CATHODIC PROTECTION CO. LTD.	**SICKNESS AND OTHER TIME OFF POLICY**	**REF:**	**CPOL22**
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1. Sickness and Other time off: Policy Statement

This policy is intended to provide all employees with guidance and advice so that they are able to manage their attendance at work in line with Company expectation. Our customers require the best possible service and it is vital to our success to have good attendance levels at work.

We are committed to taking the steps and actions appropriate so that our employees work within an environment that is healthy and safe and we ask all our people to take responsibility for maintaining good health and wellbeing as this supports excellent attendance at work.

a) Scope

This policy applies to all employees of Cathodic Protection Co. Ltd. This policy does not form part of employees' terms and conditions of employment and may be subject to change at the discretion of the management.

b) Definitions

- **Period of sickness absence** or **instance of sickness absence** - means any continuous period of sickness absence, of whatever length, during which the employee does not work.
- **Short-term sickness absence** - means any period of sickness lasting 1 to 27 calendar days.
- **Long-term sickness absence** - means any period of sickness lasting 28 calendar days or more.
- **Immediate family member** - is defined as the employee's spouse, civil partner, partner, parent, child, sibling, grandparent or grandchild.
- **Dependant** - is defined as the employee's spouse, civil partner, child or parent, and any person who lives at the same house as the employee (other than as a lodger, tenant, boarder or employee) or who would reasonably rely on the employee for assistance or arrangements for care in the event of illness or injury.

c) Data Protection

When managing an employee's absence, the Company processes personal data collected in accordance with its Data Protection Policy. Data collected is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of managing their absence leave and pay. Inappropriate access or disclosure of employee data constitutes a data breach and should be reported in accordance with the Company's Data Protection Policy immediately. It may also constitute a disciplinary offence, which will be dealt with under the Disciplinary Procedure.

d) Policy Communication

This Policy will be communicated to all current employees and new starters. All job applicants may also receive details of the policy upon request.

e) Further Information

For further information about this policy please contact your manager.

2. Sickness Absence

a) Policy Statement

The Company 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 because of ill health.

While the Company understands that there will inevitably be some sickness absence among employees, it must also pay due regard to its operational needs. If an employee is persistently absent from work, this can damage efficiency and productivity, and place an additional burden on the employee's colleagues.

The Company aims to achieve a reasonable balance between the pursuit of its operational needs and the genuine need of employees to take time off work because of ill health.

b) Payment for Sickness Absence

Following successful completion of probation, employees may be entitled to Enhanced Sick Pay (ESP) in accordance with the terms of their contract of employment. Employees who have not completed probation will only be entitled to Statutory Sick Pay (SSP), where eligible.

Any entitlement to ESP is conditional upon the employee:

- Complying with the Company's sickness absence reporting procedures;
- Providing satisfactory medical evidence covering the entirety of the absence, where required;
- Maintaining reasonable communication with the Company throughout the period of absence;
- Attending welfare meetings, absence review meetings and return to work meetings when reasonably requested; and
- Cooperating with any Occupational Health referral, medical assessment or request for medical information reasonably required by the Company.

The Company reserves the right to withhold, suspend or withdraw ESP where:

- Satisfactory medical evidence is not provided;
- The employee fails to comply with the Company's sickness absence procedures;
- The employee refuses to engage with Occupational Health or any reasonable medical assessment;
- The employee fails to maintain reasonable contact with the Company during their absence;
- There are reasonable grounds to believe that an absence is not genuine; or
- There is evidence of misconduct connected with the period of absence.

Any decision to withhold, suspend or withdraw ESP will be considered on a case-by-case basis and confirmed to the employee in writing.

Nothing in this policy affects an employee's entitlement to SSP where eligible.
After successful completion of your probation period the Company operates an Enhanced Sick Pay (ESP). Whilst in your probation period you will be entitled to Statutory Sick Pay (SSP).

c) Reporting Absence

Employee Absence Report - Cathodic

On the first day of sickness absence, the employee must inform their manager as soon as reasonably practicable that they will not be working because of illness or injury. If the employee is unable to reach the manager, they should leave a message, and a manager will return the employee's call.

The employee should provide a clear reason i.e. the nature of the illness or injury, why they cannot attend work and estimate how long they think the absence will last. The employee should also be prepared to discuss briefly any consequences of their absence, for example if customer appointments need to be cancelled or any essential work needs to be covered.

Notification of sickness absence must be via telephone, rather than text message, email or social media. In exceptional circumstances where the employee is unable to telephone e.g. due to hospitalisation, another person such as a friend or relative can contact the Company on their behalf.

If an employee comes to work but needs to leave during the day because of ill health, they should inform their manager before leaving work. If the manager is unavailable, the employee should inform the next most appropriate person within the department.

For each subsequent sick day after the first day of absence, the employee should telephone the manager as soon as reasonably practicable in the morning, unless different arrangements have been agreed.

d) Medical Evidence

All sickness absences requires certification. Where the absence is less than seven days this can be done by using the Company's CPF034 - Self Cert - RTW Interview Form

All sickness that lasts longer than seven calendar days requires medical evidence in the form of a doctor's Fit Note, also known as a "Statement of Fitness for Work".

If the employee is absent for eight calendar days or more, the employee's manager must ensure that the employee provides a Fit Note from their doctor as soon as possible. A doctor's Fit Note may state that the employee:

- Is "not fit for work", in which case the employee should remain off work.
- "May be fit for work", if the doctor's recommendations are followed for example, a phased return, amended job duties, altered hours of work, or workplace adaptations.

Where possible the Company will consider such requests and agree to the Doctor's recommendations, although this may not always be the case. Where the recommendations cannot be accommodated, the employee will be unfit for work and absent for the duration of the Fit Note.

The Fit Note will state the period that it covers, with a section for a start and end date. An employee who is not returning to work on the next working day after the end date must obtain a new Fit Note.

e) Sickness Absence and Holidays

i. Sickness During Holiday

Where an employee falls sick or is injured while on holiday, the Company will allow the employee to transfer to sick leave and take replacement holiday at a later time.

This policy is subject to the following strict conditions:

- The total period of ill health must be fully certificated by a qualified medical practitioner.
- The employee must contact the Company by telephone as soon as they know that there will be a period of sickness during a holiday.
- The employee must submit a written request no later than 10 days after returning to work setting out how much of the holiday period was affected by sickness and the amount of leave that the employee wishes to take at another time.
- Where the employee is overseas when they fell ill or became injured, evidence must still be produced that the employee was ill by way of a medical certificate.

