

# How to drive down the cost of absence from work



Mark Ridley, head Solicitor of our Employment Department, advises that absence from work costs UK businesses a combined £13.2 billion in 2007, according to a survey by employers' organisation the CBI and insurance giant AXA. Mark is now advising employers of some of the steps they can take to reduce the short-term staff sickness levels that represent the great majority of absences.

“While this is clearly a major issue that many businesses would like to be able to resolve, it is very important that they act fairly and do not infringe on the rights of their employees. In addition, they must always be aware of their responsibilities under the Disability Discrimination Act if absences may be caused by a condition that could be held to be a disability.”

To help employers reduce absenteeism while staying within the law, Mark recommends that they draw up an effective absence policy that is known and understood by all employees. “This should set out the rights and responsibilities of the employer and employees, explain the company’s payment procedures while the employee is off, and describe how absence should be notified. It should also cover when a medical certificate is required, and state that employees may need to be examined by a company doctor.”

“Businesses find it easier to act in accordance with the law when they have such a policy in place.” Any business that wishes to discuss how to create such a policy should call us.

Our employment law experts are very happy to discuss the any issues of employment. Anyone with concerns should feel free to call us for advice and speak to the Department’s PA, Sue Mace, either by telephone 024 7663 2121 or email Sue on [sue.mace@bandhatton.co.uk](mailto:sue.mace@bandhatton.co.uk).