



# DOH Standard for The Issuance and Attestation of Sick Leave Reports in The Emirate of Abu Dhabi

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## 1. Standard Purpose and Scope

### 1.1 Purpose

1.1.1 This Standard mandate the duties of DOH licensed Healthcare Providers issuing Sick Leave reports (e-sick leave reports). It sets the requirements to report to DOH on issued sick leave reports, and establishes the process, forms and evidence required for reporting and attestation of sick leave by the Medical Committee. The Standard aims to ensure that sick leave reports are issued in accordance with clinical evidence and professional and ethical practices.

### 1.2 Scope

1.2.1 This standard applies to all DOH licensed physicians in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi.

1.2.2 This is of relevance to all Abu Dhabi government employers and employees.

## 2. Definitions and Abbreviations

No.	Term / Abbreviation	Definition
2.1	Medical Committee	is the principal committee whose membership consists of experts in various medical fields established by DOH to satisfy the requirements of the Abu Dhabi Law No. 1 of (2006) Concerning Civil Service (DOH Standard for Medical Committee Terms of Reference).
2.2	Short-term sick leave	The Sick Leave certificate issued by a licensed GP physician for a maximum of three days at a time, justified by the patient conditions.
2.3	Long-term sick leave	The Sick Leave certificate issued by a licensed (consultant/specialist) physician with no maximum limit, justified by the patient conditions.
2.4	System Error	A system error occurs when the server or operating system crashes or malfunctions at a healthcare provider. Examples of system errors include, network failure, or a power failure

## 3. Standard Requirements and Specifications

### 3.1 Issuing short-term sick leave

3.1.1 DOH licensed physicians (GP's) may issue sick leave reports **for one or two or three days maximum for one single time justified by the patient's conditions.**

3.1.2 Where the patient's condition requires further extension on top of the additional three days, the patient must be referred to a DOH licensed specialist or consultant physician specializing in the disease specific field.

3.1.3 In case of system error only, sick leave certificates may be issued manually on the clinic's own letterhead. In such cases, they must include the licensed physician's full name and DOH license number, the patient's full name, date of consultation, period of sick leave recommended including start and end dates and the illness or condition for which the sick leave is recommended. A print screen of the system error must be attached.

3.1.4 The manual certificates that fulfill the above criteria can be stamped by DOH stamp.

### **3.2 Issuing long-term sick leave**

- 3.2.1 Only DOH licensed specialist and consultant physicians may issue sick leave certificates for periods of greater than three consecutive days provided that in case of exceeding continuous seven days at a time, a medical report must be attached thereto;
- 3.2.2 Long-term sick leave certificates must be:
- Issued using the DOH electronic sick leave system,
  - Supported with a case report using the DOH approved template available via the electronic system
  - Submitted to DOH via the DOH sick leave electronic system for attestation by the Medical Committee.
- 3.2.3 In case of system error only, long-term sick leave certificate may be issued on the clinic's own letterhead, and must include the licensed physician's full name and DOH license number, the patient's full name, date of consultation, period of sick leave recommended including start and end dates and the illness or condition for which the sick leave is recommended. A print screen of the system error must be attached.
- 3.2.4 The manual certificates that fulfill the above criteria can be stamped by DOH stamp.
- Long-term sick leave periods that are compatible with the period available in the e-sick leave system database can be automatically approved by the system based on specified conditions.
  - Long-term sick leave certificates shall be reviewed and attested by a member of the Medical Committee, based on a monthly schedule. Sick leave with inappropriate justification can be rejected or the Medical Committee member may request clarification or discuss it with the other members and Chairman during the Medical Committee meeting.

### **3.3 Reporting on issued sick leave certificate**

- 3.3.1 All DOH licensed physicians must report to DOH all sick leave reports issued to patients using the DOH electronic sick leave system. To do so, they must register with DOH to be granted access via Abu Dhabi government services (TAMM). Access to the electronic sick leave system will be granted by DOH upon a pre-given user name and password.

