



# **SICK LEAVE SCHEME**

## **1.0 Purpose**

- 1.1 This document outlines the arrangements in place at the University of Limerick for the administration and monitoring of the University's Sick Leave Scheme. The provisions of the University of Limerick Sick Leave Scheme are based on the Public Sector Sick Leave Scheme.

## **2.0 Scope**

- 2.1 All pensionable employees are covered by the provisions of this scheme.

## **3.0 Scheme Details**

- 3.1 An employee who is absent from duty because of personal illness or injury, may be granted paid sick leave of:
- A maximum of 3 months (92 days) on full pay in a year
  - Followed by a maximum of 3 months (91 days) on half pay
  - Subject to a maximum of 6 months (183 days) paid sick leave in a rolling four year period.
- 3.2 An employee who becomes incapacitated as a result of a critical illness or serious physical injury may be granted extended paid sick leave, in exceptional circumstances of:
- A maximum of 6 months (183 days) on full pay in a year
  - Followed by a maximum of 6 months (182 days) on half pay
  - Subject to a maximum of 12 months (365 days) paid sick leave in a rolling four year period.
- 3.3 Where the relevant period of paid sick leave has been exhausted, an employee with a minimum of 5 years' service (in a pensionable position either in a whole-time or part-time capacity) at the end of the period of paid sick leave may be granted Temporary Rehabilitation Remuneration (TRR) subject to certain conditions. TRR will be calculated on:
- Pensionable pay, and
  - Paid pensionable service accrued in the employment at the time paid sick leave was exhausted, together with the added years which would be awarded if ill health retirement were granted.
- 3.4 The period during which TRR is paid is not a period of pensionable service.
- 3.5 The granting of TRR will be conditional at all times on the University's Occupational Health Physician (OHP) confirming that there is a reasonable prospect of recovery and return to work.

- 3.6 TRR will not exceed 18 months (548 days) in the case of ordinary illness.
- 3.7 In the case of an employee who has been granted extended sick pay under the critical illness provisions, he/she may have access to 12 months (365 days) TRR followed by a further period of TRR not exceeding 24 months (730 days). This further period of TRR is subject to regular reviews by an OHP.
- 3.8 An employee who, on having exhausted the maximum period of paid sick leave (and does not qualify for TRR) is still medically unfit to resume duty and wishes to retain their position in the University must notify the Human Resources of their intention to avail of a period of unpaid sick leave within which he/she may resume working if certified as fit to do so. This period of unpaid sick leave shall not normally exceed the TRR limits set out in 3.6
- 3.9 An employee must exhaust their period of paid sick leave before he/she can apply for unpaid sick leave. The granting of a period of unpaid sick leave is subject to continued submission on a regular basis (max 3 months) of acceptable medical certification.
- 3.4 The granting of sick pay is at the discretion of the President or his nominee and is dependent on an employee's compliance with the terms of this Sick Leave Scheme and the existence of a reasonable prospect that the employee will be able to satisfactorily discharge their duties on return to work.

#### **4.0 Certification**

- 4.1 Absence on sick leave must be properly certified. If the illness is longer than two consecutive days' duration, a medical certificate must be received by the Dean/Head of Department/Manager on or before the third day of illness.
- 4.2 Where sick leave extends from Friday to Monday inclusive, a medical certificate must be furnished.
- 4.3 Sick leave for single or two-day absences, in total not exceeding seven days in any period of twenty four months, may be taken without medical certificate. Any additional sick leave must be medically certified or an appropriate deduction from an employee's salary will be made. In any case, where absences are unduly frequent or where the maximum of seven allowable days is regularly approached or taken year after year, this privilege may be withdrawn or modified at the discretion of the President or his nominee.

#### **5.0 Sick Leave & Annual Leave**

- 5.1 Annual Leave may not be taken instead of sick leave and will not be granted immediately following a period of sick leave unless a certificate of fitness to return to work is provided by an employee and is effective from the first day of proposed annual leave.
- 5.2 If an employee falls sick during annual leave and produces at the time a medical certificate to that effect, the period of sickness may be recorded as sick leave rather than annual leave. Pay shall be at the appropriate sick pay rates.

- 5.3 Annual leave should normally be taken to cover visits to doctors, dentists, opticians, etc.

## **6.0 Procedure**

- 6.1 When an employee is absent because of sickness, he/she must notify by telephone the Dean/Head of Department/Manager before or within one hour after start time on the first day of absence. This notification should indicate whether or not a certificate will be furnished and the likely resumption date.
- 6.2 A medical certificate must be sent to the Dean/Head of Department/Manager on or before the third day of absence. The Dean/Head of Department/Manager must forward all medical certificates to the Human Resources (HR) Division. A medical certificate must include:
- The name and address of the employee;
  - The dates for which the employee is covered by the medical certificate; and,
  - The doctor's signature.
- 6.3 If the illness persists, additional medical certificates must be submitted on a regular and timely basis, prior to the expiration of the last medical certificate, in accordance with the Sick Leave Scheme. Failure to adhere to this procedure will result in Social Welfare Illness Benefit deduction arrears.
- 6.4 Sick leave must be recorded by the Dean/Head of Department/Manager on a sick leave form available from the HR website . The Dean/Head of Department/Manager must forward all sick leave forms to HR.
- 6.5 An employee who is eligible for social welfare payment must claim the relevant illness benefit within 7 days of becoming sick. The employer pays for the first 3 days of illness and social welfare payment is claimed from day 4 onwards.
- 6.6 A Social welfare claim form (Known as IB1), which includes an application form for Illness Benefit must be obtained from your family doctor (GP) or hospital doctor. The employee must complete the form and submit it directly to the Department of Social Protection.

Employees must submit an intermediate medical certificate (Known as MC 2) each week for the duration of the illness to the Social welfare office, unless you are told otherwise. A final certificate from your doctor must then be submitted before you go back to work.

- 6.7 In compliance with Social Welfare and Revenue regulations (as specified in Revenue's *Employer's Guide to PAYE*), the University will deduct from the employee's salary the amount of social welfare benefit due to the employee from the Department of Social Protection for that payment period and will directly apply the relevant tax and PRSI exemptions to the payment. The employee will therefore benefit immediately from their illness-related tax and PRSI entitlements.