Where the employee fulfils all of the above conditions, the Company will grant the employee the same number of days' replacement holiday leave as the number of holiday days lost due to sickness or injury.

If an employee is ill or is injured before the start of a period of planned holiday, and is consequently unable to take the holiday, the Company will agree to the employee postponing the holiday dates to another mutually agreed time. Any period of sickness absence will then be treated in accordance with the Company's normal policy on sickness absence. The employee must submit a written request to postpone the planned holiday and this must be accompanied by medical evidence confirming that they are unfit, or are likely to be unfit, to take the holiday.

ii. Holiday During Sick Leave

An employee who is absent on sick leave will continue to accrue their contractual holiday entitlement and will be given the opportunity to take this at a later date, including in the subsequent leave year, if they do not take their statutory holiday entitlement due to being on sick leave.

An employee on sick leave may apply to take their holiday entitlement while on sick leave. The holiday dates must be approved in accordance with Section 9 of this policy.

f) Return to Work Interviews

On the first day back at work after any period of sickness absence, the employee's manager will arrange to meet informally with them to complete CPF034 - Self Cert - RTW Interview Form.

If this is not possible on the employee's first day back, the informal meeting should take place as soon as reasonably practicable.

The Return-To-Work Interview should take place in a private place, and all discussions between the employee and the manager should be private and confidential. When completing a Return-To-Work Interview following a period of short term absence the manager should:

- Welcome the employee back to work.

- Explain to the employee that the purpose of Return-To-Work Interviews is to manage and monitor employees' absence and attendance to identify any problem areas and offer support where appropriate.
- Inform the employee that their absence will be recorded.
- Ask the employee about the reasons for their absence.
- Ask the employee whether or not they have consulted a doctor or attended hospital.
- If the employee's sickness lasts for eight calendar days or more, ensure that the employee has provided a Fit Note from their doctor, and this has been passed on to the Accounts Department.
- Inform the employee if they have reached a trigger point on the Absence Management System, and the consequences of having done so.

When completing a Return-To-Work Interview after a period of long-term sickness absence, the manager should discuss:

- The arrangements for the employee's return to work, including any adjustments that are being made such as a phased return or homeworking.
- What work the employee will be doing on their return to work, including an outline of work during the employee's first week back.
- Any medical issues of which the Company is not already aware, such as any updated
- guidance from the employee's doctor.
- What arrangements will be put in place to monitor the employee's progress.
- To whom the employee should report if they have any difficulties with the arrangements.
- At the end of the Return-To-Work Interview, the manager and employee should agree their next meeting to monitor the employee's progress.

g) Absence Management

i. Triggers for Absence Management

The trigger points that are used to decide when action needs to be taken to address an employee's short-term absence record, are set out below:

Trigger	Potential Sanction
3 periods of sickness absence on the previous 12 months	Verbal Warning
2 further periods of absence within 12 months of the Verbal Warning being issued	First Written Warning
2 further periods of absence within 12 months of the Written Warning being issued	Final Written Warning
2 further periods of absence within 12 months of the Final Written Warning being issued	Dismissal

All warnings will remain on file for twelve months, in line with the referencing period for the calculation.

At its discretion, the Company reserves the right to accelerate levels in the procedure if there is a relapse in absence or where there is reasonable belief that the employee is taking advantage of the system.

ii. Absence Management Procedure

On the employee reaching a trigger point, the employee will be issued with a written invite to attend a formal review meeting.

The written invitation to the formal meeting should give the employee at least 48 hours' notice of the meeting. The letter should advise the employee who will be present, and that the employee can be accompanied by a fellow worker.

The letter should explain to the employee that the purpose of the meeting is to review the employee's unsatisfactory attendance level.

The letter should warn the employee that a possible outcome of the meeting is that they may be given a warning.

The formal meeting will be chaired by the employee's manager. They may be accompanied by another manager.

At the meeting, the manager will:

- Explain to the employee that the purpose of the meeting is to discuss the employee's unsatisfactory attendance in the previous 12 months.
- Make clear to the employee that the aim of the meeting is to find ways to improve their attendance.
- Allow the employee to share their views.
- Try to establish any underlying reasons for the employee's poor attendance level, for example a health issue or personal problems.
- Gather as much information as possible on any underlying reasons identified, without putting undue pressure on the employee to reveal more information than they want.
- Discuss and agree any steps that can be put in place to help the employee to improve their attendance.
- After a short adjournment, inform the employee of the outcome of the meeting and state that the outcome will be confirmed in writing to them within 5 days.
- After the meeting, the company will set out in writing what has been decided as a result of the meeting, for example if a warning is being issued and the employee has been placed on a formal review period, or if the decision is that no further action will be taken. The letter, which should be provided to the employee within 5 days of the meeting, should include details of any steps or targets that have been agreed to help the employee to improve their attendance, and any support that the Company is providing for the employee.

The letter should warn the employee that, if they reach the next trigger point in the next 12 months that they may be subject to further action.

The letter should give the employee the right to appeal against the warning.

iii. Appeals

An employee who is given a warning or is dismissed under this procedure has the right of appeal. The appeal should be sent in writing to the HR representative and set out the grounds on which the employee believes that the decision or process was flawed or unfair.

The employee should lodge their appeal within 5 days of receiving written confirmation of the sanction imposed on them by the Company.

An Appeal Meeting will be convened within a reasonable period, after the appeal is lodged. The Appeal Meeting will be chaired, wherever possible, by a more senior manager than the manager who made the decision that is being appealed. They may be accompanied by another manager.

The employee is entitled to be accompanied by a fellow employee.

At the meeting, the decision to impose the sanction will be reviewed and the employee will be entitled to make representations about the appropriateness of that decision.

