

Overview

Your employees may be [eligible](#) for Statutory Sick Pay (SSP), which is [£88.45 a week](#) for up to 28 weeks.

You can offer more if you have a company sick pay scheme (you can't offer less). Company schemes are also called 'contractual' or 'occupational' sick pay and must be included in an employment contract.

Holiday (or 'annual leave')

Statutory [annual leave](#) is accrued while the employee is off work sick (no matter how long they're off) and can be taken during sick leave.

Entitlement

The weekly rate for Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) is £88.45 for up to 28 weeks. It is paid:

- for the days an employee normally works - called 'qualifying days'
- In the same way as wages, eg: on the normal payday, deducting tax and National insurance

When to start paying SSP

SSP is paid when the employee is sick for at least 4 days in a row (including non-working days). You start paying SSP from the fourth 'qualifying day' (day an employee is normally required to work). The first 3 qualifying days are called 'waiting days'.

You can't count a day as a sick day if an employee has worked for a minute or more before they go home sick.

If an employee works a shift that ends the day after it started and becomes sick during the shift or after it has finished, the second day will count as a sick day.

Exception

You don't usually pay SSP for the first 3 qualifying days unless they've been off sick and getting SSP within the last 8 weeks.

When to stop paying SSP

Usually SSP stops when the employee comes back to work or no longer [qualifies](#).

Eligibility and form SSP1

To qualify for Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) employees must:

have an [employment contract](#)

- have done some work under their contract
- have been sick for 4 or more days in a row (including non-working days) - known as a 'period of incapacity for work'
- earn at least £112 a week

give you the correct [notice](#), give you [proof of their illness](#), only after 7 days off

Employees who have been paid less than 8 weeks of earnings still qualify for SSP. Use the [sick pay calculator](#) to work out how much to pay them.

Employees can qualify for sick pay from more than one job.

They could also qualify in one job but be fit for work in another, eg if one job is physical work that they can't do while ill but the other is office-based.

Exceptions

Employees don't qualify for SSP if they:

- have received the maximum amount of SSP (28 weeks)
- Are getting Statutory Maternity Pay or Maternity Allowance - there are [special rules](#) for pregnant women and new mothers who don't get these payments
- are off work for a pregnancy-related illness in the 4 weeks before the week (Sunday to Saturday) that their baby is due
- were in custody or [on strike](#) on the first day of sickness (including any linked periods)
- are working outside the EU and you're not liable for their National Insurance contributions
- received Employment Support Allowance within 12 weeks of starting or returning to work for you.

Linked periods of sickness

If your employee has regular periods of sickness, they may count as 'linked'. To be linked, the periods must:

- qualify for SSP by lasting 4 or more days each
- be 8 weeks or less apart

Your employee is no longer eligible for SSP if they have a continuous series of linked periods that lasts more than 3 years.