



No 664/2009

Ref :GM/IH

Date: 31<sup>st</sup> July 2009

Dear Colleague

**Swine Flu and the BT Attendance Policy**

Information has been sent out by both BT and the Union's health & Safety Department regarding BT's approach to Swine Flu. However, my office has received a number of calls and emails looking for clarification on the effect on the Attendance Policy for those people affected.

The guidance states:

*5.5. How will any sickness absence due to swine flu be treated under BT's attendance procedure?*

*BT's attendance policy, procedure and processes have all been revised recently and agreed with the trades unions. The approach to be taken is that managers should consider all relevant information when an individual's attendance falls below the expected standard and that any exceptional or mitigating circumstances should be taken into account when determining what, if any, action is appropriate. An influenza pandemic is clearly an exceptional circumstance but no absences are automatically discounted without manager consideration.*

In the context that once Swine Flu has been contracted, the person has a natural immunity to the virus, **BT Group clarified in a meeting with the CWU yesterday that they would not expect anyone to be disciplined as a result of absence owing to Swine Flu. This is a Group wide approach and is not a Line of Business decision.**

If branches encounter any difficulties in this regard please inform my office for further advice.

Regards

Yours sincerely,

**Grace Mitchell**  
Assistant Secretary