The outcome of the appeal will be confirmed to the employee in writing, explaining the grounds on which the decision was reached. The outcome of the appeal will be final.

iv. Conduct and Absence

Whilst the trigger points are used to manage levels of absence, an employee may be subject to investigation under the Company's Disciplinary Policy for the following:

- An unacceptable pattern of absence e.g. Mondays and Fridays, or following a shutdown or holiday, a particular time of year, etc.
- If we have good reason to believe that a specific absence is not legitimate or not for the reason provided,
- The employee is undertaking inappropriate activities while off sick, such as carrying out work for another Company; or
- The correct sickness absence notification and evidence procedure has not been followed.
- In these circumstances an employee may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal regardless of the employees' previous absence record.

h) Long Term Sickness

The Company is committed to dealing fairly and sympathetically with employees who are absent from work for long periods because of ill health. The Company aims to assist employees on long-term sick leave with their rehabilitation and eventual return to work.
The Company understands that an employee may have a health condition or injury that means that they are not fit for work, and that the employee's recovery may be a slow process. The Company must also pay due regard to its operational needs and recognise that the absence of an employee on long-term sickness absence can damage efficiency and productivity, and place an additional burden on the employee's colleagues.

By implementing this policy, the Company aims to achieve a reasonable balance between the pursuit of its operational needs and the genuine needs of employees to take time off work because of ill health.

Where an employee is on long-term sickness absence, but returns to work for short periods, the Company reserves the right to continue to manage their sickness absence under this policy. This is to prevent the Company from being required to switch between its policy on dealing with long-term sickness absence and its separate policy on managing short-term absence solely on the basis that an employee has returned to work for a short period.

i. Keeping in Touch

It is important that the Company maintains contact with an employee on long-term sickness absence to:

- Monitor the employee's progress in terms of their return to health.
- Support the employee and actively maintain their engagement with the Company.
- Provide information to the employee so that they may make informed decisions.
- Provide practical support from the Company's Occupational Health Advisers;
- Encourage a return to work as early as possible.
- Facilitate a phased return to work if required, by making appropriate temporary or permanent adjustments.
- Ensure that the employee remains informed about events in the workplace.

It is the joint responsibility of both the Company and the employee to maintain contact. Once the employee is on long-term sickness absence, the employee's manager should contact the employee to agree the method and frequency of contact.

In some circumstances, contact with an employee on long-term sickness absence can be maintained via Welfare Meetings. Welfare Meetings could take place at the Employee's home, their work location or an alternative mutually agreeable location.

Welfare Meetings will be conducted by the employee's manager and will normally be accompanied by a manager.

If the employee does not feel well enough to attend a Welfare Meeting, they should notify the manager as early as possible. Welfare Meetings will take place only when the employee is fit enough to have a meeting.

During the visit, the manager will ensure that regular breaks are taken as required.

A record of the discussions that take place during the visit will be made at the time, typed up and a copy made available to the employee should they request it.

Welfare Meetings will be used to:

- Check on the employee's current situation/progress in terms of their health.
- Provide information relating to their situation such as sick pay status.
- Keep them up to date on matters in the workplace.
- Explore what support can be offered in terms of Occupational Health Provision.
- Explore how a return to work can be facilitated, such as adjustments to the role, working hours or location.
- Agree actions where appropriate for both parties as a result of the visit.
- Make a record of these discussions that will be available to both parties.

Welfare Meetings will not be used to:

- Put undue pressure on an employee to return to work.
- Raise issues that would be more appropriately dealt with under formal Capability Procedures.
- Explore matters that are medical in nature unless the employee is happy to do.

ii. Occupational Health

At various stages of managing the employee's sickness absence, a manager may want to obtain advice on the employee's fitness for work from Occupational Health Advisers.

Examples of when a manager might refer to Occupational Health include to:

- Seek a medical report on the employee.
- Establish when the employee might be able to return to work.
- Ask for guidance on the employee's condition, for example if there is a possibility that the employee is disabled or ambiguity as to the exact nature of the condition.
- Discuss any adjustments that could be made to accommodate the employee's disability, if the employee is disabled.

Where the employee refuses to meet with the Occupational Health Adviser, the Company will explain to the employee the reasons behind the request and inform the employee that a decision relating to their employment may be made without the benefit of this information.

iii. Report from a Medical Practitioner

Where a report from the employee's medical practitioner is necessary, the employee will be fully informed of their rights under the Access to Medical Reports Act 1988 and their permission will be sought for the report to be obtained.

The employee's permission will be sought to contact the medical practitioner on the relevant CPF084 Access to Medical Records form.

The employee has the right to access the report before the Company sees it. If the employee wishes to see the report, they should inform the Company of this, so that it can inform the medical practitioner. The employee will then have 21 days from the date of making the application for the report to contact the medical practitioner to see the report.

If the employee does not contact the medical practitioner within this period, the medical practitioner can pass the report on to the Company.

When requesting a report, the Company will provide the medical practitioner with as much information as possible on the role of the employee and explain why the report is being sought. The Company will provide the medical practitioner with:

- A copy of the employee's signed CPF084 Access to Medical Records form consenting to the request to seek a medical report.
- Confirmation that the employee is aware of their rights under the Access to Medical Reports Act 1988.
- Details of the major features of the employee's job.

The Company will ask the medical practitioner to identify:

- The nature of the employee's illness or injury.
- When the employee is likely to be fully fit to resume their normal duties.
- If the employee is unfit to resume their normal duties, what alternative duties they might be fit to undertake.
- When the employee is likely to be fit to undertake any alternative duties.
- What reasonable adjustments could be made to working conditions or work premises to facilitate a return to work.
- The likelihood of recurrence of the illness or injury once the employee has returned to work.

Where the employee refuses permission for the Company to contact their medical practitioner, the Company will explain to the employee the reasons behind the request and inform the employee that a decision relating to their employment may be made without the

benefit of access to medical reports. The same procedure will be followed where the employee delays in giving their consent.

Where the employee feels that the report is misleading or incorrect, they may ask the medical practitioner to amend it. If the medical practitioner does not agree with the employee and does not alter the report, the employee may attach a statement to the report to reflect their views.

Alternatively, having seen the report, the employee may request that access to the report be withheld from the Company. The employee will be informed that a decision relating to their employment may be made without the benefit of access to medical reports.

iv. Return to Work after Long Term Sickness

While the Company prefers employees, who have been on long-term sickness absence to return to their former post and way of working, it recognises that this is not always possible. The Company sees the value of phasing employees back to work, temporarily adjusting their duties, or redeploying them permanently where possible if they cannot return to their previous role.

When the employee returns to work, the employee's manager should arrange to reintroduce the employee back into the workplace and ensure that arrangements are

made to support the employee on their return. These arrangements should include any agreed adjustments and where necessary a risk assessment.

