



DORSET & WILTSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

EDI 2 - Maternity

To be used in conjunction with the [People Policy Statement](#)

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI)

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1. Purpose & Definition

- 1.1. Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service acknowledge the importance of supporting members of staff to balance their personal and work commitments throughout their pregnancy, especially around the time the baby is due and after childbirth.
- 1.2. This procedure details the Maternity entitlements and provisions available to members of staff during pregnancy, whilst on maternity leave and returning to work.

- 1.3. These provisions should minimise disruption and support members of staff in continuing their career whilst helping to balance the demands of family and working life.
- 1.4. This procedure applies to all staff, including those on fixed term or temporary contracts.
- 1.5. Provisions for [Adoption Leave](#), [Shared Parental Leave](#), [Parental Leave](#) and [Maternity/Paternity Support Leave](#) are covered in a separate procedures.
- 1.6 **Terms used in this procedure**
- 1.6.1 A week's pay – **all staff (except those on the retained duty system)**, a week's pay during maternity leave is the amount payable to you under your current contract of employment working your normal hours in a week.
- 1.6.2 A week's pay – **on the retained duty system**, a week's pay during maternity leave means your average weekly remuneration in the previous 12 weeks (excluding any weeks absent or periods of no pay).
- 1.6.3 EWC – Expected Week of Confinement (childbirth).
- 1.6.4 MATB1 – This is the medical certificate given to the member of staff by the doctor or midwife showing the expected date of confinement (childbirth).

2. Procedure Principles for Pregnant Members of Staff

2.1. Health and Safety

- 2.1.1. Statutory Health and Safety provisions apply from the time that a member of staff notifies their Line Manager that they are pregnant, until 6 months after the birth of their child, or when they stop breast-feeding, whichever is the later date.
- 2.1.2. Under these Health and Safety provisions pregnant fire-fighters are immediately relieved from full operational duties until discussions on alternative work and duty arrangements are complete.
- 2.1.3. Watch based members of staff should not assume that alternative duty arrangements are automatic and may still be carried out at their normal place of work.
- 2.1.4. Options for whole-time Fire-fighters may include:
- shadowing their own watch-this is in the purest sense and is for the full tour of duty. Suitable alternative work will be agreed locally.
 - four days. Part shadowing their watch for two-day duty days followed by the next two consecutive days on an alternative day watch
 - day duties. This would ordinarily be on a nine-day fortnight. This means their working pattern will be Monday-Friday and they will work nine of those 10 working days.
- 2.1.5. For further information on Health and Safety please see [Guidance Document – Maternity–Health and Safety Guide](#)

- 2.1.6. A [Maternity Risk Assessment](#) will be carried out within 7 days of receiving notification of the member of staff's pregnancy. This will be updated as their pregnancy develops at least monthly, or more frequently if specific risks exist that need closer monitoring.
- 2.1.7. The Maternity Risk Assessment will be carried out by the member of staff and their Line Manager to assess any risks and put actions in place to eliminate the risk or prevent or protect the member of staff by removing them from the risk.
- 2.1.8. This may include:
- [Alternative Working Patterns](#) – Temporary adjustments to the member of staff's working conditions or hours. Normal notification of changes to shift pattern are waived. Adjustments are applied with immediate effect.
 - [Alternative Work](#) – Temporary re-deployment to another post without affecting the member of staff's existing pay or benefits
 - Paid leave on [Maternity Suspension](#). In this case, the member of staff's maternity leave would commence automatically 11 weeks before the due date. Only in exceptional circumstances will Maternity Suspension be considered.
- 2.1.9. Pregnant members of staff will also be required to complete a [Personal Emergency Evacuation Form \(C012 PEEP Form\)](#) with their Line Manager. This will need to be sent to Fire Safety department to enable them to update the appropriate premises Fire Risk Assessment.
- 2.2. **Alternative Working Patterns**
- 2.2.1. Alternative working patterns will only be considered through the risk assessment process, and/or as a result of medical reasons confirmed by a GP and [Occupational Health](#).
- 2.2.2. These must be agreed locally with the relevant line manager, in conjunction with HR Services and could include the following options:
- a change to the start and finish times of shifts i.e. starting earlier and finishing earlier to fulfil the 42-hour contract
 - finishing night shifts at midnight with a requirement to make up the discretionary stand down times of 12-two and six-eight (four hours) per shift. Arrangements to make up these eight hours per tour to be agreed locally and recorded.
 - If the Service determines there is an unacceptable risk within the workplace, or other concerns are raised, the member of staff will need to meet with their line manager to discuss any issues or options.
- 2.2.3. The member of staff has the right to request a change to their normal working pattern at any time during pregnancy.
- 2.3. **Alternative Work**
- 2.3.1. Alternative work is only undertaken after full consultation and agreement with the member of staff and their line manager.
- 2.3.2. Occupational Health, the HR Business Partner (HRBP) and the Trade Union representing the member of staff may also be included in this agreement. This may include relief from certain duties entirely.

