



## Maternity Policy

At TechPoint, we endeavour to ensure that employees are given support and encouragement before, during and on their return to work from maternity leave. We believe that employees should be provided with sufficient assistance and support so that they feel able to take time off to bond and care for their child.

We aim to ensure that the employee's duties are adequately covered during maternity leave and that an effective dialogue is implemented at all stages so that employees feel fully informed about their entitlements and the process to follow.

All employees taking maternity leave are covered by this policy, including those on part-time contracts.

### Definitions

The following terms are used within this policy:

**EWC:** The expected week of childbirth is the week, beginning on the Sunday, during which the baby's birth is expected

**MATB1:** The maternity certificate, or form, which is provided to confirm a pregnancy and confirm the expected week of childbirth

**Qualifying week:** The 15th week before the expected week of childbirth

### Notification requirements

Please notify us as soon as possible of your pregnancy to enable us to ensure that, where appropriate, any reasonable steps are taken to safeguard yourself and your unborn child and that you are not subject to any unnecessary risks at work.

To qualify for maternity leave we require by the qualifying week, or as soon as reasonably practicable after this, written confirmation of the following information:

- your pregnancy
- your EWC, and
- the date you wish to start your ordinary maternity leave period, which can be any time from the 11th week before the EWC.

You should also give your MATB1 to HR. You will normally be provided with this at around the 20-week stage.

Once you have notified HR and your line manager of your intended start date of ordinary maternity leave, we will confirm, in writing, the date that we expect you to return to work after additional maternity leave has ended. This confirmation will be sent to you within 28 days of your notification.

An informal meeting will then be arranged with a member of HR to discuss your entitlements and the organisational processes involved. The meeting will include discussions on the following points:

- the amount of leave you can take and the payment arrangements.
- the information that we will need from you to process your maternity leave.
- time off for ante-natal appointments.



- risk assessments to ensure your role does not pose a risk to you, or your baby's, health and safety.
- your right to return after maternity leave to the same or a similar role.
- the opportunity to request flexible working and how a request should be made.

In order to ensure good communication and a smooth transition in the time leading up to maternity leave, and during the leave itself, you will be informed of the arrangements for covering your work and for remaining in contact whilst you are on leave. We will also consult you on how to cover your workload during your leave and whether any temporary reporting arrangements need putting in place.

We would like to keep you fully informed of any news or developments at work during your leave and we will continue to send you any Company newsletters and information on social events etc. We will also keep you informed of any recruitment exercises undertaken during your absence.

### **Health and safety**

So that we may assess any potential risk that your role poses to your health and safety, and the health and safety of your baby, you must notify your line manager and HR as soon as you are aware that you are pregnant. A Health and Safety Risk Assessment will be undertaken and action taken to eliminate any risk.

This may include making adjustments to your role or, if no adjustments can be identified that will reduce or remove the risk, you will be offered a suitable alternative role for the duration of your pregnancy. In the event that alternative work cannot be found, we reserve the right to place you on suspension on full pay until you are no longer at risk. If necessary, where a risk remains, these arrangements will continue for a period of six months after the birth of your child.

Please speak with the Group HSE & Facilities Manager immediately if you are worried about your own health and safety at any time.

### **Time off for ante-natal care**

You are entitled to paid time off during normal working hours to receive ante-natal care. Ante-natal care can include medical examinations, relaxation classes and parent-craft classes as advised by a medical practitioner. Time off will be provided for any time spent travelling to and from these appointments, including any waiting time.

Other than for the first appointment, you may be asked to provide an appointment card to your line manager to confirm the details of the appointment.

You will receive full pay for the time taken to attend these appointments.

### **Length of maternity leave**

Subject to meeting the notification requirements set out above, you are entitled to 52 weeks' maternity leave in total, broken down as follows:

- 26 weeks' ordinary maternity leave (OML), including a 2-week period of compulsory maternity leave (or 4 weeks for factory workers)
- 26 weeks' additional maternity leave (AML) that starts immediately after OML.



