

Statutory Sick Pay *from Day One*

The April 2026 changes, how much SSP is, what to do if it's not paid, and long-term sickness.



Last reviewed: October 2026



GOV.UK · Acas · nidirect · HMRC



UK-wide

ukworkrights.co.uk

Since 6 April 2026

- Statutory sick pay (SSP) is paid from the first full day of sickness absence, for up to 28 weeks.
- There are no unpaid waiting days and no minimum earnings level any more.
- This change applies in Northern Ireland as well as in Great Britain.

▲ WATCH OUT

SSP no longer has 3 unpaid waiting days.

The rate

- SSP is £123.25 a week, or 80% of your average weekly earnings if that is lower.
- In GB, average weekly earnings are worked out over the 8 weeks before the sickness absence. (The NI guide says 80% of your normal weekly earnings.)
- Employees get SSP. Workers may also be entitled to it.
- Your contract may pay more than SSP.

Disputes go to HMRC

- If your employer will not pay SSP, or pays the wrong amount, ask them for a written statement of their decision.
- If you still disagree, you can ask HMRC to make a formal decision about your SSP.

Your job and your health

- You can be dismissed if a persistent or long-term illness makes it impossible to do your job — but your employer should first look for ways to support you and give you reasonable time to recover. Acas says dismissal should be a last resort.
- If your condition counts as a disability, your employer must make reasonable adjustments, such as a phased return, flexible hours or part-time working.
- Pregnancy loss before 24 weeks (GB): time off is treated as pregnancy-related sickness, and normal sick pay rules apply.
- You build up holiday while you are off sick.

Frequently asked questions

Q I only earn £100 a week. Do I get SSP?

Since 6 April 2026 there is no minimum earnings level. You get 80% of your average weekly earnings, as that is lower than £123.25.

Q How long does SSP last?

Up to 28 weeks.

Q Who decides if my employer is right?

HMRC can make a formal decision.

FREE RIGHTS GUIDANCE

Check your *sick pay rights*

Get plain-English guidance on your rights and your employer's legal duties.

ACAS

0300 123 1100

acas.org.uk

LRA (NORTHERN IRELAND)

03300 555 300

Labour Relations Agency

CITIZENS ADVICE / ADVICE NI

Free advice

citizensadvice.org.uk

UK WORK RIGHTS — FREE GUIDE

**Employee Rights (England,
Wales and Scotland)**

ukworkrights.co.uk/guide-employee-rights-gb.html

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TOOLBOX TALK

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FREE GUIDE

Employee Rights (England, Wales and Scotland)

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