

Medical suspension from work

By law, medical suspension is when an employer tells an employee to stop working because there are health and safety issues working with:

- dangerous chemicals
- lead
- radiation

For example, if someone has been exposed to high levels of lead and has to temporarily stop work to protect their health.

Medical suspension law only applies to those with the [legal status of employee](#).

Someone is not likely to be an employee if they're:

- an agency worker
- a casual worker
- on a zero-hours contract

If medical suspension does not relate to working with dangerous chemicals, lead or radiation, the rules on this page do not apply.

What to consider before medical suspension

Before using medical suspension, the employer should consider:

- making temporary or permanent changes to make the workplace safe
- offering the employee suitable alternative work – with the same pay and terms and conditions

If it's not possible to make any adjustments, the employer might need to suspend the employee. This would be until it's safe for them to return to work.

Pay during medical suspension

An employer must pay someone their usual pay (including bonuses) for up to 26 weeks. To get this pay, the person must have been employed for a month or more.

By law, an employee is not entitled to pay if they:

- are not available when needed for suitable alternative work – as long as the request to be available is reasonable
- refuse other suitable work from the employer without a good reason
- are an independent contractor

Pregnancy-related suspension

You can find [advice on suspension and health and safety during pregnancy](#).

Contact the Acas helpline

If you have any questions about medical suspension, [contact the Acas helpline](#).