Unless you notify us that you wish to take a shorter period, the Company will automatically assume you are taking your full entitlement to 52 weeks, and will write to you to confirm your expected return date.

During periods of OML and AML, you remain entitled to receive your normal contractual terms and conditions of employment that you would have received had you not taken this leave, with the exception of remuneration. This will include contractual benefits, subject to the terms of these benefits.

## **Commencing maternity leave**

You can start maternity leave at any time from the beginning of the 11th week before the EWC until the date of birth. You are required to inform us of the date you intend to start leave however you may change this date so long as you provide at least 28 days' notice of this change. Any application for a date change should be made in writing to your line manager, who will inform HR.

Compulsory maternity leave commences on the day after your child is born. Its purpose is to ensure that you have at least a two-week period of leave (or four weeks for factory workers) after the birth of your baby.

There are two incidences in which the maternity leave period is triggered automatically:

Where childbirth occurs before the OML would otherwise commence. If this occurs, please notify us, in writing as soon as is reasonably practicable, of the date on which you gave birth. Your maternity leave period will begin automatically on the day following the date of the birth.

Where you are absent from work, wholly or partly due to your pregnancy, after the beginning of the fourth week before the EWC. If this occurs, please notify us, in writing as soon as is reasonably practicable, that your absence from work is wholly or partly due to your pregnancy and the start date of this absence. In these circumstances, the Company may require that your maternity leave period begins on the day following the first day of such absence.

Once you have notified your line manager or HR that your OML period has been triggered due to pregnancy-related absence or childbirth, we will confirm, in writing, the date that we expect you to return to work after the AML period has ended. This confirmation will be sent to you within 28 days of your notification.

## **Shared parental leave**

You may be entitled to take shared parental leave, and you should refer to our shared parental leave policy for further information on entitlements, eligibility and notice requirements.

## **Maternity pay**

The Company provides all eligible employees with enhanced maternity pay (EMP) that is in addition to statutory maternity pay (SMP) or state Maternity Allowance.

- You will qualify for SMP if you meet the following criteria:
- you have been continuously employed with us for at least 26 weeks' by the qualifying week.
- your average weekly earnings are not less than the lower earnings limit relevant for national insurance purposes.



- you are still pregnant at the 11th week before the EWC or have given birth by that time.
- you have complied with the relevant notification requirements.

The period for which SMP may be paid is called the maternity pay period. The maternity pay period may start at any time from the start of the 11th week before the EWC and can continue for up to 39 weeks, even if you do not intend to return to work.

Payment of SMP will be made at the rate of 90 per cent of your average earnings for the first six weeks of leave and then up to 33 weeks' at the standard rate of SMP or 90 per cent of your average weekly earnings (whichever is lower).

Your normal weekly earnings are calculated based on an average of your gross earnings for national insurance during the 'relevant period'. This will include, for example, any payments relating to overtime, commission, and bonuses. The 'relevant period' is the period ending on the last normal pay day before the qualifying week and starting with the normal pay day which is at least eight weeks earlier. Further advice on how your normal weekly earnings will be calculated can be obtained from our Payroll department.

Where your gross earnings are increased by a pay rise, and this increase takes effect from the start of the relevant period and before the end of the AML period, this increase will result in a recalculation of your SMP. As a result of this recalculation, you may be entitled to a retrospective increase or may subsequently qualify to receive SMP.

To support employees taking maternity leave, the Company offers enhanced maternity pay (EMP). EMP is not a contractual benefit, and the Company reserves discretion to amend or remove the EMP scheme at any time. Further information and a final calculation of your maternity pay entitlement can be requested from Payroll.

EMP is operated by the Company as follows:

The Company will top up the 90% of your average earnings SMP for the first 6 weeks of your leave to 100% of your basic pay.

