

Maternity Leave Provisions – Guidance Notes for Managers

This document is to be used by line managers of employees who are expecting a baby. Below are guidance notes to assist you in ensuring that legislation is adhered to.

Ante Natal Appointments

Employees are entitled to reasonable paid time off to attend ante-natal appointments and any related classes which are recommended by their midwife or medical practitioner. Line managers should not necessarily ask for proof of these appointments. Managers are, however, entitled to ask for evidence i.e. appointment cards should this be necessary.

Risk Assessment

A risk assessment should be carried out and documented as soon as the employee informs you of their pregnancy. This should cover all aspects of the job and any duties that would put the employee at risk should be relinquished.

'Keeping in Touch' Days

An employee on maternity leave is now able to agree to work up to 10 days during their statutory maternity leave (52 weeks). Any such work must be by agreement of both the employee and yourself – a line manager has no right to demand an employee works or attends work during their maternity leave period. Work may include training, or any other activity that will enable the employee to 'keep in touch' with the workplace.

Line managers are also entitled to have reasonable contact with an employee whilst they are on maternity leave. However, any contact with the employee should be made initially through Personnel Services, unless prior permission and contact details have been provided by the employee beforehand.

It is recommended that you discuss the arrangements regarding 'keeping in touch' days with the employee prior the commencement of their maternity leave.

Annual Leave entitlements

Entitlement to annual leave will accrue in the normal way whilst an employee is on maternity leave. Any request to take annual leave immediately prior to/after Maternity leave must be approved by the Dean of Faculty/Director/Head of Service/Centre/Line Manager.

Returning to work

At the end of the full maternity leave period (52 weeks) an employee can return to work without having given formal notice of her intention to do so. Line managers now have the right, however, to make contact with the employee – see reference to 'keeping in touch' days and also to discuss arrangements for returning to work. It is recommended that advice be sought from Personnel Services before making contact with the employee.

An employee returning to work before the end of her full maternity leave period will need to give 8 weeks notice, in writing, to Personnel Services. Once this is received Personnel Services will contact the line manager to confirm the date the employee will return.