Phased Return to Work

Where an employee has been on long-term sickness absence, a phased return will often be the most successful way of returning them to work. A phased return to work allows an employee to transition from sickness absence back to full work duties.

The phased return to work will usually arise following medical advice, which could be:

- A doctor's letter or medical report recommending a phased return.
- One of the options on a Fit Note.

When considering whether or not a phased return to work is appropriate the manager should bear in mind that a phased return to work may be required as a reasonable adjustment if the employee has a disability. A phased return to work will not be suitable where the employee remains unfit for any work.

A meeting will be arranged to discuss whether a phased return to work is possible, and, if it is:

- When it could start, and with what work and hours.
- Whether or not there will need to be any changes to the employee's work environment or workplace during the phased return to work and/or once the phased return to work is completed.
- When and how the employee's work and hours will develop during any phased return to work.
- What arrangements will be put in place to monitor the employee's progress during any phased return to work.
- The employee's pay during any phased return to work.
- To whom the employee should report if there are any difficulties with their return to

work.

Notes should be taken as to what has been discussed and agreed at the meeting and what follow-up has been agreed. The follow-up will often require a further meeting, and the date and arrangements for the next meeting should be agreed at the end of the first meeting.

Temporary Reassignment

Where an employee has been on long-term sickness absence but is unfit to return immediately to their substantive role, even on a phased basis, their manager should consider temporarily reassigning the employee to another role where possible.

The possibility of a temporary role will depend on the availability of work elsewhere and the employee's agreement to undertake the role. The employee's manager should initially consider whether or not a different role is available within their department and, if it is not, widen the search to include other departments. The manager should do this by

asking managers about available vacancies in their departments in areas in which the employee's skills could be utilised.

The employee's existing rate of pay will be protected during the temporary reassignment and their salary will be paid by the department in which the employee normally works. Temporary placements to help an employee on long-term sickness absence will normally last no longer than 3 months.

Permanent Redeployment

The Company will consider redeployment where it appears unlikely from the medical advice that an employee on long-term sickness absence will be able to return to their existing role.

Any offer to redeploy the employee will be entirely at the Company's discretion. Such an offer will be made only where the Company is confident that the employee is no longer able to continue to work in their current role and will be able to perform well in the redeployed role.

While the employee is free to refuse any offer of redeployment, the only alternative available will usually be dismissal. If the Company believes that there is no alternative role available and suitable for the employee, the Company may be left with no option but to dismiss.

Should the employee choose to accept permanent redeployment, they will be asked to agree to a variation of contract which may affect pay and conditions.

v. Ill-Health Retirement

Retirement on the ground of ill health may be considered where:

- It is clear from the medical evidence that an employee on long-term sickness absence has a permanent condition that means they are unfit to return to work.
- The employee is a member of a relevant pension scheme.

If ill-health retirement is raised, the employee's manager should advise them in the first instance to contact the HR Department. Ill-health retirement is purely discretionary.

vi. Capability

A Capability meeting may be arranged if:

- It is clear from medical advice that the employee is unable to return to their role in the foreseeable future.
- All reasonable steps to assist the employee in returning to work for example, a phased return, amended job duties, altered hours of work, or workplace adaptations have been exhausted.

The meeting should be with a manager and another manager. While the meeting can take place in the workplace, it may be that the employee's condition necessitates a venue

that is away from the employee's place of work. The manager should therefore be open to the meeting taking place in another location. This could be the employee's home or a venue near the employee's home.

The company should write to the employee inviting them to the Capability Meeting. The employee should be given at least 5 days' notice of the meeting. The letter should explain to the employee the purpose of the meeting and advise the employee that they can be accompanied by a fellow worker or trade union official.

The letter should warn the employee that a possible outcome of the meeting is that they may be dismissed by reason of capability.

At the meeting, the manager will consider all the circumstances of the employee's case, including:

- The length of the employee's absence and the likely length of future absence.
- Medical advice on the employee's condition.
- If applicable, the possibility of ill-health retirement.
- What adjustments are available to help the employee to return to work.
- The effect of the employee's continued absence on their colleagues and department.

After the meeting, the manager will set out in writing the outcome of the Capability Meeting. The outcome of the meeting could be:

- A decision for the employee to remain on sick leave until they have recovered.
- If applicable, further steps to pursue ill-health retirement or a claim under a permanent health insurance or similar insurance scheme.
- The issue of a warning that the employee's continued absence is unsatisfactory.
- An offer to make adjustments to the employee's work.
- Redeployment with the employee's agreement.
- A decision to dismiss the employee.

Where the Company has an ill-health retirement scheme or a permanent health insurance or similar insurance scheme, a decision to dismiss should not be taken without seeking advice on whether or not the employee may be able to benefit from such schemes.

The letter should be provided to the employee within 5 days of the meeting.

vii. Appeal

An employee who is given a warning or is dismissed under the Capability Procedure has the right of appeal. The appeal should be sent in writing to the HR representative and set out the grounds on which the employee believes that the decision or process was flawed or unfair.

The employee should lodge their appeal within five days of receiving written confirmation of

the sanction imposed on them by the Company.

An Appeal Meeting will be convened within a reasonable period, after the appeal is lodged. The Appeal Meeting will be chaired where possible by a more senior manager than the manager who conducted the Capability Meeting, together with another manager.

The employee is entitled to be accompanied by a fellow employee or a trade union official.

At the meeting, the decision to impose the sanction will be reviewed and the employee will be entitled to make representations about the appropriateness of the decision.

The outcome of the appeal will be confirmed to the employee in writing, explaining the grounds on which the decision was reached. The outcome of the appeal should be provided to the employee within 5 days of the meeting. The outcome of the appeal will be final.

i) Medical Suspension

The Company has a duty to take care of the health and safety of all employees. If there an employee is unfit to be at work and causes risk to themselves or fellow employees the Company will takes steps which are reasonably necessary to avoid those risks, such as altering working conditions. It may mean offering suitable alternative work (if available) on terms and conditions that are not substantially less favourable.

