Miscarriage Policy

# Overview

[COMPANY NAME] (the Company) is committed to providing a supportive and inclusive working environment for all employees. This policy is written for those experiencing a miscarriage.

[COMPANY NAME] (the Company) understands that miscarriage can be a frightening, lonely and traumatic experience for both women and men. It is often both physically and emotionally challenging, with effects that can last some time. We appreciate if you are reading this policy, you may have been affected, and we are sorry for your loss. We want you to know we are committed to supporting you during this period of bereavement.

The policy details the guidance and support available to employees through all stages of their miscarriage.

# Scope

This policy is written for and applies to all employees and directors of the Company.

This policy will be monitored and reviewed by the [Executive Management team] and [the Human Resources Department] to ensure that it is effective and remains compliant with our statutory requirements. We reserve the right to amend or update this policy at any time.

When referring to pregnancy loss in this policy we are referring to all causes of pregnancy loss including ectopic pregnancy, molar pregnancy, neonatal loss, abortion or termination. Pregnancy loss relating to IVF and stillbirths after 24 weeks are also referred to in their own sections.

If you believe you are experiencing or have experienced pregnancy loss, please speak with your manager or a member of the senior management team. We are here to help you and we want you to feel supported in your bereavement and loss.

# Policy

This policy sets out the guidelines on the support available to all staff experiencing a miscarriage. It is not contractual and does not form part of the terms and conditions of your employment.

We understand that there is no one-size fits all approach to those experiencing pregnancy loss. We recognise that individual experiences may vary during this experience, employees may require time to rest without distraction, whist others will prefer to be able to continue with their day-to-day activities as their preference. We will do our best to ensure employees’ needs are being reasonably met and that we are providing flexibility wherever we are able.

Throughout this policy employees are advised to speak to their Manager. However, if for any reason, you do not feel comfortable discussing your situation with your manager you should contact either another manager or [JOB TITLE].

We understand the sensitive nature of miscarriage, and the language and terminology surrounding it. We have attempted to write this policy in the most sensitive way, using the most accepted and commonly used language and terms.

## Notifying us of a miscarriage

Employees should notify their manager as they feel ready when they have experienced a recent miscarriage, so that we can provide the best possible support during this time.

Any conversations will be treated confidentially.

## If a loss occurs at work

A pregnancy loss may happen at work. If you are experiencing a miscarriage or suspect you may be losing your baby at work, we understand that you may be feeling distressed, panicked, embarrassed or frightened. We appreciate [ COMPANY NAME ] may not yet be aware of your pregnancy, as you are not obliged to share that you are pregnant until 15 weeks before your estimated due date. However, should you experience pregnancy loss, regardless of whether we are aware, please do not suffer in silence, please speak with your Manager or another Manager if this is not possible.

## Absence

### Medical Appointments

Pregnancy loss can be experienced in different ways, and we are aware there are several courses of treatment that may be necessary or optional, which you may be discussing with your doctor or hospital.

Some of these options require medication or surgical intervention, and these options may require additional leave to the initial absence. If so, these absences will be recorded as pregnancy related.

You are entitled to attend all medical appointments resulting from pregnancy loss without fear or consequence.

Employees should provide us with evidence of appointments such as letters or appointment cards.

### Sickness Absence

Absences that aren’t by appointment but relate to pregnancy loss will be classed as pregnancy-related illness and will not be recorded alongside other absence. You are able to self-certify for absences up to 7 days, after which you will be required to obtain a doctors’ certificate.

[**EITHER**:] Please see our absence policy for further information on reporting an absence and entitlement to Statutory Sick Pay.

[**OR**:]

### Paid Leave [OPTIONAL]

Sickness absence at [COMPANY NAME] is normally dealt with in line with statutory regulations. At [COMPANY NAME] we recognise however that pregnancy loss is an incredibly difficult time for those involved, physically and mentally.

As such we will offer up to [XX] days’ paid sick leave [**EITHER** in a 12 month rolling period for absences related to pregnancy loss **OR** to be used within [52] weeks of an employee suffering a pregnancy loss.] This will include any entitlement to Statutory Sick Pay (SSP). [IF YOU ALREADY OFFER COMPANY SICK PAY YOU WILL NEED TO CONSIDER WHETHER THIS IS ADDITIONAL OR INCLUDED AS PART OF YOUR COMPANY SICK PAY POLICY]

In order to qualify for full pay, you must follow the procedures set out above. [After 7 days you must provide a doctors’ certificate confirming the absence is pregnancy-related.]