- 2.3.3. Should any alternative work or arrangements be made, the pregnant member of staff will be considered for support with any additional expenses incurred such as travel expenses and additional time to get to work.
- 2.3.4. Careful consideration will be given to the area, location and type of work undertaken by the pregnant member of staff, and their working hours/shifts.
- 2.3.5. The member of staff will be offered appropriate duties to the role which are also commensurate with her skills and abilities.
- 2.3.6. Whilst away from her normal role or place of work, the pregnant member of staff is encouraged to maintain contact with their watch or department and their line manager. The line manager will be responsible for communicating Service issues in the normal way.
- 2.3.7. The member of staff will continue to be eligible for training and development opportunities that arise during her pregnancy, including applying for vacancies that arise in the Service.
- 2.3.8. Appropriate risk assessments may be needed prior to undertaking such training, which is the responsibility of the line manager.
- 2.3.9. If a member of staff is requested to undertake an alternative role or are placed on limited duties, a temporary job description will be created, ensuring they are given adequate responsibilities and opportunities during this period of time.
- 2.3.10. These measures also apply if they normally work night shifts. However, the member of staff can provide a medical certificate, outlining health and safety issues putting them at risk if they continue working night shifts.

2.4. **Maternity Suspension**

- 2.4.1. In the unlikely event that suitable alternative work cannot be provided in the organisation, 'maternity suspension' will be authorised by the Head of HR.
- 2.4.2. A member of staff on maternity suspension is entitled to full pay during this period. In this case, maternity leave would commence automatically 11 weeks before the due date of the child.

2.5. **Rest Periods**

- 2.5.1. The Service will offer rest periods to pregnant members of staff where practicable and as required and will aim to ensure there is somewhere for them to sit or lie down in a peaceful environment.

2.6. **Notification Requirements**

- 2.6.1. Pregnant members of staff should notify the Service by the end of the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth (EWC) or with at least 28 days' notice of wanting to commence maternity leave, or as soon as is reasonably practicable of the following:
- The EWC – by producing a MAT B1 certificate from a registered practitioner or certified midwife. Please note that until the MAT B1 form is received, members of staff are not able to commence maternity leave.

- The date they wish to commence maternity leave by completing a [Notification of Maternity Leave Form](#).
- 2.6.2. The [Maternity – Important Dates](#) supporting information details clear dates and forms that need to be submitted during the member of staff's pregnancy and maternity leave period.
- 2.6.3. Though members of staff are not obliged to tell the Service whether they will return to work after the end of maternity leave at this stage, the Service would appreciate as much notice as possible.
- 2.6.4. The minimum notice members of staff will be required to give if they do not intend to return to work is covered in their individual contract of employment.
- 2.6.5. Whether a member of staff returns or not may impact the payment of contractual maternity pay available if they are eligible to receive this. Members of staff will need to complete and return the [Contractual Maternity Declaration form](#) to indicate whether they would like to receive or postpone contractual maternity payment.
- 2.6.6. Any early pregnancy notifications will be treated in full confidence, but the Service is only able to commence formal processes such as risk assessments, once written notification has been received.
- 2.6.7. All notifications should be sent to the member of staff's line manager with a copy to Employee Relations and HR Business Partner (HRBP).
- 2.6.8. Following the member of staff's initial notification, they will receive an acknowledgement from HR Services, who will also send details of Maternity Leave, a [notification of date of birth form](#) and a [notification of return to work form](#) for the member of staff to complete and return along with their [contractual maternity declaration form](#).
- 2.6.9. The HRBP and line manager will meet with the member of staff if required to discuss information related to maternity leave, including important dates, risk assessments and alternative work, if relevant.
- 2.6.10. Members of staff on a fixed term or temporary contract need to look closely at their conditions and dates of appointment in order to establish maternity entitlements. If they receive benefits such as maternity leave or pay, they will cease on the day their contract ends. They should contact the Department for Work and Pensions to seek other benefits assistance.
- 2.7. **Ante-natal care**
- 2.7.1. Pregnant members of staff are entitled to paid time off to attend ante-natal appointments.
- 2.7.2. Reasonable notice is required that they have an appointment, and evidence in the form of an appointment card may be required.
- 2.7.3. Partners of pregnant members of staff, who are also employed by the Service, are entitled to unpaid time off to accompany their partner to ante-natal appointments, providing they have a qualifying relationship with the pregnant woman or the expected child. Please see the [Maternity/Paternity Support Leave](#) procedure for further details.