To be entitled to receive EMP, you will need to have been employed for a minimum of 52 weeks by the qualifying week.

Once the entitlement to EMP has ended, you will revert to SMP or maternity allowance payments for your remaining entitlement. Once this entitlement has been exhausted, any remaining weeks of maternity leave will be unpaid.

A condition of the EMP scheme is that you must return to work after your maternity leave has ended for a minimum period of 6 weeks. Notice period or annual leave is not included in this minimum period.

Where you fail to return to work for this minimum period because you have resigned, the Company is entitled to recover any EMP paid to you that is in excess of SMP or maternity allowance. This clawback will be operated at the discretion of the Company.

### **Keeping in touch (KIT) days**

You may, by mutual agreement, work for up to 10 days during your maternity leave period (but not during the compulsory maternity leave period) without losing statutory payments for that week or ending your entitlement to leave. Payment for KIT days will be discussed and agreed in advance of these being worked.



For this purpose, any work carried out on any day, even just an hour's work, is deemed to constitute "a day's work". Any days' work done under this provision will not have the effect of extending the total duration of the maternity leave period.

### **Stillbirth and miscarriage**

If you suffer a stillbirth after 24 weeks of pregnancy, your entitlement to maternity leave and pay will not be affected and you will still be able to take the time off, and receive pay, as planned.

If you experience a miscarriage before 24 weeks of pregnancy, you will no longer be entitled to take maternity leave. It is anticipated that an employee may need some time off work in these circumstances and this will usually be taken as sick leave, during which the Company's sickness absence policy will apply.

### **Holiday**

You will continue to accrue holiday whilst you are on maternity leave. As these holidays cannot be taken whilst you are on maternity leave, it is important for us to discuss and agree the arrangements for the taking of these holidays.

### **Benefits in Kind**

All benefits in kind will continue throughout your maternity leave based on your current eligibility.

### **Returning to work**

If you return to work at the end of your OML period, you are entitled to return to the same job, with the same terms and conditions, in which you were employed before your absence.

If you return to work after a period of AML, you are entitled to return to the same job in which you were employed before your absence. Where this is not reasonably practicable, you will be entitled to return to a suitable and appropriate job on terms that are no less favourable.

If you are made redundant during maternity leave, you will be offered a suitable alternative role.

Unless you state otherwise, it will be automatically assumed that you will return to work at the end of your full 52 week leave period. So that we may make effective plans for your return, we would be grateful if you would contact us shortly before your return. However, there is no obligation on you to do so unless you wish to change the date of your return, in which case you must give us eight weeks' notice.

If you qualify for shared parental leave and wish to return early from maternity leave for this purpose, you must also give us eight weeks' notice. You can find more information on this in our shared parental leave policy.

You may be invited to attend an informal meeting with your line manager in order to discuss any arrangements regarding your return to work. This is likely to take place approximately two weeks before your return. The following points will be discussed at this meeting:

- any developments that have taken place at work
- any appropriate training to take place
- any flexible working arrangements which have been agreed



If you decide that you do not wish to return to work after your maternity leave, you are required to give us notice of your resignation. Your notice period to resign is set out in your contract of employment. Where you choose to resign without returning to work, the Company will require repayment of any maternity pay in excess of your statutory entitlement that you have received during maternity leave.

If you are unable to return on the agreed date due to sickness, please inform your line manager immediately.

### **Flexible working**

We recognise that employees returning from maternity leave may wish to reduce their working hours or undertake homeworking.

We will make every effort to accommodate requests for part time working, provided that your duties can still be effectively carried out on such a basis. However, we must also take into account the needs of the business when assessing and granting any requests.

Any flexible working request should be made in line with the process set out in the flexible working policy.

### **Grievances related to maternity rights**

The Company's grievance procedure may be used in the event that you are dissatisfied with any decision made in respect of your maternity rights.

*This policy is non-contractual.*

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