### **3.4 Attestation of Issued Sick Leave Reports by Medical Committee**

- 3.4.1 The Medical Committee is responsible for attesting patients' sick leave reports issued by healthcare providers.
- 3.4.2 long-term sick leave reports and short-term sick leave reports exceeding a cumulative total of 21 days in a calendar year or more than consecutive 7 days issued to Abu Dhabi government employees shall be submitted to the Medical Committee for attestation.
- 3.4.3 Requests for attestation will be accepted only from Abu Dhabi government entities, including employers, law enforcement authorities and the courts in accordance with the Abu Dhabi Law No. 1 of (2006) Concerning Civil Service.
- 3.4.4 The Medical Committee reserves the right to reject attesting sick leave certificates failing to demonstrate evidence of clear diagnosis, appropriate sick leave period for the condition, or where the requirements of this Standard are not fully satisfied.
- 3.4.5 For Long-term Sick leave reports issued by a DOH licensed physician, the sick leave certificate must be:
- Submitted to the Medical Committee and it shall be reviewed and attested within seven days from the date of sick leave issuance.
  - If the patient condition necessitates granting a prolonged sick leave period, the concerned physician should attach the appropriate supporting documents including full medical report detailing the diagnosis, supportive diagnostic test results (laboratory,

radiological investigations or any other means of investigation), clinical or surgical intervention and admission/discharge dates, follow up care or treatment including care management plan, where appropriate, and health condition as assessed by the treating physician.

3.4.6 Sick leave reports issued by a non-DOH licensed healthcare provider (nationally or internationally-based), must be:

- Signed and stamped by the treating physician and must bear the stamp of the physician's employing facility;
- Certified by the United Arab Emirates Embassy/Consulate office in the country from which the sick leave report is issued;
- Submitted to the Medical Committee within fifteen days from the date of patients' return to Abu Dhabi from travel outside the emirate;
- Accompanied by supporting documents including full medical report detailing the diagnosis, the period of sick leave, supportive diagnostic test results (laboratory, radiological investigations or any other means of investigation), clinical or surgical intervention and admission/discharge dates, follow up care or treatment including care management plan, where appropriate, and health condition as assessed by the treating physician.

## 4. Key stakeholder Roles and Responsibilities

### 4.1 DOH Role

4.1.1 DOH mandates the requirements for issuing sick leave certificates and for reporting issued certificates using the electronic system. In doing so, it is responsible for:

- Setting the duties on healthcare professionals issuing sick leaves, and specifying the requirements to report to DOH and submit sick leave certificates for attestation by the Medical Committee as per the terms of this Standard (Section 5);
- Establishing and maintaining the DOH electronic sick leave reporting and attestation system;
- Publishing, and from time to time, revising the DOH Standard for Issuance and Attestation of Sick Leave Reports in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi developed and maintained by the Medical Committee.

4.1.2 DOH appoints the members of the Medical Committee, sets its Terms of Reference and supports the Committee in fulfilling its functions;

4.1.3 Audit and inspection of DOH licensed healthcare providers, as well as enforcement of compliance with the requirements of this Standard and associated DOH Policies and Standards.

### 4.2 Duties of Healthcare Providers

4.2.1 Healthcare providers, including facilities and professionals, issuing sick leave reports must be licensed by DOH;

4.2.2 The responsible treating physician **must not** issue a sick leave:

- Without the actual examination of the patient,
- For a condition or illness falling outside of his/her specialty, scope of practice and the privileges granted by the employing facility,
- For a medical condition or illness other than that observed and examined at consultation,

Before the date of actual consultation, retrospectively or backdated.

## 5. Enforcement and Sanctions

5.1 Sick Leave reports issued to patients are legal documents. Healthcare service providers must comply with the terms and requirements of this Standard, the DOH Standard Provider Contract and the DOH Data Standards and Procedures. DOH may impose sanctions in relation to any breach of requirements under this Standard, (including the deliberated issue of false, misleading or inaccurate sick leave certificates) in accordance with the Complaints, Investigations, Regulatory Action and Sanctions Policy, Chapter, Healthcare Regulator Manual Version.