2.8. **Fitness during pregnancy**

- 2.8.1. During pregnancy it is essential for the mother to maintain a good balance of health and fitness.
- 2.8.2. The Service will provide practical assistance, advice and encouragement where required to support this and monthly reviews of the [Maternity Risk Assessment](#) will be conducted as the member of staff progresses through the stages of pregnancy, and into motherhood.

2.9. **Uniform/Maternity Wear**

- 2.9.1. During the early stages of pregnancy, uniformed members of staff should continue to wear existing uniform where relevant.
- 2.9.2. In the later stages, the Service will provide a polo shirt and sweatshirt and will provide a uniform allowance for other appropriate pregnancy attire.
- 2.9.3. Items purchased with this allowance should conform to the Service colour scheme and style of uniform.
- 2.9.4. Reasonable costs will be reimbursed, providing that prior authorisation/approval is given, to purchase two skirts/trousers.

2.10. **Sickness Absence before Maternity Leave**

- 2.10.1. If a member of staff's sickness is unrelated to pregnancy, the absence will be treated as normal sickness absence under the [Attendance Management](#) procedure.
- 2.10.2. If sickness continues past the date on which the member of staff advised that they wish to start maternity leave, they will receive maternity pay as opposed to sick pay, and their maternity leave period will start on the original date agreed.
- 2.10.3. If the member of staff chooses to work beyond the four week expected birth date and is absent due to sickness related to pregnancy, their maternity leave will start automatically from their first day of sickness. They will receive maternity pay from this date.
- 2.10.4. Maternity leave or absence due to a pregnancy related illness, will not be treated as 'sick leave', and will therefore not be recorded or monitored as such. Members of staff must record the absence as pregnancy related when reporting absences.

2.11. **Premature Birth**

- 2.11.1. If the baby is born prematurely, before the start of the member of staff's maternity leave, they must inform the Service in writing as soon as reasonably practicable of the actual date of birth. This is so their maternity pay is correctly calculated and paid.
- 2.11.2. Maternity Leave will commence the day following the birth of the child.

2.12. **Stillbirth or Miscarriage**

- 2.12.1. In the unfortunate situation that the baby is stillborn after the 24th week of pregnancy, the member of staff is still entitled to maternity pay and can remain on leave during the remaining period of their maternity leave.

- 2.12.2. The member of staff may return to work before the end of this period provided, they are medically fit.
- 2.12.3. If a miscarriage occurs before the 24th week of pregnancy, the member of staff will not receive maternity pay but will qualify for Sick Pay if they supply a medical certificate supporting this.
- 2.12.4. [Special leave](#) may also be considered based on individual needs and medical opinion.
- 2.13. **Fertility Treatment**
- 2.13.1. Fertility treatment can be a long and complicated process. If members of staff are undergoing fertility treatment, they may suffer individual symptoms. Authorised absence is granted to attend hospital appointments to undergo treatment. Treatment is not a single treatment but a series of procedures including scans. Whilst the dates of these procedures may not be flexible, it would be expected that members of staff attend this at times where it would cause less impact on their working day.
- 2.13.2. On proof of treatment, a two-week paid leave of authorised absence is granted after embryo implantation has taken place and pregnancy has, or has not, been confirmed.
- 2.13.3. If a member of staff is accompanying their partner for treatment their line manager will authorise all appropriate requests for leave.
- 2.13.4. It is recognised that absence periods may differ depending on the treatment being undertaken and the invasive nature of specific elements such as egg collection.
- 2.13.5. Members of staff undergoing fertility treatment are encouraged to inform their Line Manager, HRBP and Occupational Health to assist in overcoming workplace difficulties and to ensure that adequate support is in place.
- 2.14. **Travelling abroad for Fertility Treatment**
- 2.14.1. Should a member of staff travel abroad for treatment, authorised absence is approved in the same way as treatment undertaken in the UK and is for attendance at hospital appointments, undergoing treatment and two weeks paid leave of absence after embryo implantation.
- 2.14.2. Travelling and pre-treatment stays prior to embryo transfer are not considered to be authorised absence and should be taken as leave (annual/flexi/unpaid).
- 2.14.3. If a member of staff is accompanying their partner abroad for treatment their line manager will authorise all appropriate requests for leave.
- 2.15. **Discontinuation of Fertility Treatment**
- 2.15.1. Should a member of staff suffer adverse side effects or complications resulting from fertility treatment, which prevents them from continuing with their treatment cycle, they should book sick in the normal way if they are unable to return to work. Any such absence will be treated as a maternity related absence.