If it is not possible for the Company to alter working conditions to remove the risks and there is no suitable alternative work available to offer, the Company may suspend the employee from work on medical grounds until such time as there are no longer any risks to either themselves or their fellow employees. The employee would be entitled to normal salary and contractual benefits during the period of suspension, unless they had unreasonably refused an offer of suitable alternative employment. Employment would continue during the period of the suspension

j) Pregnancy Related Absence

Pregnant employees who are off work because of pregnancy-related ill health must abide by the Company's Absence Reporting Procedure. For example, a pregnant employee is subject to the usual notification and evidence requirements and will be asked to attend a Return-To-Work Interview when returning to work.

However, any sickness absence by a pregnant employee for a pregnancy-related reason should not be included when calculating the trigger points.
If the manager is in any doubt as to whether or not a pregnant employee's absence is related to pregnancy, the manager should contact the HR representative for clarification.

k) Disability Related Absence

Where an employee gives as the reason for absence, an underlying health issue that could amount to a disability under the Equality Act 2010, the manager must refer the employee to the HR representative.

Managers should remember that the Company is under a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled employees. The legal definition of a "disability" is wide, and managers should refer to the Company's guidance for further information. Where the absence is wholly or partly for a disability-related reason, the trigger points for the management of

absence referred to in this policy may need to be modified to take proper account of the employee's disability, and other adjustments to the procedures set out in this policy may need to be made. If in doubt, the manager should contact the HR Department for clarification.

3. Elective Surgery

a) Policy Statement

The Company recognises that from time to time employees may elect to have surgery that is not medically necessary. This policy aims to provide guidance on how this should be dealt with by both the employee and the Company.

In these circumstances, there is no statutory right to time off, paid or unpaid and any leave or pay granted in at the discretion of the Company.

b) Definitions

Elective surgery is surgery that is not considered to be medically necessary. It includes cosmetic surgery, which is concerned with the enhancement of appearance through surgical and medical techniques. Surgery may include, but is not limited to; face-lifts, breast implants, laser eye treatment, vasectomies, the removal of bunions and the removal of warts, etc.

c) Leave and Pay

If an employee requires time off for elective surgery, they must inform their manager to discuss the surgery and the length of time off, including recovery time that would be required. The Company may choose to request further information from the

employees' GP or Consultant.

At the absolute discretion of the Company, unpaid leave or sick leave may be authorised after the Company has taken into account the reason for the surgery and whether there are sound business reasons for permitting or not permitting the absence at that time.

The employee will be informed of the Company's decision as to time off and payment and should not finalise arrangements for surgery until they have received confirmation that they may take the time off work.

4. Medical Appointments

a) Policy Statement

The Company recognises that employees will, from time to time, need to attend medical appointments during their normal working time.

This policy aims to provide guidance on how this should be dealt with by both the employee and the Company.

b) Definitions

For the purposes of this policy a medical appointment is a pre-planned appointment for an employee or their dependant which may include, but is not limited to;

- GP appointment
- Hospital appointment
- Dentist appointment

Appointments for things such as antenatal or adoption are covered in our Family Friendly Policy and therefore do not apply to this policy.

c) Leave and Pay

Employees should endeavour to arrange medical appointments in their own time or, if this is not possible, at times that will cause the minimum amount of absence from work or inconvenience to the Company.

However, because the Company accepts that it is not always possible to arrange medical appointments outside working hours, it is the Company's policy to permit reasonable time off work for such appointments.

Time taken off for appointments will normally be unpaid or if authorised at the manager’s discretion, the time may be made up. It is important to remember that if the working day is shortened due to an appointment the employee must still take at least a 20 minute (unpaid) break if they are working above 6 hours.

Employees must obtain approval from their manager in advance of any appointment. The manager reserves the right to ask the employee to reschedule an appointment if its timing would cause disruption to the Company's business. The manager may also, at their discretion, ask the employee to produce confirmation of the appointment.

5. Bereavement Leave

a) Policy Statement

The Company recognises that dealing with a bereavement can be among the biggest challenges of an employee's life. This policy sets out the Company's commitment to supporting staff through their grief by providing Bereavement Leave, keeping in touch with staff while they are off work, and supporting staff on their return to work.

The Company acknowledges that every bereavement is different and grief impacts everyone in different ways. This policy is intended to cater for a wide range of circumstances and the differing impacts that a bereavement can have, while also recognising the needs of the business.

b) Definitions

Immediate family member - is defined as the employee's spouse, civil partner, partner, parent/guardian, child, sibling.

c) Leave and Pay

In the event of the death of an immediate family member, the employee will be granted up to five days' paid leave, to include the funeral.

The company recognises that there may be special circumstances where employees are close to relatives not identified as immediate family members within this policy. A degree of discretion will be applied in these circumstances.

The employee should inform their manager of the need to take Bereavement Leave as soon as reasonably practicable or, at the latest, on the first day on which they are absent.

The employee should inform their manager of what they would like colleagues to know about the situation and of any urgent tasks that other staff need to pick up or meetings that need to be cancelled or rearranged.

Following the initial contact, the employee and the manager should keep in touch. The level of contact is a matter for agreement between the employee and the manager.

Where an employee has exhausted their Bereavement Leave, or is not entitled to Bereavement Leave under this policy, they can still apply for annual leave under the Company's Holiday Policy in the usual way.
If an employee is taking sickness absence as a result of ill health brought on by a bereavement, the Company’s usual Sickness Absence Policy applies. Under the Sickness Absence Policy, the employee must:

- Complete a self-certification form for sickness of seven calendar days or less; and
- Provide medical evidence for sickness of more than seven calendar days.

d) Support and Returning to Work

Upon returning to work, if an employee feels temporarily unfit for their normal role or hours they should talk to their manager. Where appropriate the Company will consider

requests to make temporary changes to the employee's working arrangements. Depending on the nature of the temporary changes, the manager may agree the temporary adjustments informally with the employee, or the employee may need to make a formal request for flexible working under the Company's Flexible Working Policy.

- External sources of help and support for bereaved employees include:
- Cruse Bereavement Care / Cruse Bereavement Care Scotland, which offers support to bereaved people, for example via a telephone helpline;
- Child Bereavement UK, which offers support to families when a child dies, for example via a telephone helpline;
- Age UK, which has a website that includes guidance and support on coping with bereavement;
- WAY Widowed and Young, which specialises in supporting people aged 50 or under whose partner has died; and
- Marie Curie, which supports families living with a terminal illness.

e) Certification

Upon their return to work, if it has not already been done, the employee should Complete CPF083 Bereavement Leave Request Form, certifying the Bereavement Leave.

f) Parental Bereavement Leave and Pay

We recognise that, while dealing with any bereavement is difficult, the death of a child is among the most devastating events that an employee can ever face. We are committed to supporting staff coping with the loss of a child by ensuring that bereaved parents can take parental bereavement leave. This is a legal entitlement for bereaved parents to be absent from work for up to two weeks where their child passes away.

