

NORTHERN IRELAND FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

Chief's Circular 6/2013

MANAGEMENT OF MEDICAL CERTIFICATES

The existing arrangements relating to the management of medical certificates have been reviewed and strengthened and, as a result, revised provisions for the management of medical certificates will be introduced on 1 February 2013. These arrangements apply to all NIFRS staff.

You will be aware that when you are absent from work due to illness or injury, you are individually responsible for the certification of your absence and the reason(s) for it. Such certification must be presented to your line manager in a timely manner. Failure to do so could result in the eventual suspension of your salary/wage until the required certification has been presented.

Certification is accomplished in 2 ways:

- 1 If your absence is 7 calendar days or less, you must complete an NIFRS SC211 Self Certificate on your return to work. This is normally completed and presented to your line manager during your return to work interview.

Please note that there is no longer a requirement to obtain, complete and forward a DHSS SC2 Self Certificate Form.

- 2 If you know that your absence is going to last more than 7 calendar days, you must make early arrangements to obtain an SC211 form and be seen by your GP who should provide you with a Statement of Fitness to Work (MED3). The SC211 and the MED3 should be forwarded to your line manager without delay. In the event of any delay, such as obtaining an appointment with your GP, you must inform your line manager immediately.

The SC211 may be obtained by contacting a District or Area Command, Fire & Rescue Service Training Centre, Regional Control Centre, or HQ Department, depending where you are based; or by going on to NIFRS website and selecting the 'Publications' section where details of the process and the SC211 may be found.

A medical certificate will be regarded as overdue normally after 2 calendar weeks from the date it is due. If this occurs you will be contacted in writing by the Payroll Department requesting the certification that is overdue and giving you a date by which the requested certification should be received by NIFRS.

The 2 week period will only be waived in notified exceptional circumstances.

If you fail to comply with this formal request, due consideration will be given to suspending your salary/wage. As part of this consideration all of your circumstances will be taken into account so it is in your best interests to inform your line manager immediately if you are having any difficulty in obtaining or presenting the required certification.

In the event of your salary/wage being suspended, it will remain so until the requested certification has been received by NIFRS.

In the event of an overpayment of pay as a result of an overdue medical certificate, or a medical certificate received after the cut off date for the calculation of your salary/wage, Payroll will take steps to recoup the value of the overpayment from future payments.

Managers with responsibility for the completion of registers should ensure that each register accurately reflects the sickness certification status of their staff at the time the register is completed and signed.



Jim Wallace
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

31 January 2013