

# MANAGERS GUIDE – Maternity

## What should I do when an employee informs me she is pregnant?

When an individual notifies you of their pregnancy, you should ask her to complete a Notification of Pregnancy Form and let her know where she can access the Maternity Policy and Process. You should also familiarise yourself with the Maternity Policy and Process which will enable you to support and guide your employees in respect of maternity issues. Thereafter you should arrange a meeting to discuss the contents of the form and advise of the need to carry out a pregnancy risk assessment.

## How do I carry out a pregnancy risk assessment?

You will need to carry out a risk assessment as soon as possible after a pregnancy notification has been received in order to establish any possible risks or hazards. A Pregnancy Risk Assessment Form is available from your HR Team. If a risk is identified, the employee may be advised to move into a temporary position until she goes on to maternity leave or a temporary suspension from duties in some cases. Please speak to your HR Team for more information.

## Can an employee attend pregnancy related medical appointments during work time?

During pregnancy the individual will need to attend various medical checks/classes. Such appointments must be allowed during work time and are paid. You may ask to see confirmation of these appointments.

## I've received a MATB1 form from my employee, what should I do with it?

The individual will be provided with a MATB1 Form (Maternity Certificate) from their doctor or midwife at around 24 weeks of pregnancy. This is official confirmation of the pregnancy and when the baby is due. The original form should be sent to HR and a copy retained by the employee.

## How much maternity leave is an employee entitled to?

All employees, regardless of length of service or the number of hours worked per week are entitled to take up to 52 weeks maternity leave in total. This leave includes 26 weeks ordinary maternity leave (OML) and 26 weeks additional maternity leave (AML).

## When should an employee confirm her maternity leave plans?

An employee will need to provide you with at least 28 days' notice of their intention to go on to maternity leave by completing a Maternity Leave Notification Form. Maternity leave can start on any day of the week, providing it is no earlier than the 11 weeks before the expected week of childbirth (EWC). The form should be forwarded to your HR Team so that the maternity leave plans can be confirmed in writing.

## Can an employee change her maternity leave plans?

A pregnant employee can change her intended leave date at any time and for any reason, however by law is required to give you a minimum of 28 days' notice of this change. Please ask her to complete a Changing your Maternity Leave form and arrange a time to discuss the details. Please advise your HR Team of such changes.

## Can I replace a maternity leaver?

When an individual informs you of their pregnancy it's time to start thinking about how the work will be covered whilst she is on maternity leave. Could the workload be re-distributed amongst existing team members? Is there the possibility for an internal employee to be seconded into the role? If there aren't any such options available to you, you may wish to recruit someone externally on a temporary basis to provide maternity cover.

## My employee is going on maternity leave soon, is there any additional I need to do?

It's a good idea to meet with your employee a couple of weeks prior to the start of the maternity leave period to ensure that everything has been planned for and taken into consideration. It's important to agree how you will maintain contact whilst the employee is on maternity leave. Use the Prior to Starting Maternity Leave form to structure your discussion.

## I've been informed that the baby has arrived early, what should I do?

If the baby arrives early, the maternity leave period is automatically triggered. Please advise your HR Team of the birth date so that the revised maternity leave dates and payment schedule can be confirmed in writing to the employee.

## I've received a Keeping in Touch (KIT) request form, what should I do?

Keeping in touch (KIT) days allow an employee to go to work, to undertake training and to keep in touch with the employer for up to 10 days during the maternity leave period without bringing the maternity leave or pay to an end. Such days are different to the reasonable contact that employers and employees may make with one another and any work done on any day during the maternity leave period will count as a whole keeping in touch day. The type of work that the employee undertakes on keeping in touch days is a matter for agreement between you and the employee.

## What do I need to consider when an employee is returning to work?

Unless notified otherwise, it is assumed that an employee will be taking 52 weeks of maternity leave. If an employee wishes to return to work early, she must provide 8 weeks' notice. Ask the employee to confirm her intentions in writing using the Notification of Return to Work form and set up a convenient time to discuss this in detail using the Return to Work Discussion form for guidance. If the employee is returning to work after Ordinary Maternity Leave (26 weeks) she is entitled to return to the same job. If returning to work after Additional Maternity Leave (52 weeks) it may not be possible to return to her previous job but she should be offered a suitable alternative job with the same terms and conditions of employment. To facilitate a welcoming return to work, make a note in your diary of the anticipated return to work date and make sure all relevant arrangements are in place in good time e.g. induction training and necessary company equipment.

## What should I do if an employee wishes to return part-time or on different hours?

Wherever possible, we will support any request for a change to working pattern. All requests will need to be accompanied by a flexible working application form. Please refer to the flexible working process or speak to your HR Team for more information.

## What should I do if an employee does not wish to return to work following maternity leave?

The employee must indicate that she does not wish to return in writing, giving contractual notice. You should then follow the standard leaver process.