Whatever you length of service, you can take parental bereavement leave if you have lost a child (i.e. under the age of 18) and are the:

- Parent of a child who has passed away; or
- Partner of the child's parent, where you live in an enduring family relationship with the child and their parent; or
- "Parent in fact" of a child who has passed away, which means that, for a continuous period of at least four weeks before the child passed away, they have been living with the child and had "day-to-day responsibility" for the child (but who is not being paid to look after the child).

In practice, this means that most employees with parental responsibility for a child who passes away can take parental bereavement leave. Parental bereavement leave is available in a number of other scenarios, including for adoptive parents whose child has passed away and where a parent suffers a stillbirth after 24 weeks of pregnancy.

If you have suffered a bereavement, but are unsure if you are entitled to parental bereavement leave, you should contact the HR representative for clarification.

If you are a bereaved parent, you are able to take the leave as:

- A single block of two weeks; or
- Two separate blocks of one week at different times.

A bereaved parent can take parental bereavement leave at any time from the date of the death of the child until 56 weeks after of the date of the death of the child.

To be eligible for statutory parental bereavement pay, employees who are on parental bereavement leave are required to have:

- At least 26 weeks' continuous employment with their employer by the week before the week in which their child passes away, and still be employed by that employer on the day on which the child passes away; and
- Normal weekly earnings in the eight weeks up to the week before the child's death that are no less than the lower earnings limit for national insurance contribution purposes.

If you take parental bereavement leave and qualify for Statutory Parental Bereavement Pay, you will be paid at the rate set by the Government for the relevant tax year, or 90% of your average weekly earnings where this figure is lower than the Government's set weekly rate. A non-eligible employee's parental bereavement leave will be unpaid.

6. Unauthorised Absence Policy

a) Policy Statement

Unauthorised absence applies if an employee fails to comply with the Company's Sickness Absence Reporting Procedure or provide the necessary evidence within the required time period, fails to attend work, fails to return from holiday or is absent from work for any other reason without permission.

If an employee is absent from work without good cause and/or fails properly and effectively to notify the Company of their absence, this may be treated as a serious disciplinary offence, potentially constituting gross misconduct.

b) Action

On the first day of the employee's absence, their manager will attempt to contact them, keeping a record of the time. If the employee does not answer the telephone, the manager will attempt to leave a voicemail message asking them to return the call. If the manager is unable to contact the employee, they may attempt to contact the employee's next of kin or listed emergency contact.

On the second day of the employee's absence, if nothing has been heard from the employee, the manager will write to the employee detailing their absence and the attempts to make contact. The letter will say that no satisfactory explanation for the absence has been received and require that the employee make contact with the manager as soon as possible, but no later than the date detailed in the letter. The letter will warn the employee that, if they fail to make contact by the deadline, the Company may take serious disciplinary action.

If, following the deadline, the employee has still not contacted the manager, the manager will send the employee a letter inviting them to attend a Disciplinary Meeting to explain their absence. The letter should warn the employee that the lack of an adequate explanation could result in summary dismissal for gross misconduct.

If the manager makes contact with the employee and/or the employee returns to work, the manager should conduct an immediate investigation into the reasons for their absence and their lack of contact with the Company.

If the employee can give adequate explanation for their absence and lack of contact, the manager can conduct a Return-To-Work Interview and the absence may be recorded in accordance with the trigger points. If the employee is unable to provide an adequate explanation for their absence and lack of contact, this may also be recorded in accordance with the trigger points and the Company may also treat the absence and the failure to follow the Absence Reporting Procedure, as a disciplinary matter.

If the employee claims to have been sick to the extent that this also precluded contacting the Company, the manager can ask for reasonable evidence of this.
If the employee is unable to provide sufficient evidence, the Company may consider whether or not the claimed sickness absence was genuine and respond accordingly.

7. Timekeeping Policy

a) Policy Statement

The Company operates the following policy on employees' timekeeping, in order to maximise its productivity, efficiency and effectiveness and ensure fair treatment of all staff.

b) Time Keeping Requirements

Each employee's contract of employment defines the minimum hours of work that they are contractually required to work. Specific start and finish times including the provision for lunch breaks will be determined by the manager and arranged to suit operational needs. Employees are individually responsible for ensuring that they arrive at work early enough to enable them to begin their work at the appointed start time.

Similarly, employees are required to remain at work at least until the finishing time, unless granted permission by their manager to leave work before that time. The same principles apply to lunch breaks.

Where, for any reason, an employee realises that they are likely to be late for work at the start of the working day/shift, they must endeavour to telephone their manager as soon as possible to explain the situation and give an estimate of when they expect to arrive at work. It is accepted that circumstances outside employees' control can cause lateness, for example if a traffic accident has caused long delays on the roads.

However, a high volume of traffic causing delays that is a normal or regular occurrence, or which can reasonably be anticipated, will not be regarded as a valid reason for an employee's lateness.

Repeated or persistent lateness without good reason will be viewed as misconduct. On each occasion when an employee arrives late to work, the manager should speak to the employee informally to establish the reason for the lateness, whether or not the employee has any particular difficulties with timekeeping, the cause of any such difficulties and how the employee might be supported to achieve improvement. The manager will be responsible for keeping records of the dates, number of occasions and the length of lateness on each occasion.

Where, following any three or more occasions of lateness within any six-month period, and employee's timekeeping remains unsatisfactory, the Company will invoke its Disciplinary Procedure.

8. Holiday Policy

a) Policy Statement

This policy sets out to define the way in which employee's Annual Leave is accrued and taken. The holiday year runs from 1 April to 31 March for all employees.

b) Definitions

Statutory Holiday Entitlement refers to the 5.6 weeks Annual Leave entitlement that all employees have under the Work Time Regulations.

Contractual Holiday Entitlement is any entitlement detailed in the contract of employment which is above the Statutory Holiday Entitlement of 5.6 weeks detailed above.

