

Human Resources

Modified Duties Policy

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South Yorkshire
Fire & Rescue
WORKING FOR A SAFER
SOUTH YORKSHIRE

MODIFIED DUTIES

INTRODUCTION

1. This policy details the provision for employees who are absent from work due to sickness or who are suffering from an affliction which is restricting them from attending for work and/or carrying out their full duties.
2. The Policy aims to facilitate a return to work and to full duties as quickly as possible by arranging for individuals to undertake work on a modified duties basis i.e. making adjustments to their role or providing a suitable alternative.
3. As a member of the Dignity at Work Partnership¹, SYFR is committed to promoting a positive working environment where the dignity and respect, to which all employees are entitled, is not undermined. No employee should be treated less favourably on the grounds of race, gender or gender reassignment, disability, sexual orientation, religion or spiritual belief, colour, nationality, national or ethnic origin, marital/parental status, family ties, trade union or political belief, hours worked, or any other reason, either directly or indirectly.

PROCEDURE

4. Employees will only be placed on modified duties at the recommendation of the Occupational Health Unit (OHU) on an FS 101A, or where an Area Manager/Function Head or above identifies serious Health and Safety implications.
5. The OHU will recommend certain adjustments for the employee that will enable them to carry out work of a certain nature. Examples of such adjustments are:
 - Reduced hours / phased return to work
 - Restricted manual handling
 - Driving restrictions
 - Restrictions on movement e.g. sitting or standing
6. The OHU will determine whether or not employees on the Flexible Duty System are able to continue on this whilst on modified duties.
7. If the employee is unable to carry out modified duties in their substantive role, Human Resources, in liaison with Function Managers, will place them at a location where they can be best utilised and this may be anywhere within the boundary of South Yorkshire.
8. Where restrictions permit, the first choice for modified duties for Operational Staff should be to undertake Community Fire Safety work.
9. Human Resources will confirm their placement on modified duties by writing to the employee, setting out who they will report to and their start date.

¹ The Dignity at Work Partnership is a partnership between the Government, Unite (the UK's largest union) and major public and private sector organisations. For further information on the Partnership, see www.dignityatwork.org

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10. Employees must remain on modified duties until recommended otherwise by the OHU or management.
11. Where it has been necessary for an individual to change location in order to undertake modified duties, the manager at the new location will assume line management responsibilities.
12. Employees should let their line manager and the OHU know immediately if they experience any negative effects to their condition whilst on modified duties.
13. Employees on modified duties should be entered as 'MD' in the register at their substantive role and their attendance should be recorded at the location they are undertaking modified duties.
14. Managers who can accommodate an individual on modified duties should contact Human Resources with details of the role to be undertaken, including any duties that may have an impact on an individual's recovery e.g. manual handling.
15. Priority will always be given to the welfare of the employee whenever they undertake a period of modified duties. However, employees should be aware that where it has been identified that their period of modified duties is likely to be long term due to their medical condition or pregnancy i.e. 6-12 months, then where possible a project based placement will be found.

CONDITIONS

16. Any additional travelling expenses incurred whilst on modified duties as a result of a change of base will be reimbursed by South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue and any additional travelling time incurred will be deducted from the normal working day.
17. Whilst on modified duties, permission should be sought from Human Resources to continue any secondary employment previously approved. Human Resources will then liaise with the OHU if applicable to determine whether the employees' secondary employment would have a detrimental affect on their health.
18. All Uniformed employees will be conditioned to a 9 day fortnight unless otherwise recommended by the OHU and annual leave entitlements will be adjusted to reflect this. Attendance times whilst on a 9 day fortnight will be as determined by the Line manager unless specifically stated otherwise by OHU.
19. Any annual leave previously booked by the employee will be honoured during their period of modified duties. Wherever possible Leave should not be allowed to accrue during this period with the specific intention of taking it on return to normal duties.
20. Employees will be given time off to attend any appointment they have scheduled in order to aid their recovery e. g. physiotherapy, with the permission from their Line manager. Employees may be required to provide proof of their appointment.

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21. Certain injuries or conditions may not require a period of sickness absence and a period of modified duties may be considered as an alternative. In such cases, Employees should contact a Nurse Advisor for further information and possible referral to the OHU.
22. Wholetime duty system employees who have been absent from operational duties for a period of more than 12 weeks will be required to undergo a period of retraining before they can return to full operational duties. The level of retraining required will be determined by the Station Manager.
23. For Health and Safety reasons, operational employees who have notified the organisation that they are pregnant will automatically be placed on modified duties for the duration of their pregnancy. Human Resources will place the individual at a location where they can be best utilised, which may be anywhere within the boundary of South Yorkshire.
24. Employees who are on modified duties will not be classed as being on sick leave.

FURTHER INFORMATION

25. This policy supersedes Section 2, sub section (viii) 'Light Duties' of the Personnel Order.

Further information on this policy can be obtained from Human Resources.