

Policy Identifier: Illness

Policy Title:	Illness Policy
Description:	Policy setting out the criteria which applies in the event of a staff member being unable to attend work owing to illness.
Author (Position):	Human Resources
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Approved By:	MIE Governing Body
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Revision History		
Previous Version no.	Summary of Amendments <i>Inc. date of approval of the update</i>	Reviewed Version no.
1	Update to Section 4.4 Length of Sick Leave to include the process towards Income Protection Cover Update to Section 5.1 Contacting MIE on protocol for absence due to illness Update to Section 5.2 on submitting Illness Benefit claim to the Department of Social Protection Approved by Quality Committee (June 2025)	2

Illness Policy

1. Context

Marino Institute of Education (MIE) wishes to ensure that it maintains the highest possible standards in all its activities. This policy document aims to set out in easy-to-follow terms the rules which apply in the event of a staff member being unable to attend work owing to illness.

2. Purpose

To set out the rules which apply in the event of a staff member being unable to attend work owing to illness.

3. Principles

3.1. MIE wants to ensure that staff members who are ill are supported during that illness.

3.2. MIE is committed to dealing with the matter in a confidential and fair manner.

4. Definitions

4.1. Sick Leave Year

The twelve-month period, which is the sick leave year, starts on the first day of sick leave.

4.2. Certified Sick Leave

All periods of sickness of three or more consecutive days must be certified by the staff member's medical practitioner or dentist, as soon as possible, and the required certificates shall be sent to Human Resources (HR) for filing. The certificate should state the precise period for which the staff member will be unfit for duty or the probable date of resumption of duty. Subsequent certificates must be submitted if the absence continues beyond the period covered by the initial certificate, and renewed thereafter, at least weekly. For all periods of certified sick leave over five consecutive days, MIE employees are required to make an application for illness benefit to the Department of Social Protection through www.mywelfare.ie. Steps to submit an illness benefit claim are available from the HR department.

Not submitting an illness benefit claim where an employee is on certified sick leave for five+ days, and therefore not complying with the above, may impact on the continuation of payroll payments.

4.3. Certified/Uncertified Periods of Illness

Staff will be entitled to be paid for the first three consecutive working days of certified sickness, but subject to a maximum of seven such days in any 12-month period.

Thereafter, payment for periods of certified illness will only be made after the third day of certified illness.

Periods of short/uncertified illness will not be paid after the 7th uncertified day in any 12-month period.

4.4. Length of Sick Leave

Subject to the conditions above, staff absent from duty as a result of sickness, will be entitled in any one period of twelve months to certified sick leave on full pay for the first three months (remitting Social Welfare payments to the Institute) and to certified sick leave on half-pay for the following three months (with the employee retaining Social Welfare payments). At the discretion of the President of MIE, full pay may be extended for the full initial six months of sick leave, on the basis that an employee is suffering from an acute illness with well-established potential to reduce life expectancy, or a chronic progressive illness with well-established potential to reduce life expectancy. Process for determining discretion applied will be as follows:

Where an employee is on certified sick leave and approaching half-pay, HR will contact the employee in writing. The staff member will be asked to notify HR in writing if they feel they meet the criteria of acute or chronic progressive illness with well-established potential to reduce life expectancy and wish to avail of the President's discretion. It is then at the discretion of the employee if they wish to disclose their illness or prefer not to disclose the nature of their illness. MIE may decide to make an assessment referral to a nominated independent medical practitioner for assessment.

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Any further payment when on sick leave that goes beyond an initial six-month period, is dependent on the employee being eligible for Income Protection under the MIE Income Protection insurance scheme, that was introduced on 1st June 2023.

The MIE Income Protection Plan Member's Guide provides that eligible employees include fulltime permanent employees and part-time permanent employees. Eligible employees absent from carrying out their normal occupation for a 10-week period, the employee is required to contact the Human Resources department to start the claim process.

HR will issue to the employee the Member Guide, that includes a full outline of the Income Protection (IP) claim process, and the IP claim form. The HR department will support the employee throughout the process of submitting an IP claim. All staff members are provided with the MIE Income Protection Plan and Death Benefit Member Guide on commencement of employment. The Member Guide is also available at all times from the HR department.

5. Policy

5.1. Contacting MIE

Staff who are unable to report for work due to illness, are required to contact their Head of Department within two/three hours of starting time of the first day of absence (or someone on their behalf) and give the reason for the absence and the probable date of their return to work. It is the responsibility of the Head of Department to contact the following as required; the relevant Programme Leader(s), the Dean, HR department (askhr@mie.ie), the Education Office and Conferencing Office to alert them of the absence for administrative purposes, without specifying a reason for the absence. The Programme Leader emails students to notify them of the change and may seek suitable cover, if possible.

If cover cannot be found to replace the staff member on leave, the lecture/tutorial should be postponed with a view to a possible reschedule at a time suitable for both the lecturer and students. It is not the policy of the Institute to move lectures online in place of face-to-face teaching.

5.2. Payments from the Department of Social Protection

MIE, subject to the conditions set out above, will continue salary payments, to a staff member while on sick leave. Staff are required to submit an illness benefit claim to the

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Department of Social Protection and remit to the Institute, any illness benefit payments due, during periods when they are on sick pay. Staff members are advised to input MIE bank account details on their Illness Benefit claim form and direct payment to MIE from the Department of Social Protection.

5.3. Medical Examination

In all periods of illness, the Institute may request, and has the right to require, an independent medical assessment carried out by one of a number of practitioners nominated by MIE, and report on the fitness of the staff member. The nominated medical practitioners shall include both male and female practitioners, and the staff member may select from among those nominated. The Institute will pay for any such consultations/examinations.

5.4. Certified Sick Leave During Annual Leave

If a staff member, who falls ill during a period of [annual leave](#), produces at the time a doctor's statement to the effect that they are unfit for work, the period of their sickness will be treated as sick leave, and not [annual leave](#).

5.5. Abuse of Sick Pay Provisions

Any employee found to have deliberately misinformed the Institute, or in any other way whatsoever abused the Institute's Sick Pay provisions, such abuse will be regarded as a most serious breach of conduct/discipline and will be dealt with as a disciplinary matter under the Institute's [Disciplinary Procedures](#).

6. Responsibility

The responsibility for maintenance of this policy rests with HR.

7. Related Documents

7.1. Contract of Employment

7.2. [MIE Disciplinary Policy](#)

7.3. [Annual Leave Policy](#)

7.4. MIE Income Protection Plan Member Guide