

Line Managers Pregnancy and Maternity Guide

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## Information sent to Staff member

When you have received the joyous news that your staff member is pregnant, there are a few things that you need to do and be aware of.

Enclosed with this guide is a copy of the Maternity Pack which has been sent to your staff member by HR/ Admin. Attached are also a list of enclosures that they have also received so that you can read them.

The enclosures attached to this document are:

* Pregnancy and Maternity Policy
* Shared Parental Leave Policy
* Parental leave
* Flexible working

## Risk Assessments

Also enclosed are 2 risk assessments for you to complete with your staff member:

* There is one for you to complete with them when you first find out that your staff member is pregnant.
* The second more detailed risk assessment is to be done 3 months after the first risk assessment, and then monthly thereafter to continually assess any changing risk factors as your staff member’s pregnancy progresses. This is to ensure that all possible risks to your staff member and the baby have been identified and measures put in place to reduce or prevent those risks.

Where you have identified a risk, you must ensure that you take steps to reduce or prevent the risk by law. Sometimes this will mean temporarily amending the role to remove any risky duties. Occasionally this can even mean that you need to put the staff member into another role entirely. There are very rare cases, where the risk of the role simply cannot be removed, and in this instance, you may need to put the employee on paid leave until either the risk has been removed or until they start their maternity leave. You should speak to HR before making a decision on this, as there are specific letters that will need to be sent to the staff member.

## Ante-natal appointments

All employees are entitled to reasonable paid time off for ante-natal appointments. Your staff member should confirm with you the dates that they have been given, and if requested, should provide you evidence such as an appointment card or letter.

## Sickness absence during pregnancy

It is likely that during the first 12 weeks of pregnancy, your staff member will be feeling quite ill with morning sickness and may need to take time off sick. During any part of the pregnancy there can be sickness issues which specifically relate to the pregnancy, and you should be mindful that you may need to make some adjustments to their role to help alleviate these issues when they return from sick leave. Any sickness absence related to the staff member’s pregnancy will not count towards their sickness absence triggers. It would be unlawful to do this. Therefore, we will not flag any pregnancy related sickness absence with a return-to-work form, although you may wish to re-look at the risk assessment on their return and make any necessary arrangements.

If your staff member is off sick with a pregnancy related illness in the 4 weeks prior to the baby’s due date, then their maternity leave will automatically start the next day, so it will be important for you to let us know, so that we can ensure Payroll know.

## Annual leave accrual

During your staff member’s maternity leave, they will continue to accrue annual leave as normal. This includes the normal annual leave and bank holiday leave accrual. If your staff member’s maternity leave starts mid-way through the year, it is prudent for them to ensure that they take all their annual leave before their maternity leave starts. Likewise, if they return mid-way through the next year, it would be prudent for you to discuss with them about taking any accrued annual leave for that current year, once their maternity leave has finished (Effectively extending their leave a bit). Then the remainder of their annual leave entitlement can be used during the rest of the year.

## Clothing

During your staff member’s pregnancy, they will experience things like hot flushes and generally feeling uncomfortable, therefore it will be important for you to be flexible about what they wear to work. If your staff member is in a front facing role, you may wish to let them know that during interactions with other customers, you would like them to still wear smart clothing, as a representative of the organisation. The main thing to note is that although they may need to wear sandals or looser fitting shoes due to their feet swelling, that they wear ones which have straps at the back to stop them falling off their feet while walking up and down stairs, as this would be a health and safety risk to both them and the baby.

## Planning workload for your staff member’s maternity leave

As soon as possible after finding out that your staff member is pregnant, you will need to look at how you cover their role during their maternity leave. They need to tell you and HR the date which they wish to start their maternity leave, by the 25th week of their pregnancy. Once your staff member has decided on a date for their maternity leave, they must write to HR to confirm this. HR will then send them a letter detailing their start and end dates for maternity leave and will cc you in this letter. For reference, they are entitled by law to 52 weeks of leave. They do not have to take this whole period, however, if they decide to return earlier than this, they need to give 8 weeks written notice.

As soon as you know when your staff member will be starting maternity leave, you should put together a recruitment plan, which provides for approximately a one month overlap between the temporary cover starting, and your staff member going on maternity leave.

You should then work with HR about how you will advertise this role. There is a form that you will be sent which details all the steps in the recruitment process.

## Updates while on maternity leave

You should discuss with your staff member, how they wish to receive any updates of what is happening within the organisation during their maternity leave. This doesn’t have to be frequent and is entirely up to the staff member whether they want to be contacted at all.