Public/Bank Holidays are days that are defined by the government as Public or Bank Holidays. There are normally 8 days per annum which typically include Christmas Day, Boxing Day and Easter amongst others.

c) Leave Entitlements

The holiday entitlement for each employee is detailed in the contract of employment.

i. Part Time and Variable Hours employees

For those working part time or on variable hours the holiday entitlement is calculated on a pro-rata basis.

ii. Holiday Entitlement in Year of Commencement

If the employee joins the Company part way through a holiday year, they will be entitled to a proportion of their holiday entitlement based on the period of their employment in that holiday year.

This will be calculated in the following way:

Annual entitlement / 52 weeks x Number of completed weeks

iii. Holiday pay on Termination of Employment

If the employee leaves the Company's employment part way through a holiday year, they will be entitled to be paid for any outstanding holiday entitlement for that holiday year that has not been taken by the date of termination. This includes holiday accrued during any notice period which has been paid in lieu.

The Company reserves the right to require the employee to take any outstanding holiday entitlement during any period of notice, whether such notice is given by the Company or by the employee.

If, on the employee's date of termination, they have taken paid Holiday Leave in excess of earned entitlement, they will be required to reimburse the Company by means of deduction from salary if necessary, in respect of such holiday.

d) Booking Leave

All holiday dates must be approved in advance by the employee's manager. As much notice as possible of proposed holiday dates must be given to the manager to ensure adequate staffing coverage at all times. Such notice must be at least twice the number of working days that the employee wishes to take as holiday.

Holiday requests must be made utilising Chronicle. If the correct notice is given, the Company will always try to grant a request unless it would be detrimental to the operational efficiency of the department. Holiday requests will be approved on a first come first served basis.

The Company has a duty to ensure that an employee takes their full statutory entitlement and will not unreasonably refuse holiday requests made with the appropriate notice.

In certain business areas it may be that the Company requires employees to take their holiday at a particular time of the year. In this instance, the Company will provide the employee with at least twice the number of working days that the employee is required to take. If the Company shuts down some or all of its operations at certain times of the year (for example public holidays, factory shutdown periods, including Christmas, employees will be notified of this in advance.

e) Extended Leave

The maximum amount of time off in one block is normally two weeks. If an employee wishes to take extended holidays (over 2 weeks) requests for such authorisation must be made in writing to a Director at least 13 weeks in advance.

The Company reserves the right to refuse such requests where operational efficiency would be impaired.

f) Unused Holiday Entitlement

An employee's 5.6 week statutory holiday entitlement must be taken during the holiday year and the Company will not unreasonably prevent them from doing so, provided that they give the required notice as detailed above. If an employee finds that, for work related reasons, they are having difficulty in taking all their statutory entitlement they must talk to their manager to resolve the difficulty.

The Company is committed to ensuring that all employees are able to benefit from holiday away from work during the holiday year. In the event that they are genuinely unable to take holiday leave due to sickness or other exceptional circumstances the Company will allow them to carry unused statutory days over to the following year. The Company will advise the date by which any carried over holiday days need to be taken.

Unused contractual leave entitlement will be forfeited if not taken during the holiday year unless in exceptional circumstances it has been agreed by a Director that it may be carried over.

g) Unauthorised Holiday

If an employee has been refused a request for Annual Leave but fails to attend work

either saying that they are sick or by making no contact, the Company will investigate this as a potential unauthorised absence. This could be considered a gross misconduct offence.

h) Holiday pay

For the avoidance of doubt, the first four weeks of the leave an employee takes in any holiday year shall be deemed to be the leave derived from regulation 13 of the Working Time Regulations 1998 (SI 1998/1833) and the remainder shall be deemed to be derived from regulation 13A of those regulations. Currently, the law states that regulation 13 leave shall be paid at the rate of "normal remuneration" whereas regulation 13A leave may be paid at the rate of an employee's basic salary only.

If an employee's remuneration normally includes variable elements, such as commission or overtime, the Company will notify the employee separately whether such payments will be included in their regulation 13 holiday pay. A decision to reflect certain elements of remuneration in holiday pay on one or more occasions shall not give rise to an expectation on the employee's part that it will be included on future occasions.

9. Time off for Public Duties Policy

a) Policy Statement

The Company recognises the value to local communities and society of employees undertaking public duties outside work. In turn, the Company recognises that staffing levels must at all times remain in line with the demands of the business.

This policy sets out how employees who are undertaking public duties outside work can request unpaid time off; how the Company will deal with requests for time off; and how the Company's needs will be balanced against requests for time off.

The policy is limited to statutory time off work for public duties. The Company operates separate policies on jury service and reservists.

b) Entitlement to Request Time Off

An employee is entitled to request a reasonable amount of unpaid time off from work if they are:

- A magistrate.
- A local councillor.
- A school governor.
- A member of a health authority.
- A member of any statutory tribunal.
- A member of the managing or governing body of an educational establishment.
- A member of the General Teaching Councils for England and Wales.
- A member of the Environment Agency in England and Wales.
- A member of the prison independent monitoring boards.
- A trade union member (for trade union duties) Time off for public duties will be unpaid.

c) Making the Request

Employees who wish to take time off for public duties should initially discuss the matter with their manager, providing an estimate of the amount of time off required per year to undertake the role.

The employee and their manager should discuss any other issues, such as how much notice the employee will be able to give when time off is required and how the employee's work will be covered during their absences.
Managers may also ask employees for evidence of their appointment to a public role.

The employee should give as much notice as possible when making individual requests for time off for public duties. Requests should be made in writing to their manager.

While the Company will endeavour to grant employees' requests for time off for public duties, it reserves the right to refuse requests on a case-by-case basis, depending on:

- How much notice the employee has provided.
- How much time off is required to carry out the duties.
- How much time the employee has already had off for public duties.
- The Company's business needs and the effect of employees' absence on the

running of the business.

The manager will keep a record of what individual requests for time off have been accepted or rejected and the reasons for this via the Time and Attendance System.

Managers will keep a watching brief to ensure that the time off:

- Is not excessive nor required at inappropriate times, such as peak business periods.
- Does not have an adverse effect on the employee's colleagues, such as substantially increasing their workload.
- Does not cause any operational difficulties for the Company

10. Jury Service Policy

a) Policy Statement

In the event of the employee being called up for jury service, they should contact their manager at the earliest opportunity to discuss the matter. Jury service normally lasts for up to 10 working days but may be longer. The employee should provide their manager with a copy of the court summons and any other relevant documentation.

