

CIPD data shows absence rates are at their highest level in over 15 years, averaging **9.4 days** per employee, per year.

ONS insights illustrate that presenteeism costs the UK economy around **£21 billion a year** in lost productivity.

The top cause of long-term absence is mental ill health at **41%**. Source: CIPD

SSP REFORM: MOVING FROM REACTIVE TO PROACTIVE ABSENCE MANAGEMENT

The Employment Rights Act is making SSP a day one right and removing the earning threshold so all employees will be eligible from April 2026, meaning the pressure on UK businesses is set to increase.

Absence rates are already at a record high, so not only will this update create an additional admin and cost burden, but it also accelerates the need for HR leaders to prioritise a proactive and data-driven approach to sickness absence management strategy.

FIVE KEY STEPS TO ENHANCING YOUR ABSENCE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

01

Future-proof your documentation

Audit and update your contracts, policies and process documents to ensure your organisation is fully aligned with the new ERA requirements.



02

Transform data into proactive strategy

Shift from reactive tracking to a data-driven culture. Senior HR teams are awash with data but identifying the root cause of issues impacting sickness and other employee wellbeing matters remains a challenge for many. Fit-for-purpose employee relations technology can help HR teams to pinpoint the root causes of rising absence and enable HR to take proactive steps to reduce sickness absence rates.



03

Bridge the gap during absence peaks

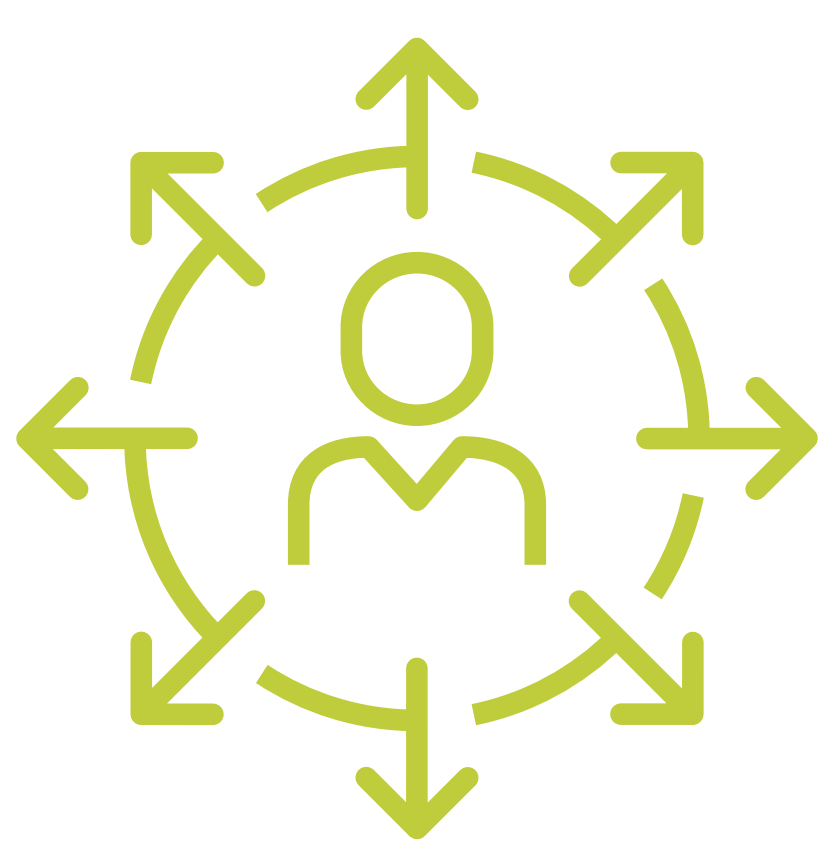
HR teams are currently being hit hardest by the absence crisis. HR professionals are seeing some of the highest internal absence rates as burnout and workload pressures take their toll. Outsourcing advice to a third party removes the risk of under-resourcing, as service levels remain consistent regardless of internal HR absence gaps.



04

Upskill managers for the new era

To combat rising absence rates, employers need to invest in empowering managers to move from reactive to proactive intervention. Leveraging technology that automates case creation and triggers timely manager prompts builds manager capability in managing absence effectively, helping to significantly reduce the frequency and duration of absence.



05

Provide resources to support wellbeing in the workplace

Ensuring that your managers and employees know where to access resources to support them, when they may need them, and investing in improving awareness and providing support such as mental health first aiders demonstrates your commitment to the wellbeing of your workforce.



REAL-WORLD IMPACT

Read how our employee relations solution, which combines our award-winning technology **empower**® with our expert HR advice line, helped Starbucks UK reduce their absence rate by 10% in just 12 months, returning 15,000 hours to improve frontline services.

[Read the case study to find out more](#)

CONTACT US

To understand the impact of the April 6th changes, [book a consultation with our experts.](#)

