



**sick note**



**to**



**fit note**

# Statement of Fitness for Work

Guide to the new 'fit note'

This guide explains what to do when you get a fit note from your doctor. The fit note is a new form your doctor will give you when your health affects your ability to work. It replaces the old sick note.

The fit note may include advice from your doctor on how you may be able to return to work. Work can be an important part of your recovery. You can find more details online at **[www.dwp.gov.uk/fitnote](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/fitnote)**

## What if my fit note says I am 'not fit for work'?

Give or send the fit note to your employer. It provides evidence that you cannot work because of your health. Your employer will use it to arrange your sick pay. If you are self-employed or unemployed, you can use the fit note to support a claim for benefits.

## What if my fit note says I 'may be fit for work'?

If the fit note says you 'may be fit for work', this means you may be able to return to work with some help from your employer.

You should discuss this advice with your employer to see if you can return to work, taking into account the effects of your illness or injury. If it is possible for you to return to work you should agree how this will happen, what support you will receive and how long the support will last.

If you and your employer agree it is not possible for you to return to work until you have recovered further, you do not need to return to your doctor for a new fit note.

If you are self-employed or unemployed, you can still use the fit note to make a claim for benefits even if the doctor has advised that you 'may be fit for work'.

## Do I need to see my doctor again before I return to work?

Your doctor will say on the fit note whether they need to see you again before you return to work.

## When can I return to work?

You should return to work as soon as you feel well enough and with your employer's agreement. This may be before your fit note runs out. However, if your doctor has advised that it would be unsafe or bad for your health to return to work, you should take this advice seriously. For some jobs there are separate processes to ensure it is safe for you to return. If so, your employer will tell you.

## How does this affect benefits?

The way you apply for benefit has not changed. If the fit note says you 'may be fit for work', you can still apply for benefit. Information on how to claim benefit is on the back of the fit note.

## How does this affect Statutory Sick Pay?

The arrangements for Statutory Sick Pay have not changed. If the fit note says you may be fit for work but you and your employer agree that you should remain off work, then you can still receive Statutory Sick Pay. If you are in doubt about your rights to Statutory Sick Pay, you can seek advice from your trade union or an advice centre. You can find detailed information about Statutory Sick Pay online at [www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk)

## **Important information about this leaflet**

This leaflet is only a guide and does not cover every circumstance. We have done our best to make sure that the information in this leaflet is correct as of March 2010. It is possible that some of the information is oversimplified, or may become inaccurate over time, for example because of changes to the law.



This report can be accessed online at:

[www.dwp.gov.uk/fitnote](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/fitnote)

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[www.dwp.gov.uk](http://www.dwp.gov.uk)