employee found to have falsely claimed sickness absence or misused company sick pay may be subject to investigation and disciplinary action under the Company’s disciplinary procedure.

Disability and Health Conditions

Where sickness absence relates to a disability or long-term health condition, the Company will consider reasonable adjustments in accordance with the Equality Act 2010. Employees are encouraged to discuss any ongoing health concerns with their manager or HR so that appropriate support can be considered.