

## Time off with stress

Where possible, an employer should help a worker who's experiencing stress to stay in work.

However, taking time off for work-related stress might give someone the space and time to recover. This can be helpful if stress is making their physical or mental health worse.

If a worker needs time off work, they should follow their organisation's sickness policy, if they have one. They might be entitled to sick pay.

[Find out more about sick pay entitlement](#)

## Keeping in touch

When a worker is off work with stress, an employer should have a reasonable amount of contact with them.

Workers often benefit from regular contact because it can:

- prevent isolation
- support them while off sick
- help with the return to work

However, the employer and worker should agree how often they'll keep in touch so that it's not overwhelming. It's a good idea to review this regularly and check that this contact is helpful for the worker.

[Find out more about keeping in touch during absence](#)

## Having a return to work meeting

The employer should talk to the worker when they return to work after time off with work-related stress.

A [return to work meeting](#) is a good opportunity to:

- make sure the worker is ready to return to work
- see if they need any support
- agree on a plan for returning to work, if appropriate, for example a [phased return to work](#)
- review or do a stress risk assessment
- talk about any work updates that happened while they were off

Using a [Wellness Action Plan from Mind](#) can help a manager to talk with a worker about the causes of the stress. This can help the employer reduce the risk of the worker needing more time off.

Other things to discuss could include:

- the signs of poor mental health
- what the worker should do if they become unwell, for example who to contact

- what support or adjustments they might need