### Compassionate leave [OPTIONAL]

As the mother [or father] experiencing pregnancy loss you will be entitled to [XX] days’ compassionate leave immediately following the loss. [This is in addition to your paid sickness allowance.] [We understand that the emotion following the loss of a baby may affect employees at different times and as such this compassionate leave may be taken at any point within the first [XX] weeks of experiencing a loss.]

### Returning to work

Your manager may contact you during your absence to discuss how they can support you during this time and help you upon your return to work.

## Support Considerations

We encourage you to talk to your manager and keep them informed of your situation and any support which you feel may be required or is already in place but isn’t working. Your manager will be familiar with the miscarriage policy and any conversations you have with them regarding your journey will be treated with respect and dealt with sensitively. All conversations will be confidential, unless a manager is required to disclose this information due to serious safety concerns, or you authorise any information to be shared.

[COMPANY NAME] is committed to supporting you at all times, the following list is not exhaustive, but is a representation of the types of support that are available to you:

* Phased return to work
* Adjusting working patterns including start and finish times.
* Allowing employees to turn their cameras off during online video calls.
* Allowing additional breaks.
* Reviewing targets and allocation of work.
* Allowing time off to attend GP and medical appointments.

We may also consider temporary flexible working arrangements such as changes to your hours, home working or hybrid working (where you work some hours from your workplace and some hours from home or another location) if you are underdoing fertility treatment. Please speak to your manager if this is something you would like us to consider.

Optional – If you offer an employee assistance programme or free counselling services please provide details.

Below we have listed a number of external support details for those employees who require further advice and guidance.

## Pregnancy Loss After 24 Weeks

If a pregnancy sadly ends in stillbirth after the 24th week of pregnancy or if you miscarry after 24 weeks of pregnancy, you remain entitled to maternity/paternity leave and pay commencing from the day after the stillbirth or miscarriage.

For more information please refer to our Maternity, Adoption and Paternity Policy.

## In Vitro Fertilisation (IVF)

In the case of In Vitro Fertilisation (IVF) a person is deemed legally to be pregnant once a fertilised egg has been implanted into the uterus. From this time, you will be protected from unfavourable treatment related to your pregnancy for the duration of your pregnancy.

In the unfortunate event that an IVF cycle is not successful, you will remain legally protected for a further two weeks. You will be eligible for any of the support covered in this policy.

[Further information on fertility treatment and IVF is available in our fertility policy.]

## Partners

Whilst partners are not legally entitled to any time off, [COMPANY NAME] fully recognises the impact this experience will have on them, and the support they will need to provide their partner. [This is why we offer paid time off to partners, further details can be found in the Absence section of this policy.] We highly recommend you make your manager aware of the situation so we can provide you with the appropriate support.

## External Support

Below we have listed a number of external support details if you require further assistance and advice:

* **Arc-** Arc is a national charity offering parents support during antenatal screening and following a termination. [www.arc-uk.org](http://www.arc-uk.org)
* **Abortion Talk -** Abortion Talk is a new charity offering the opportunity to talk about abortion in a non-judgemental and supportive environment. [www.abortiontalk.com](http://www.abortiontalk.com)
* **Miscarriage Association** - Information and support to help you through a miscarriage, ectopic pregnancy or molar pregnancy. [www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk](http://www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk)
* **Ectopic Pregnancy Trust -** Information and support for ectopic pregnancy. [www.ectopic.org.uk](http://www.ectopic.org.uk)
* **Maternity Action -** Information on rights and benefits around pregnancy, pregnancy loss and maternity – [www.maternityaction.org.uk](http://www.maternityaction.org.uk)
* **Mind** - Information on mental health support – [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)
* **Petals** - Petals is an organisation providing specialist counselling services after a pregnancy loss. [www.petalscharity.org](http://www.petalscharity.org)
* **Sands -** SANDS is an organisation that can offer you support if your baby dies during pregnancy or after birth. [www.sands.org.uk](http://www.sands.org.uk)
* **Tommy’s -** Tommy’s is a charity that funds research into pregnancy problems but also provides information for parents-to-be. [www.tommys.org](http://www.tommys.org)

# Related Policies

Maternity, Adoption and Paternity Policy

Fertility Policy

Absence Policy

Compassionate Leave Policy

# Review

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| Written and Approved by: |  |
| Date: |  |
| Version: |  |
| Review Date: |  |