



sick note

to

fit note

Statement of Fitness for Work

– the fit note explained

This guide explains what you should do when your doctor gives you a fit note. The fit note is the new form which your doctor will give you when your health affects your ability to work. It replaces the sick note. The main difference is that the fit note allows your doctor to advise you 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.nidirect.gov.uk/fitnote



Department for
**Social
Development**

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

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

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

Your doctor will advise you that you 'may be fit for work' if they believe 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 form to make a claim for benefits if the doctor has advised that you 'may be fit for work'.

Do I need to see my doctor again before I go back to work?

Your doctor will say on the form if they need to see you again. So, unless requested, you do not need to see your doctor again before you go back to work.

When can I return to work?

You should return to work as soon as you feel well enough to do so and with the agreement of your employer. This might be before your fit note runs out. However, if your doctor has advised you 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 to your job. Your employer will advise you if this is the case.

How does this affect benefits?

The way you apply for benefit has not changed. If your doctor has recommended that you 'may be fit for work' you can still apply for benefit. Information on how to make a claim to benefit is on the back of your fit note.

How does this affect Statutory Sick Pay (SSP)?

The arrangements for Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) have not changed. If a doctor recommends that you may be fit for work, but you and your employer agree that you should remain off work you can still receive SSP. If you are in doubt about your rights to SSP, you can seek advice from your trade union or an advice centre. You can find detailed information about SSP online at **www.nidirect.gov.uk**

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 April 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:

<http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/fitnote>