



SICK LEAVE - PANEL MEMBERS

PURPOSE

This policy aims to ensure that sick leave is processed according to the standards and guidelines specified in this policy.

SCOPE

This policy applies to:

- MHR Clients
- MHR Management and Personnel
- MHR Panel members

DEFINITIONS

Terms	Definition/Description for the purpose of this policy
CRS	MHR Payroll system
HPCSA	Health Professions Council of South Africa. The Council guides and regulates the health professions in South Africa in aspects pertaining to registration, education and training, professional conduct and ethical behaviour, fostering compliance with healthcare standards. All individuals who practise any of the health care professions incorporated in the scope of the HPCSA are obliged by the Health Professions Act No. 56 of 1974 to register with the Council. Failure to do so constitutes a criminal offence.
MHRM	MHR Management system
ML007 Report	CRS Report - MHRM audit on PM booked 7 days back
ML305 Report	CRS Report - MHRM employee history with pay rate
SANC	South African Nursing Council

POLICY STATEMENT

- 1) The panel member is responsible for applying for sick leave benefits at the applicable MHR office.
- 2) Sick leave is granted only in cases of illness, indisposition and injury that are not the result of the panel member's own doing, misconduct or negligence.
- 3) Sick leave is granted **1 (one) hour for every 26 (twenty-six) hours** worked **over a 3 (three) year cycle**. The cycle starts on the panel member's date of engagement and cannot be carried forward.

- 4) Panel members may be scheduled for shifts in advance, but sick leave is only granted if the MHR representative **CONFIRMED** the panel member for the specific shift prior to the commencement of the shift.
- **Weekdays/nights:** Panel member must be **confirmed** not earlier than **24 hours** before the shift starts.
 - **Weekend confirmation:** Panel member must be **confirmed** no earlier than **36 hours** before the shift starts (on a Friday).
- 5) The panel member must submit their medical certificate to the nearest MHR office **no later than one month** after the sick leave period.
- 6) An electronic, original hard copy, scanned copy or photo of the medical certificate can be submitted as follows:
- Medical certificate can be emailed to:
 - **MHR Central Region** (*Free State, KwaZulu-Natal and Northern Cape*)
admin.central@mhr.co.za
 - **MHR North Region** (*Gauteng, Limpopo, Mpumalanga and North West*)
admin.north@mhr.co.za
 - **MHR Western Cape Region** (*Southern and Western Cape locations*)
admin.wc@mhr.co.za
 - Original medical certificate must be handed in at the nearest MHR office
- 7) This section pertains to medical certificates issued for in-person or virtual consultations:
- MHR accepts medical certificates issued by the following practitioners:
 - Medical Practitioner (GP or Specialist) registered with HPCSA
 - Dental Practitioner/Dental Specialist registered with HPCSA
 - Homeopath
 - Chiropractor
 - Ophthalmologist or Optometrist registered with HPCSA
 - MHR also accepts medical certificates from registered clinics issued by a Professional Nurse who possesses an additional qualification in Clinical Nursing Science, Health Assessment, Treatment and Care **and** an additional qualification in Occupational Health Nursing
 - Professional Nurses who do not possess these additional qualifications may only issue certificates of attendance as per SANC's position statement.
 - The SANC number must be specified on the medical certificate and MHR to check the SANC eRegister to confirm the Professional Nurse's qualification.
 - The recommended period for Professional Nurse Practitioners to issue a medical certificate is a maximum of 2 (two) days.
 - **A medical certificate must clearly state the following:**
 - Date certificate was issued
 - Examination date
 - Exact period of recommended sick leave
 - Name and surname of the patient
 - Doctor's name and surname/Professional Nurse's name and surname (Clinics)
 - Practice number/SANC number of Professional Nurse (Clinics)
 - Address and contact number of the practice/clinic
 - Doctor's signature/Professional Nurse's signature (Clinics)
 - Doctor's qualification and/or hospital/clinic reference

