*[Insert name]*

*[Insert address]*

*[Insert date]*

Dear *[insert name]*,

Thank you for informing me about your pregnancy and the date that your baby is due. I would like to extend my congratulations to you.

I have taken this opportunity to outline your entitlements to maternity leave and pay and also risk assessments in respect of your health and safety at work.

**Ante-natal care**

You are entitled to paid time off during normal working hours in order to attend ante-natal classes, and this time off will be paid at your normal hourly rate. I would be grateful if you could give us as much notice as possible in respect of your appointments in order that we can arrange cover. You will also need to provide a copy of your appointment card for all appointments other than the first one.

**Health and safety**

As your employer, I need to ensure your health and safety is not put at risk whilst you are working during your pregnancy. I will arrange for a specific risk assessment of your job and we will discuss what adjustments (if any) we need to take in respect of your working environment. To do this, I may seek your permission to approach your GP for his/her advice on your pregnancy and appropriate adjustments. If you have any concerns in respect of this assessment I would be grateful if you could let me know immediately.

**Maternity leave**

You are entitled to a maximum of 52 weeks’ maternity leave in total, broken down as follows:

• 26 weeks’ Ordinary Maternity Leave. You are not permitted to work for *[delete as appropriate - two weeks/four weeks (period is four weeks if employee works in a factory environment)]* immediately after your baby is born, as this is the Compulsory Maternity Leave period

• 26 weeks’ Additional Maternity Leave that starts immediately after Ordinary Maternity Leave.

Maternity leave can commence, at the earliest, at the 11th week before the expected week of childbirth, and, at the latest, the day after the birth of your baby. In order to take advantage of the right to maternity leave, you must follow the required notification procedures. These are outlined below under the heading ‘Notice Requirements’.

**Maternity pay**

*[Select from the paragraphs below and delete as appropriate]*

*[EITHER]*

Unfortunately, you are not entitled to receive Statutory Maternity Pay as you do not meet the qualifying conditions. The attached SMP1 form provides more information on this.

However, you may be eligible to receive State Maternity Allowance (SMA) and I would advise that you contact your Job Centre Plus to clarify this. The attached SMP1 form will assist in your claim.

*[OR]*

You are entitled to receive Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) for a maximum 39 weeks. Generally speaking, the first six weeks of SMP is paid at 90 per cent of your average weekly earnings, which is *[insert amount].* The remaining maximum 33 weeks is paid at the standard rate *[insert amount],* however, if 90 per cent of your average weekly earnings is less than the standard rate, you will receive 90 per cent of your average weekly earnings for the entire maternity pay period. The average weekly earnings are taken from the eight weeks up to and including the ‘qualifying week’. Your qualifying week is *[insert date].*

I must inform you that any entitlement to SMP may be affected if you work for another employer whilst you are receiving SMP. You must therefore inform us if this happens.

*[OR]*

We operate a Company maternity pay scheme which is subject to qualifying criteria. The details of this scheme are as follows: [insert details].

**Notice requirements**

To exercise your right to maternity leave and Statutory Maternity Pay, please inform me by the 15th week before your expected week of childbirth (EWC), unless not reasonably practicable, of:

* when the EWC will be. This is done by providing your Certificate MATB1, a maternity certificate from a registered medical practitioner or midwife that is normally issued within 20 weeks of your EWC
* the date you wish your maternity leave to start. This must be in writing and cannot be a date that is earlier than the beginning of the 11th week before your EWC.

Please tell me at least 28 days in advance of the start date if you have changed your mind about when you wish your maternity leave to begin unless this is not reasonably practicable to do.

Once I’ve received your plans, I will write to you within 28 days confirming the date you will be expected to return to work after taking your full maternity leave entitlement.

You may be entitled to opt into shared parental leave. The aim of shared parental leave is to give you the flexibility to decide who, between you and your partner, will take time off after a baby is born, and how much time you will take off. There are various qualifying criteria attached to shared parental leave so if you think you would like to take shared parental leave, please ask me for more information.

**Keeping in touch days**

During your maternity leave, you may work for up to 10 days without losing your entitlement to maternity leave and *[delete as appropriate – SMP/MA]*. These are called Keeping in Touch days (KIT days). You may not work a KIT day within *the [delete as appropriate - two weeks/four weeks (period is four weeks if employee works in a factory environment)]* after you have given birth. KIT days are intended to help you keep in touch with us and allow you to do some work during your maternity leave for which you will receive your normal rate of pay offset against *[delete as appropriate – SMP/MA]*. KIT days may only be taken where the dates are mutually agreeable for us both.

**Internal vacancies/opportunities at work**

During your maternity leave we are keen to keep you informed of any internal vacancies/opportunities that may arise, or other Company information that may be useful to you. However, we are conscious that you may not wish to be contacted during your leave, therefore we would kindly request that you indicate to us whether or not you wish to be contacted.

**Annual leave**

You will continue to accrue holidays whilst you are on maternity leave. As these holidays cannot be taken whilst you are on maternity leave, it is important for us to discuss and agree the arrangements for the taking of these holidays. For example, if you decide to take the full 52 weeks’ leave you will accrue *[insert number]* days’ holiday during this time, therefore you may wish, with our agreement, to take some of these holidays prior to the start of your maternity leave and then tag some onto the end. I appreciate that at this stage you may not have made any firm decisions, but perhaps once you have given this some thought we can discuss this further. Any holiday requests must be agreed by us before they can be granted.

Yours sincerely,

*[Insert name]*

*[Insert job title]*