

Pregnancy Loss Policy

Guidance for Employees who experience a miscarriage, ectopic pregnancy, molar pregnancy, still birth or abortion

We are so very sorry for your loss. We understand work may be the last thing on your mind right now, but we have put together this information to help you understand your rights. It is based on guidance supplied by the Miscarriage Association but also covers other pregnancy related losses.

We acknowledge that in the main body of this document, many of the links relate to the Miscarriage association as there is a lot of published information available which we felt was useful, not just for miscarriages, but any pregnancy loss. We have included links to other charities and support groups which you may find helpful at the end of this document.

For women who experience a miscarriage, ectopic pregnancy, molar pregnancy, still birth or abortion

Sick leave after a pregnancy loss is protected as 'pregnancy related' and will be recorded separately and as such will not count towards any sickness absence 'triggers'.

The facts:

You can self-certify for seven days, after this, you will need to get a 'fit note' or Fitness for Work statement from your GP that confirms your absence is pregnancy related.

Our sickness absence policy has more information [\(LINK\)](#).

You have a right to keep your pregnancy loss private if you choose and your manager will ask you what, if anything, you would like other people at work to know. Please ensure that you only share what you are comfortable in sharing. Whatever you decide now, you can change later so please do not feel under any undue pressure at this time. We will keep open levels of communication with you throughout and can discuss this more when you feel able.

Introduction

We appreciate that everyone's needs will be different. For example, some people may feel that they can continue to work as normal, while others may require more support, and some may even have to spend some time in hospital. Everyone will experience their loss differently, and we will not make any assumptions about how you feel or how you want to be treated.

Therefore, it is important that we are able to discuss these things with you to ensure that we do what is right for you and your family as such a difficult tie and that we are responding to your needs accordingly.

Partners, as well as grandparents and other close relatives, might be affected by the loss and you will need to consider how best to support them.

Talking about pregnancy loss

It's important to acknowledge the loss rather than to ignore it, unless you request otherwise. Your colleagues will be worried about you and will probably want to support you, however might not feel equipped to have a conversation with you. We are comfortable to discuss with team in advance of your return, what level of discussion you are comfortable with and communicate this for you. You can then organically share/ not share whatever level of detail you feel is appropriate when you return and with whom you wish to share.

The Miscarriage Association has more information on [talking about miscarriage in the workplace](#).

You may be very confused and upset which is understandable. We recognise that the shock of losing a pregnancy may make it difficult for you to contact us to tell us what has happened, and/or to discuss what happens next with work. You may find [this page from the Miscarriage Association](#) helpful.

At an appropriate point, we will need to speak to you about what you would like colleagues to know about your loss. This could be your line manager or another trusted colleague. If you do not wish to share this information, we will respect your wishes. You should not feel pressured either way.

This type of contact can help your colleagues to understand what has happened, what the effects might be on you, and how to be supportive. It will also make it easier for you to speak to colleagues when you return to work. Colleagues may find it helpful to look at the Miscarriage Association's [information for colleagues](#) and the leaflet [Supporting someone you know](#).

For partners

If you are the partner of someone who has experienced a physical loss, you are entitled to compassionate leave. Please discuss this with your line manager and HR to agree the length of time you require.

Returning to work

When you are ready to return to work your manager should offer you a meeting where any specific needs can be discussed.

Your manager will contact you to arrange a meeting beforehand to discuss how they can help you. This may include a phased return if you feel this would be helpful. Your line manager will speak to you to discuss any reasonable adjustments, flexible working arrangements or to complete a wellness action plan.

This might include a temporary workplace adjustment, which is aimed at enabling you to remain at work rather than taking sick leave – for example more working from home, or a phased return to work. This can be particularly important if you have ongoing hospital appointments to attend.

We also acknowledge that it might also be very difficult for someone who has suffered a pregnancy loss to work closely with or near to a colleague who is pregnant or has recently given birth. If this is the case, we would be comfortable to explore whether working in a different location within the office would be possible and helpful.

You may find it helpful to look at the Miscarriage Association's [information for employees](#) here. This includes information on [going back to work after a miscarriage](#).

Future leave

You, and perhaps your partner or close family member, may need time off in the future to attend appointments related to your loss.

In any future pregnancy, additional scans and monitoring may be required. We will always do our utmost to accommodate these requests. You have a right to take reasonable time off for antenatal care¹. Partners of pregnant people have a statutory right to time off to attend two antenatal appointments however, we will accommodate as many appointments as is reasonably feasible. This will be discussed and agreed on a case-by-case basis to ensure that we are doing the right thing by you individually. Please discuss this with your line manager or HR at the appropriate time.

Requests by partners for additional time off to attend further scans or other antenatal appointments may also be accommodated by allowing them to work flexibly, take annual or special leave to attend.

Helpful Guidance:

Maternity Pay and Maternity Leave Policy
Special Leave Policy
Sovereign Healthcare Employee Assistance Programme - 0800 028 9165
Mindful Employer Helpline - 0300 5556006

External support:

<https://www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk/information/miscarriage-and-the-workplace/employers-and-managers-information-and-support/supporting-an-employee-before-during-and-after-a-loss/>

Miscarriage Association
www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk
01924200799
info@miscarriageassociation.org.uk
Information and support to help you through a miscarriage, ectopic pregnancy or molar pregnancy.

Sands
sands.org.uk
0808 164 3332
helpline@sands.org.uk
Information and support for stillbirth and neonatal death

[NHS Stillbirth pages](#)

¹ <https://maternityaction.org.uk/advice/time-off-for-antenatal-care/>

[Healthline stillbirth pages](#)

[NHS Abortion pages](#)

[British Pregnancy Advisory Service \(BPAS\)](#)

Ectopic Pregnancy Trust
ectopic.org.uk
020 7733 2653
Information and support for ectopic pregnancy

Maternity Action
maternityaction.org.uk
(find information and appropriate telephone numbers on this link)
Information on rights and benefits around pregnancy, pregnancy loss and maternity

[Tommy's baby loss charity](#)

[Tommy's charity baby loss series \(You Tube\)](#)

[Cradle early pregnancy loss charity](#)

Mind
mind.org.uk
Information on mental health support including Wellness Action Plans and reducing stress at work

Working families
workingfamilies.org.uk
0300 012 0312
advice@workingfamilies.org.uk
Advice for working families via website and helpline
<https://workingfamilies.org.uk/articles/miscarriage-stillbirth-and-neonatal-death-your-rights-at-work/>

Citizens Advice Bureau
citizensadvice.org.uk
(search for your local office on this link)
Free and confidential advice on benefits, work, and family

Additional Resources for Men:

https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/men-and-miscarriage_l_5c816144e4b020b54d833ac7

<https://www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Men-and-Miscarriage.pdf>

<http://www.miscarriageformen.com/>