- Generic diagnosis and description of illness (This is not obligatory). It must also be indicated whether the certificate was issued as a result of personal observations by the practitioner during an examination or as a result of information received from the patient which was based on acceptable medical grounds
 - The panel member is responsible for checking the certificate when issued to ensure all the required information is specified on the certificate before submitting it to MHR.
 - **Panel members are reminded to be aware of the following insofar as medical certificates are concerned:**
 - Where an adjustment is made to a medical certificate (which is not signed by the applicable medical practitioner); **OR**
 - Where MHR has any reason to believe there has been inappropriate use of the certificate; **OR**
 - Where there is evidence to suggest that the certificate is not authentic, **the following may apply:**
 - i. Payment of sick leave may be withheld pending an investigation. Such investigation shall, wherever possible, be completed within 5 (five) working days.
 - ii. The outcome of the investigation may result in disciplinary action being taken against the panel member and/or the period of absence not being paid.
- 8) When a panel member submits a medical certificate following the standards specified in **section 7 above**, the applicable shifts are paid according to the number of sick leave hours available.
- 9) All shifts scheduled in advance are cancelled.
- 10) No payment is granted if sick leave is exhausted.
- 11) MHR Regional/Administration Manager must check whether a panel member regularly exceeds their sick leave benefit by referring to the **Panel member work history (ML305) report on CRS**. It is an acceptable standard that panel members **should not exceed 5 (five) incidents per annum (1 calendar year)** for sick leave consumption. If this standard is exceeded, the Regional Manager must initiate corrective counselling with the panel member according to the MHR Code of Conduct.
- This standard refers to the number of frequencies of absence and not to serious and/or long-term illness occurrences. **Where it is not possible to correct the problem, MHR will proceed with appropriate incapacity/disciplinary actions.**
- 12) The Regional Manager is responsible for using discretion when approving sick leave, and the Regional Manager is encouraged to review the panel member's sick leave history, reasons for repetitive sick leave applications, and the panel member's work history at the client or MHR office.
- 13) Any panel member suspected of abusing their sick leave allocation or manipulating or contriving sick leave will be investigated and subjected to disciplinary action when appropriate. Abuse of MHR's sick leave policy could constitute fraudulent misconduct.
- 14) Injuries whilst on duty are processed as WCA leave - Please refer to the "Injury on Duty Policy".
- 15) A panel member who falls ill on duty will be granted sick leave if their sick leave application adheres to the criteria stipulated above.

PROCEDURE

The procedure below provides further guidelines regarding the sick leave application and payment procedure.

Steps	Actions
1	The panel member applies for the sick leave benefit by submitting their medical certificate, adhering to sections 5 - 7 above. Sick leave will not be processed until the MHR office receives the medical certificate.
2	<p>Upon receipt of the above – the authorised MHR representative (nominated by the MHR Regional Manager) continues with the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Checks whether the medical certificate complies with the standards specified in Section 7 above. It is also advisable to check whether the healthcare professional who issued the medical certificate is registered with the applicable Professional Council. Enters the panel member's ID/passport number on MHRM to obtain the panel member's MHR number. NB: Also checks whether the panel member has more than one profile on MHRM due to a tax change during the current 3 (three) year sick leave cycle. Runs, saves and checks the ML305 report(s) on CRS to confirm whether the panel member has not been paid for the claimed sick leave date (s). Runs, saves and checks the ML007 report on CRS to confirm whether the panel member was scheduled to work on the date(s) leave is claimed for. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the sick leave request is submitted by an MHR coordinator, the MHR coordinator is required to include a screenshot of the MHRM booking, as well as the cancellation as this serves as proof that the panel member was scheduled to work on the specific date(s). The shift must also adhere to the confirmation guidelines stipulated in Section 4 above. Checks the panel member tariff for the specific job description at the specific client on MHRM. Watch out for weekend and public holiday tariffs (When applicable). Completes an MHR attendance register for the date(s) the panel member is claiming, deducting lunch according to the job description and shift arrangements with the client. Signs the attendance register next to the sick leave entries confirming that the sick leave application adheres to the criteria stipulated in this policy. Emails the ML305/ML007 reports, and submits the completed register and medical certificate to the Regional Manager/Administration Manager for final approval.
3	<p>The Regional/Administration Manager continues with the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Checks whether the medical certificate submitted complies with the standards stipulated in section 7 of the policy statement. Checks the ML007 report received via email to reconfirm the dates the panel member was scheduled to work. Checks the ML305 report(s) received via email to identify whether the panel member regularly claims sick leave and addresses sick leave incidents according to section 11 above. Checks MHRM to reconfirm the tariff.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Checks whether all the details stipulated on the MHR attendance register were recorded accurately. If the above is in order, sign the attendance register as final payment approval.
4	The region forwards the approved attendance register and supporting documents to the MHR Payroll Officer and also informs the Payroll Officer if the panel member has more than one profile on MHRM during the current sick leave cycle.
5	The region files the medical certificate and supporting documents in the panel member's file.
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The MHR Payroll Officer calculates the sick leave payable, referring to the applicable panel member profile(s) generated during the current 3 (three) year sick leave cycle. The Payroll Officer confirms the number of hours to be paid with the MHR region. NB: The region to inform the panel member if fewer hours are paid than claimed. The sick leave is processed. The Payroll Clerk checks and signs off the sick leave payable as reflected on the pre-payrun. Payrun is processed and the panel member is paid on the weekly payrun. All documentation pertaining to the sick leave payout is filed as per normal payrun procedures.

ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

ACTS	
Basic Conditions of Employment Act	Act no 75 of 1997
Basic Conditions of Employment Amendment Act	Act no 11 of 2002
Health Professions Act (Former title: Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Service Professions Act)	Act no 56 of 1974
Nursing Act, 2005	Act no 33 of 2005
SANC Position Statement on issuing of sick notes by professional nurse practitioners	SANC website
MHR DOCUMENTS	
MHR Attendance register	MHR Secured docs
MHR Event Investigation	MHR Secured docs
ML305 MHRM employee history with pay rate	CRS
ML007 MHRM audit on PM booked 7 days back report	CRS
POLICIES	Location/Number
Guidelines - Management of Absenteeism	Intranet (HR Dept.)
MHR Attendance register policy	MHR Secured docs