## Collections and Cards

In our office, we do have a culture of wishing people well when they go on maternity leave or leave the organisation. As the line manager, it will be up to you to organise any collections and a collective card for everyone to write their well wishes.

## When the baby is born

Although we have asked that the staff member contact us to let us know when the baby has been born, it is more likely that you will find out first, as the line manager. Therefore, we would appreciate it if you could email HR to let us know.

## Planning their return to work

You will see from the maternity pack, that your staff member can work up to 10 keeping in touch “KIT” days whilst on maternity leave. It is not essential that you offer them any work, and they do not have to accept any work. However, you may wish to ask them to do a KIT Day to do any training that is being run, or to plan their return to work.

At their return-to-work meeting, aside from discussing work related tasks, you will need to also discuss how they will use their accrued annual leave on their return as per the annual leave section.

Your staff member may tell you that they plan to continue breastfeeding or expressing milk on their return to work. You may need to discuss this with HR if the employee wishes to breastfeed their baby as this will involve spells of being away from the office/work and we would need to co-ordinate how this is done while maintaining the staff member’s contractual hours. They may even prefer to put in a temporary flexible working request to cover the time they will be absent. If the staff member will be expressing milk, then they will need to ensure that they utilise one of the fridges to store their milk and ensure that it is clearly labelled in the fridge. They will be able to use the lounge or meeting room 4 to do this, and will need to book the rooms in advance, but as we don’t have locks on those doors, they will need to put up a sign to say the room is engaged so that they have their privacy. You will need to discuss with them how they will fit expressing milk into their usual contractual hours.

## Once they have returned to the office

You will need to ensure that they settle back into the role well and keep a check on their wellbeing. Often returning to work after a long period of absence can be difficult especially if the baby is in childcare for the first time.

You should be aware that childcare issues can crop up at any time, and we have provision for this in the staff handbook. If it is likely to be a half day or one day absence until the staff member can find alternative childcare arrangements, then they have the option to take this day as unpaid, annual leave or TOIL. It is for you to agree this with them.

For longer term childcare issues, they have the option of parental leave and/or carers leave (if the child is disabled). Please refer to our policies on this, but let HR know what you have agreed with the staff member, so that we can process this through payroll.

You may also wish to set some objectives for your staff member to achieve as an interim measure until the next appraisal/ 6-month review is due. This will help to keep them focused on what they need to do on their return and act as a mini-induction period for them.

## Wellbeing

Because of how common post-natal depression is (1 in 10 women experience this), you should keep an eye on their wellbeing, and if you notice that they are struggling, you should speak to them about this. You should ideally refer them to their GP for support, however we also have mental health supporters on site who may be able to assist, and the Health Assured EAP that can be utilised. Staff also have access to the Diocesan Counsellor if they feel that they need more structured Christian counselling.

## Support for you as a line manager

If you need any further support when managing your staff member’s pregnancy, maternity, or return to work, or when conducting the recruitment campaign for temporary staff, please speak to HR.

## Checklist for line manager to complete

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| --- | --- |
| Action | Outcome |
| When did the staff member notify you that they are pregnant? |  |
| Have you read the Line Manager guide sent to you by HR? |  |
| Date completed initial risk assessment with staff member and sent to HR to store on personnel file |  |
| Date completed detailed risk assessment with staff member and sent to HR to store on personnel file |  |
| Have you scheduled dates to review the detailed risk assessment? (monthly until staff member goes on maternity leave) – please send these updates to HR |  |
| What is the baby’s due date |  |
| Has the MATB1 been sent to HR? |  |
| Date of maternity leave start (must notify you 15 weeks before due date)  |  |
| Have you commenced recruitment for someone to fill the staff member’s role temporarily? |  |
| Have you discussed how you will keep in touch with your staff member when they are on maternity leave? |  |
| Have you discussed KIT days which you may want the staff member to do? Please remember to let HR know when KIT days have been worked so we can notify payroll to make payment |  |
| Notify HR of any pregnancy related absence within 4 weeks of baby’s due date |  |
| Have you bought a card and started a collection to wish the staff member well during maternity leave |  |
| Date completed handover of duties prior to maternity leave |  |
| Have you notified HR that the baby has been born? |  |
| Have you set a date to meet with the staff member before their return from maternity leave to catch up and discuss work objectives? |  |
| Is the staff member planning on breastfeeding or expressing milk? If so, then you must complete the detailed risk assessment with them and send this to HR, and make provisions for the storage of milk etc |  |
| Has the staff member submitted a flexible working application? If so, then please discuss this with HR |  |