

5 February 2026

Applications for extensions of full sick pay under NHS Terms and Conditions of Service (Agenda for Change) within Belfast Health and Social Care Trust.

Time period: Please provide data for the last four complete financial years available (e.g. 2021 / 2022, 2022/23, 2023/24, and 2024/25 to date). If this period is not available, please provide the most recent three-year period held.

- 1. The total number of applications made by staff for an extension of full sick pay in each year.**

Information regarding requests for extension to sick pay entitlement was not collated centrally in Human Resources until 2025. Therefore, no records are available before this.

18 applications are recorded for 2025

- 2. of those applications listed in number one -**
 - The number approved;**
 - The number refused; and**
 - The number pending or not progressed (if recorded).**

From the 18 requests received for an extension to full sick pay entitlement, Belfast Trust can advise that 12 requests were declined.

Due to the potential to make individuals identifiable, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust reserves its right not to release the number of applications received in the 2025 / 2026 period that have been approved, are pending or that were not progressed as the figure in each category is <5.

Use of <5 (less than five): We are unable to provide an exact figure - exempt from release under Section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act - Personal Information relating to a third party. Disclosure would constitute a breach of the principles of the General Data Protection Regulation 2018.

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- 3. The average length of time between:**
- submission of an application for extension of full sick pay, and the panel decision.

From the 18 requests for an extension to full sick pay received, the average waiting period for the panel's decision was 3 months.

- 4. The number of occasions (if recorded) where an employee's full sick pay expired before a panel decision was made.**

From the 18 requests for an extension to full sick pay received, the average waiting period for the panel's decision was 3 months.

- 5. Any recorded guidance, instructions, or internal communications (current at the time of this request) provided to managers or staff which reference:**
- the use of annual leave during periods of certified sickness absence; or
- the use of annual leave while awaiting a panel decision on an extension of full sick pay.

There is no recorded guidance in relation to the use of annual leave during certified sickness absence or the use of annual leave while awaiting a panel decision on an extension of full sick.

It is understood that an employee cannot be forced to take annual leave while on sick leave. However, if an employee on sick leave wishes to request a period of annual leave, they can do so.