Where the Company considers that an employee's absence on jury service could cause substantial injury to its business, they will be asked to make an application for excusal or deferral, as appropriate. Where the Company considers that this applies, the employee should not submit an application for excusal or deferral before the Company has provided them with a letter (and any other relevant evidence) to support the application.

The employee will continue to be paid while on jury service at the normal rate of pay subject to the deduction of any monies received from the court in respect of loss of earnings. The employee will receive, with their jury summons, a Certificate of Loss of Earnings or Benefit, which the employee can complete (with assistance from the Company) and submit to HM Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS) to receive reimbursement, up to a limit, for loss of earnings incurred due to being absent from work due to jury service. The employee will be paid as normal until their reimbursement has been processed, whereupon the employee is obliged to present the Company with the receipt for the reimbursement. The Company will then make the appropriate deduction from the employee's pay.

11. Volunteer Reserve Forces

a) Policy Statement

This policy sets out how the Company supports staff who are reservists. The reserve forces include the Army Reserve, Royal Naval Reserve, Royal Marines Reserve and Royal Auxiliary Air Force.

The Company recognises that many of the skills that reservists gain during their training are transferable to the workplace. The Company will assist reservists as far as possible, for example by taking into account unusual leave requirements or the need to amend working patterns.

b) Leave, Including Pay and Conditions

An employee must inform the Company if they are a member of the Reserve Forces. So long as they have notified us prior to starting employment with us, or at the point of joining the reserve forces, they will be entitled to one week's unpaid leave to attend annual training. Annual training of greater than one week's duration must be taken from holiday entitlement.

If an employee wants to volunteer for mobilisation, they must inform their manager and receive written consent from the Company before they can apply.

When a reservist receives a call out notice for mobilisation, they should inform their manager immediately. Once the Company have received the relevant information from the MOD, they and the employee can, under exceptional conditions, apply for exemption or a deferral of mobilisation. This will only be done by the Company, if there are substantial business reasons for doing so.

During any period of mobilisation, the employee will be paid by the MOD and their contract of employment with the Company will be suspended until an application for reinstatement is made and they return to work. They will not be paid by the Company during their absence, nor will any benefits accrue during that period.

At the end of the period of mobilisation, the employee must make an application for reinstatement in writing by the third Monday after the end of whole-time service.

If the employee returns to work within six months of the end of their active service, they will be entitled to return to their position, or to a suitable alternative position and continuity of service will be preserved.

12. Domestic Emergencies Policy

a) Policy Statement

In the event of a domestic emergency arising, the employee should notify their manager as soon as it is reasonably practical, explaining the nature of the emergency and how much time off work the employee thinks they will need. Time off for domestic emergencies is unpaid and authorised at the discretion of the manager who may request evidence that the situation is serious enough to warrant time off work.

Where time off is taken and once the immediate emergency has been taken care of, the employee is expected to return to work and if additional time off is required, their manager may, at their discretion, authorise holiday to be taken.

Absence of this nature will normally be recorded and managed with in accordance with the Absence Management System outlined in Section 2.7.

13. Garden Leave Policy

a) Policy Statement

On occasions prior to termination of employment, we may ask an employee to complete part or all of their notice period on Garden Leave. Garden Leave is normally applicable when they have access to commercial sensitive data and we need to protect our data.

If an employee is placed on Garden Leave they will continue to receive contractual pay and benefits as normal, until they leave the Company.

b) Conduct During Gardening Leave

We request that employees do not have contact with any customers, suppliers or external organisations without speaking to their manager on each occasion.

We ask that they remember their responsibilities towards the Company, especially in relation to confidential information and outside interests. These continue to apply as if they were still attending work.

During Garden Leave an employee is not able to perform work or services for financial reward, either on their own account or for any other party. They are however required to remain available to undertake work for the Company as required and we may also ask them to complete other tasks or duties within their skill set.

An employee will remain in contact with their manager during this period.

14. Absence During Extreme Weather Conditions

a) Policy Statement

The Company recognises that employees may face difficulties attending their place of work and returning home during periods of severe weather or when there are disruptions to public transport. While the Company is committed to protecting the health and safety of all of its employees, it must ensure that disruption caused to its services remains minimal.

Employees should use their best endeavours to attend work in all circumstances. However, it is not the Company's intention that employees put themselves at unnecessary risk when trying to attend work. Members of staff should use their own judgment and, if unable to attend work, contact their manager as soon as possible.

b) Severe conditions occurring before the start of the working day

Employees who are unable to attend work or delayed by the weather conditions or disruptions to public transport should contact their manager.

Employees who are delayed will have the opportunity to make up this time at a later date. However, it is at the discretion of their manager to waive this requirement if the lateness is negligible having regard to the severity of the weather conditions or disruptions to public transport and the employees' personal circumstances e.g. distance from their home to work and the mode of transport used.

If an employee has made all reasonable efforts to get to work but failed to do so because of severe weather conditions or disruptions to public transport, it is the responsibility of the individual's manager to make a decision as to whether or not the employee should:

- Be allowed to work from home.
- Take the time as Annual Leave.
- Make up for the time at a later date.

When making this decision, the manager should take into account the employee's circumstances e.g. distance from their home to work and the mode of transport, the employee's views and the needs of the Company.

Where these options are not available or where the manager sees fit, the employee will take unpaid leave and a deduction will be made from their wages.

c) Severe conditions occurring during the course of a working day

Managers should decide on a case-by-case basis whether or not it is appropriate for employees to leave work early. When making this decision, they should take into account the employee's circumstances e.g. distance from their home to work and the mode of transport, the employee's views and the needs of the Company.

The manager may require employees who leave work early to:

- Take work home with them as appropriate.
- Make the time up at a later date.
- Take time off as unpaid.

d) Health and Safety

While the Company will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of all its employees, employees are reminded of their duty to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions. This includes taking extra care when travelling to and from work in severe weather conditions.

The Company recognises that severe weather particularly affects employees whose job involves driving or working outdoors. The Company will undertake regular risk assessments to ensure that employees working in these conditions are properly instructed.

Name: Chris Martin



Position: Managing Director **Date:** 05.01.2026