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Better
Every Day

SICK ABSENCE CONTROL POLICY

Montego
—Pet Nutrition—

Contents

1.	PREAMBLE	3
2.	OBJECTIVES	3
3.	SCOPE	3
4.	SICK LEAVE CYCLE / SICK ABSENCE THRESHOLD	3
5.	PROCEDURE	4
	5.1 Counselling upon reaching the pre-determined threshold	4
	5.2 Reaching the limit of thirty (30) or thirty-six (36) days	4
	5.3 Enquiry	5
6.	DISABILITY	5
7.	TRANSITIONAL MEASURES	5
8.	REPRESENTATION AND RESPONSIBILITY OF EMPLOYEES	5
9.	RECORD KEEPING AND MONITORING	5
10.	POLICY REVIEW	6

1. PREAMBLE

- 1.1 Regular attendance remains a contractual obligation of all employees, and a failure to observe this obligation will reflect upon an employee's capacity, entitling the Company to terminate the employee's services.
- 1.2 Absenteeism remains an issue, which must of necessity be addressed in accordance with the Procedures set out in this Policy.
- 1.3 This Policy is directly supportive of the principles contained in the *Labour Relations Act 1995 (LRA), as amended*, relating to ill health and/or injury incapacity, and the principles contained in *Schedule 8* thereof.
- 1.4 In doing so, the Company:
 - 1.4.1 Recognises the entitlement of employees, in terms of the *Basic Conditions of Employment Act (BCEA)*, to thirty (30) or thirty-six (36) days of paid Sick Leave in a three (3) year cycle;
 - 1.4.2 Sets this as the maximum permissible limit of Sick Leave that the Company will accommodate, subject to the terms of this Policy and in the absence of an acceptable reason for extending this limit.
- 1.5 An acceptable reason for purposes of this Policy is one which justifies an extended period of absence, in a single incident, as a consequence of factors over which the employee has no control (e.g. hospitalisation as a consequence of an accident, etc.).

2. OBJECTIVES

To identify measures to achieve the outcomes required by the Company in order to meet its operational requirements and which equally ensure that those employees, who during their *Sick Leave Cycle* are monitored, counselled, where required and corrective measures are taken fairly and consistently in accordance with *Schedule 8* of the *LRA* and the *BCEA*.

3. SCOPE

This Policy will be binding on all employees engaged by the Company, regardless of their Union affiliation or otherwise.

4. SICK LEAVE CYCLE / SICK ABSENCE THRESHOLD

- 4.1 The extent to which the Company will accommodate an employee's sick absence will not exceed the limits as set out by the *BCEA*.
- 4.2 The threshold thus set will be one of thirty (30) or thirty-six (36) days' sick absence within a three (3) year cycle, calculated from the employee's date of engagement (*Sick Absence Cycle*).

- 4.3 Sick absence in excess of this threshold in the absence of an acceptable reason will impact the ongoing employment relationship and result in the employee being called upon to attend an *Enquiry* into the employee's capacity to give effect to his/her contractual obligations.

5. PROCEDURE

5.1 Counselling upon reaching the pre-determined threshold

- 5.1.1 Where an employee has been absent from work as a consequence of sick absence, he/she will be required to undergo a *Return-to-Work Interview* upon the resumption of duties.
- 5.1.2 An employee will be required to attend a *Counselling Session* upon the employee accumulating sick absence amounting to or exceeding the following thresholds:
- 5.1.2.1 Ten (10) days;
 - 5.1.2.2 Twenty (20) days; and
 - 5.1.2.3 Twenty-five (25) days
- within the employee's *Sick Absence Cycle*.
- 5.1.3 The purpose of the *Counselling* will be to identify difficulties encountered in regard to his/her attendance and with a view to offering meaningful support and assistance where possible.
- 5.1.4 This will be undertaken by affording an employee the opportunity to undertake an independent assessment to determine the nature and extent of the ailment, and the steps to be taken to address it.
- 5.1.5 The obligation to identify to the Company at the earliest opportunity, issues which may be capable of being addressed by such support and assistance, remains with the employee.
- 5.1.6 In addition, the employee will be informed of the consequences of continuing or extended sick absence.

5.2 Reaching the limit of thirty (30) or thirty-six (36) days

Any employee who, during the employee's *Sick Absence Cycle*, exceeds the limit of thirty (30) or thirty-six (36) days of sick absence will be required to attend an *Enquiry* into the employee's capacity to give effect to his/her contractual obligations. The employee will receive written notification to this effect.

5.3 Enquiry

5.3.1 The purpose of the *Enquiry* is that of establishing the employee's ability to give effect to his/her contractual obligations, taking into account the sick absence accumulated by the employee during the *Sick Absence Cycle*.

5.3.2 During the *Enquiry*, the Presiding Officer will be required:

5.3.2.1 To confirm the level of the employee's sick absence;

5.3.2.2 To consider the interventions that have taken place prior to the employee reaching the thirty (30) or thirty-six (36) days limit;

5.3.2.3 To determine whether any acceptable reason exists for the extension of this limit.

5.3.3 The Presiding Officer may terminate the employee's *Contract of Employment* if this is warranted in accordance with the prescripts of this Policy.

6. DISABILITY

An employee may apply at any time, if the employee so elects, to be considered for disability in terms of the *Rules of the Provident Fund* relating to the extension of a *Disability Benefit*.

7. TRANSITIONAL MEASURES

Employees who have exceeded the thirty (30) or thirty-six (36) days limit at the time of implementing this Policy:

7.1 Will be requested to attend an Assessment Process.

7.2 Will be afforded a further five (5) days unpaid sick absence, or such further period as may be recommended by way of the *Assessment*.

8. REPRESENTATION AND RESPONSIBILITY OF EMPLOYEES

An employee who is called upon to participate in an *Enquiry* in terms of this Policy will be entitled to representation by a Union Representative or a fellow employee.

9. RECORD KEEPING AND MONITORING

HR will maintain detailed records of *Sick Leave Usage*, *Counselling*, *Enquiries*, and related documentation

Absence trends will be reviewed periodically to inform *Workforce Wellness* and *Efficiency Planning*.

10. POLICY REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed every twenty-four (24) months or when legislative or operational changes necessitate updates.