

**Our client cancellation,
did not attend and was
not brought policy**



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1 In a nutshell

At The Owl we committed to providing timely assessments and support to all clients. Missed appointments can delay care, impact assessment outcomes, and reduce the availability of appointments for other clients. This policy sets out our approach to appointment cancellations and non-attendance

2 Scope

This policy applies to all clients referred to The Owl for assessment and related appointments.

3 Our commitment to continuity of care

We recognise that there are many legitimate reasons why a client may be unable to attend an appointment, including illness, family emergencies, work commitments, technical difficulties, transport issues, caring responsibilities or other unforeseen circumstances.

We are committed to delivering compassionate, accessible and person-centred care. Where appropriate, and wherever operationally possible, The Owl will make reasonable efforts to reschedule appointments to ensure our clients can continue their assessment or treatment journey without unnecessary disruption.

3.1.1 Rescheduling appointments

When a client provides notice that they are unable to attend, we will:

- Offer an alternative appointment at the earliest available opportunity
- Consider alternative appointment formats where appropriate, such as virtual appointments
- Make reasonable steps to understand and address barriers to attendance.
- Prioritise continuity of care and minimise delays to assessment or treatment pathways

3.1.2 Providing appropriate notice

We ask all clients, parents, carers and representatives to provide as much notice as possible if they are unable to attend a scheduled appointment. Providing notice allows appointments to be offered to other clients waiting for support and helps ensure the effective use of clinical capacity.



Where possible:

- A minimum of 48hours' notice should be provided for appointment cancellations or requests to reschedule
- Clients should notify The Owl as soon as they become aware they cannot attend
- Notification can be made via the contact details provided in appointment communications and shown below
- Where less than 48 hours' notice is given, the reason for cancellation will be considered, particularly when there are exceptional or emergency circumstances

3.1.3 Appointment change communication channels

Scenario	Who to contact
I have an appointment that is more than 48 hours away, who do I contact?	bookings@theowl.org
I have an appointment that is less than 48 hours away, who do I contact?	cancellations@theowl.org

3.1.4 Unavoidable emergencies

We understand that emergencies can occur which prevent attendance at short notice.

Where a client experiences an unavoidable emergency, they or their representative should contact The Owl as soon as possible. Each situation will be considered on its individual circumstances, and where appropriate the appointment will be rearranged without prejudice to the client's ongoing care.

Examples may include:

- Sudden illness
- Family bereavement
- Accidents or medical emergencies
- Significant transport disruption
- Unexpected caring responsibilities

3.1.5 Repeated non-attendance

While The Owl is committed to supporting clients to access care, repeated non-attendance may impact on service delivery, appointment availability for other patients, and assessment timelines.



Where there are repeated did not attends, The Owl may:

- Contact the client to understand any barriers to engagement
- Offer support or alternative arrangements where appropriate
- Review whether ongoing appointments remain clinically appropriate
- Consider discharge in line with contractual requirements, commissioning arrangements, safeguarding obligations, and service-specific procedures

Clients will be informed of any concerns and given reasonable opportunity to re-engage before discharge is considered, unless there are contractual or clinical reasons that require an alternative approach.

4 Appointment cancellation categories

To support effective service delivery and maximise appointment availability for all patients, The Owl categorises missed appointments as follows:

4.1.1 Cancellation with appropriate notice

A cancellation with appropriate notice occurs when a client parent, carer or representative informs The Owl of their inability to attend an appointment at least 48 hours before the scheduled appointment time.

Where appropriate notice is provided:

- The appointment will be recorded as a cancelled appointment
- The Owl will seek to reschedule the appointment where clinically and operationally appropriate. This could result in a delay in your next appointment being offered
- The cancellation will not be treated as a did not attend
- Repeated cancellations will lead to a review of the clients' ongoing pathway and potential discharge in line with contractual, commissioning or clinical requirements

4.1.2 Late cancellation

A late cancellation occurs when a client, parent, carer or representative cancels an appointment less than 48 hours before the scheduled appointment time.

Late cancellations can impact clinical capacity and prevent appointments from being offered to other clients.



Where a late cancellation occurs:

- The appointment will be recorded as a late cancellation
- The reason for cancellation will be considered
- Genuine emergencies and exceptional circumstances will be taken into account
- The Owl will seek to reschedule the appointment where clinically and operationally appropriate. This could result in a delay in your next appointment being offered
- Repeated late cancellations will lead to a review of the clients ongoing pathway and potential discharge in line with contractual, commissioning or clinical requirements

Important: typically, when a client has two late cancellations, this will lead to an automatic discharge, in line with contractual and commissioning arrangements.

4.1.3 Did not attend (DNA)

A did not attend occurs when:

- A client does not attend their scheduled appointment; and
- No prior notification has been received by The Owl Centre; or
- Contact is made after the appointment has already commenced or been missed

Where a did not attend occurs:

- The appointment will be recorded as a did not attend
- The Owl will contact the client to understand the reasons for non-attendance
- Any safeguarding concerns or barriers to engagement will be considered.
- Repeated did not attends will lead to a review of the clients ongoing pathway and potential discharge in line with contractual, commissioning or clinical requirements

Important: typically, when a client has two did not attends, this will lead to an automatic discharge, in line with contractual and commissioning arrangements.

4.1.4 Was not brought (WNB)

For children and young people who are unable to legally consent to treatment, The Owl uses the term **was not brought** rather than **did not attend**.



This terminology recognises that attendance is the responsibility of a parent, carer or person with parental responsibility and avoids placing responsibility on the child or young person where they may have had no control over the missed appointment.

A was not brought occurs when:

- A child or young person does not attend a scheduled appointment
- No prior notification has been received by The Owl
- A parent, carer or representative fails to bring the child to the appointment
- Notification is received only after the appointment has been missed

Where a child or young person is not brought to an appointment:

- The appointment will be recorded as a was not brought
- We will make reasonable efforts to understand the reasons for the non-attendance
- Consideration will be given to any barriers that may have prevented attendance
- The potential impact on the child's health, wellbeing and assessment pathway will be considered
- We will review whether there are any safeguarding concerns or patterns of non-engagement requiring further consideration
- Appropriate efforts will be made to reschedule the appointment where clinically and operationally appropriate
- Repeated was not brought's will lead to a review of the clients ongoing pathway and potential discharge in line with contractual, commissioning or clinical requirements

Important: typically, when a client has two WNB, this will lead to an automatic discharge, in line with contractual and commissioning arrangements.

5 Safeguarding concerns

Before any discharge decision is made, safeguarding risks and individual circumstances will be considered. The Owl reserves the right to take a different approach where there are known vulnerabilities, safeguarding concerns, or clinical risks.



6 Equality, inclusion and accessibility

The Owl is committed to ensuring that attendance difficulties arising from disability, neurodiversity, communication needs, language barriers, or other protected characteristics are appropriately considered. Reasonable adjustments will be offered wherever practicable to support clients in accessing services.



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