

Maternity Policy

Policy Purpose

Pabulum is committed to the welfare of our employees. This policy sets out the rights and responsibilities of both Pabulum and employees who are pregnant or have recently given birth and sets out the arrangements for pregnancy-related sickness, health and safety, and maternity leave.

Arrangements for time off for antenatal care and to accompany a pregnant woman to antenatal appointments are set out in this policy.

In some cases, you and your spouse or partner may be eligible to opt into the shared parental leave (SPL) scheme which gives you more flexibility to share the leave and pay available in the first year. You will need to give us at least eight weeks' notice to opt into SPL, and you must remain on maternity leave until at least two weeks after birth. For information about SPL, see our Shared Parental Leave (Birth) Policy.

This policy only applies to employees and does not apply to agency workers or self-employed contractors. This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment, and we may amend this policy at any time.

Entitlement to Maternity Leave

All employees are entitled to up to 52 weeks' maternity leave, consisting of 26 weeks' ordinary maternity leave (OML) and 26 weeks' additional maternity leave (AML).

Notification

As soon as possible employees should inform Pabulum that they are pregnant. This is important as there may be health and safety considerations.

You must tell us you are pregnant by no later than the fifteenth week (**Qualifying Week**), or as soon as reasonably practical afterwards. In addition, and at the same time, you must tell us:

- (a) the week in which your doctor or midwife expects you to give birth (**Expected Week of Childbirth**); and
- (b) the date on which you would like to start your maternity leave (**Intended Start Date**).

We will write to you within 28 days to tell you the date we will expect you to return to work if you take your full maternity leave entitlement (**Expected Return Date**).

Once you receive a certificate from a doctor or midwife confirming your Expected Week of Childbirth (MATB1), you must provide us with a copy.



Time off if you are pregnant

If you are pregnant, you may take reasonable paid time off during working hours for antenatal appointments. Please try to give us as much notice as possible of the appointment. We may ask you to provide the following, unless it is the first appointment:

- a certificate from the doctor, midwife or health visitor stating that you are pregnant;
- an appointment card.

Time off for accompanying a pregnant woman: eligibility

You may take unpaid time off to accompany a pregnant woman to an antenatal appointment if you have a "qualifying relationship" with the woman or the child. This means that either:

- you are the baby's father;
- you are the pregnant woman's spouse, civil partner or cohabiting partner or you are living with the pregnant woman in an enduring family relationship and she is not your daughter, granddaughter, sister or niece, or
- she has undergone assisted conception and at that time you were her wife or civil partner or gave the required legal notices to be treated in law as the second female parent; or
- you are one of the intended parents in a surrogacy arrangement and expect to obtain a parental order in respect of the child.

Time off for accompanying a pregnant woman: how to book time off

Please give us as much notice of the appointment as possible. You must provide us with a signed statement providing the date and time of the appointment and confirming:

- that you meet one of the eligibility criteria above;
- that the purpose of the time off is to accompany the pregnant woman to an antenatal appointment; and
- that the appointment has been made on the advice of a registered medical practitioner, registered midwife or registered nurse.

Time off for accompanying a pregnant woman: amount of time off

- You may take time off to accompany a pregnant woman to up to two antenatal appointments in relation to each pregnancy.
- You must not take more than six and a half hours off for each appointment, including travel and waiting time.
- The above will either be unpaid, or you may, by agreement with your manager, make the time up.



Starting Maternity Leave

The earliest you can start maternity leave is 11 weeks before the Expected Week of Childbirth (unless your child is born prematurely before that date).

If you want to change your Intended Start Date, please tell us in writing. You should give us as much notice as you can, but wherever possible you must tell us at least 28 days before the original Intended Start Date (or the new start date if you are bringing the date forward). We will then write to you within 28 days to tell you your new expected return date.

Your maternity leave should normally start on the Intended Start Date. However, it may start earlier if you give birth before your Intended Start Date, or if you are absent for a pregnancy-related reason in the last four weeks before your Expected Week of Childbirth. In either of those cases, maternity leave will start on the following day.

Shortly before your maternity leave is due to start, we will discuss with you the arrangements for covering your work and the opportunities for you to remain in contact, should you wish to do so, during your leave.

The law says that we cannot allow you to work during the two weeks following childbirth.

Maternity Pay

Statutory Maternity Pay (**SMP**) is payable for up to 39 weeks provided you have at least 26 weeks' continuous employment with us at the end of the Qualifying Week and your average earnings are not less than the lower earnings limit set by the government each tax year. The first six weeks SMP are paid at 90% of your average earnings and the remaining 33 weeks are at a rate set by the government each year. Should you have no entitlement to SMP we will write to you giving you the reasons why as you may be entitled to claim a different allowance called Maternity Allowance from the government.

During Maternity Leave

With the exception of terms relating to pay, your terms and conditions of employment remain in force during OML and AML.

Holiday entitlement will continue to accrue during maternity leave. If your maternity leave will continue into the next holiday year, any holiday entitlement that is not taken or cannot reasonably be taken before starting your maternity leave can be carried over and must be taken immediately before returning to work. Please discuss your holiday plans with your manager in good time before starting your maternity leave. All holiday dates are subject to approval by your manager.

If you are a member of the pension scheme, we shall make employer pension contributions during OML and any period of paid AML, based on your normal salary, in accordance with the pension scheme rules. Any employee contributions you make will be based on the amount of any maternity pay you are receiving, unless you inform the Pensions Administrator that you wish to make up any shortfall.



Keeping in Touch

We may make reasonable contact with you from time to time during your maternity leave although we will keep this to a minimum. This may include contacting you to discuss arrangements for your return to work.

You may work (including attending training) on up to ten "keeping-in-touch" days during your maternity leave. This is not compulsory and must be discussed and agreed with your line manager or the Human Resources Department.

You will be paid at your normal basic rate of pay for time spent working on a keeping-in-touch day and this will be inclusive of any maternity pay entitlement.

Returning to Work

You must return to work on the Expected Return Date unless you tell us otherwise. If you wish to return to work earlier than the Expected Return Date, you must give us eight weeks' prior notice of the date. It is helpful if you give this notice in writing. You may be able to return later than the Expected Return Date if you request annual leave or parental leave, which will be at our discretion.

You are normally entitled to return to work in the position you held before starting maternity leave, and on the same terms of employment. However, if you have taken AML and it is not reasonably practicable for us to allow you to return into the same position, we may give you another suitable and appropriate job on terms and conditions that are not less favourable.

If you want to change your hours or other working arrangements on return from maternity leave you should make a request under our Flexible Working Policy. It is helpful if such requests are made as early as possible.

If you decide you do not want to return to work, you should give notice of resignation in accordance with your contract.

Nelson Williams
Managing Director

(This policy will be reviewed in November 2022)

