

Sickness Absence and Fitness for Work Policy

1. Purpose

Safe Skills Training Ltd is committed to protecting the health, safety, and wellbeing of learners, clients, staff, and associates. We also recognise that sickness absence can affect service delivery, particularly in a small provider.

This policy sets out:

- How sickness absence must be reported
- Evidence requirements
- How we support return to work and safe working
- How we manage delivery impact when cover is not available

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- **Employees** of Safe Skills Training Ltd
- **Associates/subcontractors** engaged by Safe Skills Training Ltd

This policy should be read alongside:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Incident, Accident and Near-Miss Reporting Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy
- Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notice
- Information Security Policy
- Business Continuity and Contingency Policy
- Refunds and Credits Policy
- Terms and Conditions of Service

3. Principles

We will:

- Prioritise safety and infection prevention
- Encourage early reporting and honest communication
- Treat people fairly and consistently
- Consider reasonable adjustments and phased return where appropriate

- Keep health information confidential and handle it lawfully

4. Definitions

- **Sickness absence:** Time away from work due to illness or injury.
- **Fitness for work:** Being well enough to carry out duties safely and effectively.
- **Infectious illness:** Illness that may be passed to others (e.g., vomiting/diarrhoea, flu-like illness, COVID-19, contagious rashes).

5. Reporting sickness (employees)

5.1 When to report

Employees must notify Safe Skills Training Ltd **as soon as possible** when they are unwell and unable to work.

Where the employee is due to deliver training, notification must be made **immediately** once they believe they may not be fit to deliver.

5.2 How to report

Employees must contact the Director/Lead Educator by:

- Email: andy@safeskillstraining.com

If email is not practical due to illness, the employee should make contact by telephone and follow up by email when able.

5.3 What to include

- Nature of illness (brief description)
- Whether symptoms may be infectious
- Expected duration (if known)
- Whether any urgent client delivery is affected
- Any immediate risks (e.g., exposure to infectious disease, injury at work)

6. Reporting sickness (associates/subcontractors)

Associates/subcontractors must notify Safe Skills Training Ltd **as soon as possible** if they are unwell and unable to deliver.

Because cover may not be available at short notice, associates must:

- Notify immediately if they suspect they may not be fit to deliver a scheduled session
- Provide an estimated return-to-work date as soon as reasonably possible

Notification must be made to andy@safeskillstraining.com (and by telephone where urgent).

7. Evidence and certification

7.1 Employees

Employees may be asked to provide evidence of sickness absence where appropriate and lawful.

Where a Fit Note (Statement of Fitness for Work) is required, employees must provide it as soon as reasonably possible.

7.2 Associates/subcontractors

Associates may be asked to provide reasonable evidence where:

- Absence affects booked delivery, or
- There are repeated short-notice cancellations, or
- There is a safeguarding or safety concern.

Any evidence requested will be proportionate.

8. Fitness for work and attending while unwell

8.1 General expectation

No one should deliver training if they are not fit to do so safely and effectively.

This includes situations where illness or medication may impair:

- Concentration and judgement
- Safe manual handling and practical demonstration
- Driving safety
- Professional communication and behaviour

8.2 Infectious illness

To protect learners and clients, individuals must not attend delivery where they have symptoms consistent with an infectious illness that could reasonably be passed on.

Where vomiting/diarrhoea has occurred, individuals should not deliver training until they have been symptom-free for a suitable period.

If unsure, the individual must contact Safe Skills Training Ltd in advance to agree the safest approach.

8.3 Infection control requirements at client sites

Some client sites may have additional infection control rules. These must be followed where reasonable and proportionate.

9. Managing impact on bookings and clients

Safe Skills Training Ltd will act promptly and transparently if sickness affects delivery.

9.1 If an employee/associate cannot deliver

Where a scheduled session cannot be delivered due to sickness and suitable cover is not available, we will:

- Contact the client as soon as possible
- Offer either:
 - **Rescheduling** at the earliest mutually convenient date (priority where possible), or
 - A **refund** for the affected session

We will not make unrealistic promises of same-day cover where this cannot be delivered safely.

9.2 Communication standards

Client communication will be:

- Timely
- Professional and respectful
- Focused on practical next steps

We will not share unnecessary personal medical details.

9.3 Related policies

Any refunds/credits will be handled in line with:

- Refunds and Credits Policy
- Terms and Conditions of Service

10. Contact during sickness absence

10.1 Employees

Employees should keep in reasonable contact during sickness absence. The frequency will depend on:

- Expected duration
- Impact on delivery
- Any support needs

10.2 Associates/subcontractors

Associates must keep Safe Skills Training Ltd informed of:

- Expected return date
- Any restrictions affecting delivery scope

11. Return to work and return to delivery

11.1 Return-to-work discussion (employees)

A return-to-work discussion may take place to:

- Confirm fitness to return
- Identify any support needed
- Review any workplace factors
- Confirm any temporary adjustments

11.2 Return to delivery (employees and associates)

Where delivery involves practical skills, travel, or long sessions, Safe Skills Training Ltd may require confirmation that the individual is fit to deliver.

Where a Fit Note includes recommendations (e.g., phased return, amended duties), we will consider these where reasonably practicable.

12. Repeated short-notice sickness and reliability

We recognise genuine illness can occur unexpectedly. However, repeated short-notice absence that affects delivery may require review.

12.1 Employees

Where there is a pattern of short-notice sickness absence, we may:

- Meet to discuss support and underlying issues
- Agree an attendance improvement plan
- Consider occupational health advice where appropriate
- Use the Disciplinary Policy where necessary and proportionate

12.2 Associates/subcontractors

Where there is a pattern of short-notice cancellations, we may:

- Restrict future bookings
- Require additional notice periods for acceptance of work
- Require re-standardisation or supervision if quality is affected
- End the engagement in line with the associate agreement

13. Illness or injury arising from work

If illness or injury arises from work activities (including travel to delivery), it must be reported promptly and recorded in line with the Incident, Accident and Near-Miss Reporting Policy.

14. Data protection and confidentiality

Health information is sensitive personal data. Safe Skills Training Ltd will:

- Collect only what is necessary
- Store it securely
- Limit access to those who need it
- Retain it only as long as required

15. Review and version control

- **Policy owner:** Director/Lead Educator
- **Review frequency:** Annually, or sooner if business needs or legal expectations change

Version control

Version	Date	Summary of changes
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1.0	19/04/2026	First issue
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