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# Managing employee absences – a best practice guide

This guide outlines best practices used by schools for ensuring all employees are aware of their obligations and workplace procedures relating to absence and leave. These practices can be adapted to suit the individual school’s administrative requirements and current practice.

## All staff can easily access leave forms.

* Ensure staff can access HR21 to submit an electronic application for personal leave (all permanent staff) and annual leave (staff other than teachers).
* Ensure staff can access a hard copy of the application for leave, e.g. forms are located in the front office, staffroom and/or staffing office.
* Email a copy of the application for leave form to each staff member with instructions on how to add their name and AGS number and save the form on their H drive.
* Promote the link <http://sharedservices/actgovt/HRforms.asp> to access an application for leave form.

## All staff are aware of arrangements and procedures

* for advising the workplace of an absence (see sample information sheet below)
* for submitting the completed application for leave for approval or recommendation by principal electronically via HR21 (see *HR21 User guide for Education* and *HR21 Quick Facts Education*) or in hard copy, as required for the leave type (e.g. leave the form in the “IN’ tray in the front office or staffing office)
* *Managing Employee Absences - Mandatory Procedures.*

### Sample information sheet explaining arrangements for taking leave

If you are unable to come to work please phone the relief staffing officer by [TIME]. If you miss this deadline, please call the school number and speak to a personas it is possible for a message left on answering machine to be missed.

* Relief Staffing Officer [NAME] [PHONE NUMBER]
* School [PHONE NUMBER]

When you return to school you must fill out an application for leave preferably immediately and within 10 working days.

* For personal leave (all staff) and annual leave (staff other than teachers), use HR21 to submit an application for leave.
* For all other types of leave, complete a hard copy application for leave. Blank forms are found at [LOCATION OF HARD COPIES] or electronically saved in your H drive or accessed from the Shared Services Customer Service Portal at <http://sharedservices/actgovt/HRforms.asp>.

If you know in advance that you will be absent [PROCEDURE FOR NOTIFYING STAFFING OFFICER].

Please return all completed forms to[LOCATION IN SCHOOL e.g. IN TRAY at front office].

You should discuss arrangements for providing lesson information to relief staff with your supervisor (teachers).

If you leave the school during the day, [DETAILS ON ARRANGEMENTS, e.g. sign-out book].

You can obtain information about leave types and entitlements from the relevant Enterprise Agreement/s available on Index at <https://www.education.act.gov.au/employment/employment_agreements> .

You should also familiarise yourself with the M*anaging Employee Absences – Policy and Mandatory Procedures,* available on Index at <https://www.education.act.gov.au/publications_and_policies/policies>

✂ [CONTACT CARD to be provided to all staff at the beginning of the school year or on commencement at the school.]

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| ***IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND WORK***  ***please call me on***  **[PHONE NUMBER 1]**  ***preferably on the previous evening or in the morning before* [TIME]**  **[STAFFING OFFICER’S NAME]**  ***After this time, please speak to the school office on***  **[PHONE NUMBER 2]** |

## Identify one staff member responsible for staffing including leave management.

* Usually a school leader or teacher is responsible for teaching staff absences.
* This staff member is usually responsible for Casual Relief System (CRS) or Staffing information Management System (SiMS) data entry, although some schools identify another staff member for the entry of this data.
* The business manager is responsible for administrative staff absences.
* Train a ‘back up’ staff member in case the staff member responsible for staffing, leave management and CRS/SiMS data entry is absent.

## At least once each school term conduct an audit of CRS/SiMS certified absences reports and the leave forms submitted to Shared Services Payroll.

* Implement the *Managing Employee Absences - Mandatory Procedures* for every instance in which an employee is absent and has not submitted a leave form.

## Records Management

Schools must ensure they maintain all records relating to employee absences and leave, including:

* approved (hard copy) applications for leave, documentary evidence such as medical certificates and statutory declarations (seven years)
* records of any actions taken in managing an employee’s absence
  + written reminder to employees to submit a leave application, and
  + notifications to Shared Services Payroll of unauthorised absence and salary action (two years).

### Copies of approved applications for leave could be filed:

* in a folder with each CRS Certified Absences Report, or
* in alphabetical or chronological order behind the CRS Certified Absences Reports in individual staff files.

### Copies of records of any action taken could be filed:

* in a folder in alphabetical order of staff member name, or
* in individual staff files.

### Privacy

Consideration must be given to privacy requirements when copying and storing applications for leave and any record of action taken.

The 11 Information Privacy Principles (IPPs) that apply to ACT government (and Commonwealth) agencies are set out in section 14 of the [Privacy Act 1988](http://www.comlaw.gov.au/comlaw/management.nsf/current/bytitle/32AA97DFE9AA8326CA256F7100071D25?OpenDocument&mostrecent=1)(Cth). These IPPs cover the collection, management, access to, accuracy, use and disclosure of personal information.

Information on privacy is available on Index at <https://index.ed.act.edu.au/governance/compliance/privacy-work.html>