

The first sample policy is appropriate for businesses in which employee timeliness and attendance are critical. The policy is designed to impress upon employees that the needs of the business require them to get to work on time and that they need to let you know when they will be unable to make it in to work.

Sample Absence Policy #1

Your timely attendance at work is crucial to making the business run smoothly. We must meet production requirements to satisfy our customer's demands. You need to do your part in achieving this goal, and one way is to maintain a good attendance record. Any absence or tardiness becomes a part of your employment record.

Punctuality requirements. Employees are expected to be at their work stations on time. Tardiness is defined as being at your work station at least [insert a number] minutes past your scheduled starting time. You should also notify the appropriate person when you know you may be late for work. Being on time makes it easier for all of us because tardiness hinders teamwork among employees. Being tardy for work or leaving the job station before quitting time will be considered cause for corrective action.

Counting absences. Here are the rules for how absences will be counted:

- An unscheduled absence for at least one-half the workday will be counted as one occurrence.
- An absence for one or more consecutive workdays will be considered one occurrence. For example, if you're out two consecutive days, that will count as one occurrence.
- If an employee returns from an absence (due to an illness) and goes out again due to the same illness after being at work for no more than one day, then the absence will be counted as one occurrence.

Repeated occurrences will result in verbal counseling, written counseling, and/or suspension or termination of employment.

Procedure. In the event that you are unable to come to work, be sure to call in and let the appropriate person know, in advance where possible, but no later than your regular starting time, so that arrangements for other help can be made.

Vacation days must be scheduled at least 24 hours in advance except in cases of emergency.

Employees may be granted excused absences for sickness/illness when the appropriate person is notified prior to the start of work. Pre-scheduled medical/professional appointments (lawyers, clergy, counselors, etc.) or other compelling reasons, with prior supervisory approval, may also be considered as excused absences.

Absence of three or more consecutive scheduled working days without notifying the appropriate person will be considered as a voluntary termination, and you will be removed from the payroll.

Authorized absence documentation. We may require documentation of authorized reasons for absence, such as sick leave or jury duty, and may also verify the documentation where appropriate.

Inclement weather. The facility must continue to operate during periods of bad weather. Thus, the need for employees to be on the job during such emergencies is of paramount importance. You are expected to make every effort to report for work. If you do not report for work when scheduled during a weather emergency, you will be considered absent.

The second sample policy is more appropriate for businesses in which strict conformity to scheduled working hours is not as important. A less stringent policy may be a good idea when your employees are professionals, artists, and others whose performance is measured by timely delivery of results rather than by time spent performing a particular task.

Sample Absence Policy #2

As an employee, you will be treated as a professional, which means that you will be expected to complete your work on time and at the expected level of quality. If extra hours are needed to complete your work, you will be expected to put in those extra hours. If, on the other hand, you are able to complete your work in less than a standard workweek, you are free to use those extra hours as you see fit. In return for being treated as a professional, we expect you to behave as one and not to abuse these privileges.

Even though you will be treated as a professional and will presumably behave as one, general absence guidelines are nevertheless necessary to ensure that we are able to conduct business in a predictable manner. Although we are not interested in monitoring your comings and goings, we need to know, in advance where possible, when you will be absent from work. Here are those guidelines:

Absences. Employees are expected to be at work and to work a full workweek, except for authorized absences. Authorized absences include the following:

- vacation time scheduled in advance
- sick leave
- time off for a workers' compensation injury
- a death in your family
- jury duty
- time off to vote
- military leave
- emergency situations beyond your control

Notification procedure. To obtain an authorized absence, call in, where possible, and let the appropriate person know that you are unable to come to work. The call should be made, if possible, no later than your regular starting time.

As for notifying someone that you will be late to work or will be leaving early in the event your work has been completed, we ask that you use your best judgment. If you know someone is likely to need to know that you will be coming in late or leaving early, you should call that person and let him or her know.

Failure to notify. If you don't come to work and don't call in, at some point we have the right to determine that you're not coming back. Thus, our rule is that unauthorized absences of three or more consecutive days without notice will be considered as a voluntary termination, and we will remove you from the payroll.

If you are repeatedly absent without authorization, you could be subject to counseling, suspension, and termination.

Inclement weather. During inclement weather, you should call to find out whether to report to work. Also, while the weather may be nice where you are, hazardous weather conditions could exist at or near the workplace. If you know hazardous conditions have been reported in the area, protect yourself and call work first.

