

Influenza – DCU HR FAQ's

Ask HR

Q. Should I attend work as normal?

A. Yes, except if you have any influenza symptoms. The University remains open and work is continuing as normal. The university will continue to monitor the situation and will follow public health and HSE guidelines as appropriate.

Q. What should I do if a member of my household develops Flu?

A. You should come to work as normal, except if you have any influenza symptoms (see www.dcu.ie/safety/swine_flu.ie). If you are in certain high-risk groups (see above), you should contact your GP for advice.

Q. What will happen if members of my family/dependents are ill and need me to take time off to care for them?

A. You should contact your Head of School or Head of Unit and arrange to take leave. In the first instance, force majeure leave is available. This is emergency leave that allows a staff member to take paid leave for 3 days in any 12 consecutive months, or 5 days in any 36 consecutive months. Absence for part of a day is counted as one day of force majeure leave. After the force majeure leave entitlement is used up, then staff would be expected to take annual leave as normal.

Q. What personnel procedures (such as sickness absence) will apply?

A. Normal sick leave and other leave procedures will apply. Please refer to the HR website or your staff handbook for further information.
<http://www.dcu.ie/hr/leave/sickleave/>

Q. What are the sick pay arrangements?

A. The normal sick pay arrangements apply. Please refer to the HR website for further information.
<http://www.dcu.ie/hr/Policies/SickLeavePolicyDec2008.pdf>

Q. Can I come to work earlier or later than normal, for example to avoid busy public transport?

A. Staff are expected to turn up for work as normal at this point in time.

Q. Can I work at home during the Influenza outbreak?

A. Staff are expected to turn up for work as normal at this point in time. Working from home may form part of the University's contingency planning at a later stage if the situation necessitates it.

Q. Will annual leave arrangements be affected?

A. If a member of staff is diagnosed and certified with influenza, they are on sick leave.

If a member of staff has to look after a family member, then force majeure leave will apply in the first instance. After the force majeure leave entitlement is used up, then staff would have to take annual leave.

Staff will only be asked to cancel annual leave if this is completely unavoidable to provide essential cover.

Q. As a manager, what are my responsibilities when a staff member contacts me about potential influenza infection?

A. You need to establish specifically:

Whether the staff member has consulted a GP (if not, the staff member should be directed to phone their GP);

Whether the staff member has been diagnosed as an actual or probable case by a GP.

If the staff member is diagnosed with Influenza then normal sick leave arrangements apply

Inform the DCU HR Department as part of the normal absence procedures(s).

Q. What are my responsibilities as a member of staff?

A. If a staff member has been in contact with a confirmed/diagnosed case of Influenza, the staff member should continue to work as normal and monitor themselves for symptoms of influenza. If they are in a high-risk group (have diabetes, chronic respiratory, heart, liver neurological disease, Immunosuppressed, aged 65 years or older, are on medication for asthma, severely obese or pregnant) they should contact their GP and;

- Seek direction on whether he/she should attend work,
- Follow this direction and
- Report the direction to their Head of School or Head of Unit.

A staff member should **not** be at work if:

- Diagnosed as having contracted Influenza, until they have been symptom free for at least 24 hours or if 7 days has elapsed since the onset of symptoms, whichever period is shorter.

- They are displaying influenza-like symptoms.
- Staff who have influenza-like symptoms must comply with management requests to leave the workplace in order to avoid spreading the infection.

Q. What do I do if a student contacts you to report an absence due to the flu?

A. You should record their name and student number and forward details to the relevant Head of School or the School Secretary.

For more information, contact the HR Department on 01-7005149.