3. Procedure Principles for Members of Staff on Maternity

3.1. Maternity Leave

- 3.1.1. All staff are entitled to a maximum of 52 weeks' maternity leave.
- 3.1.2. Providing they have a current contract of employment in force, members of staff are entitled to the following:
- Compulsory Maternity Leave – this refers to the two weeks that start from the day of childbirth when a woman is not allowed to work by law. This forms part of the Ordinary Maternity Leave period and is not additional to it.
 - Ordinary Maternity Leave (OML) – up to 26 weeks leave, regardless of length of service, during which the member of staff is normally paid.
 - Additional Maternity Leave (AML) – starts at the end of the Ordinary Maternity Leave and is for a period of an additional 26 weeks. There is no qualifying period of employment for eligibility for AML. Part of AML is unpaid.
- 3.1.3. The expected date of birth is the predicted birth date supplied by your doctor or midwife on form MATB1.
- 3.1.4. Maternity Leave cannot commence any earlier than 11 weeks before the expected birth (unless the child is born prematurely).
- 3.1.5. It is the member of staff's choice when they want maternity leave to start and for how long they wish to take.
- 3.1.6. The latest date members of staff can start maternity leave is the date of the birth. However, if they are off sick for a pregnancy related illness reason less than four weeks before the birth, maternity leave will automatically start.
- 3.1.7. An estimated forecast of earnings will be provided to all pregnant members of staff on receipt of form MATB1.

3.2. Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP)

- 3.2.1. Members of staff are entitled to 39 weeks' statutory maternity pay if they have at least 6 months' continuous service with DWFRS at the 15th week before the week the baby is due and meet the National Insurance (NI) contributions requirement.
- 3.2.2. The 39 weeks SMP comprises of:
- six weeks at 90% of the member of staff's average weekly earnings (the higher rate of SMP), followed by
 - 33 weeks at lower rate SMP or 90% of the member of staff's average weekly earnings if this is less than the statutory rate.
- 3.2.3. Please check details of current SMP rates with Employee Relations.
- 3.2.4. All statutory maternity payments are paid through the normal monthly payroll and are net of tax, NI and pension contributions.
- 3.2.5. If a member of staff decides not to return to work following maternity leave, they do not have to repay any of the above statutory maternity payments.

- 3.2.6. The rules and conditions regarding eligibility for, and payment of SMP, are set by the Government and are complex. To check eligibility and entitlements, please contact Employee Relations.
- 3.2.7. If members of staff do not qualify for SMP, they may qualify for Statutory Maternity Allowance. Please contact the local Department for Work and Pensions for further information.
- 3.3. **Contractual Maternity Pay**
- 3.3.1. If the member of staff has at least one year's continuous service with the Service at the beginning of the 11th week before their Expected Week of Confinement (EWC), they are entitled to the full benefit of both Contractual and Statutory Maternity Pay schemes.
- 3.3.2. If the member of staff intends to return to work, they are entitled to:
- six weeks at 90% of their average weekly earnings
 - 20 weeks at 50% of their average weekly earnings, plus the standard rate of Statutory Maternity Pay or 90% of their average weekly earnings, whichever is lower.
 - following the 20-week period, the employee is entitled to SMP only for the subsequent 13 weeks.
- 3.3.3. To qualify for 20 weeks at 50% of their average weekly earnings the member of staff must return to work for a period of three months either on a full time or part time basis.
- 3.3.4. If the member of staff notifies their manager that they intend to return to work and then changes their mind or returns for less than three months, the 20 weeks half pay is recovered through payroll.
- 3.3.5. Alternatively, the member of staff may request that the Service holds their 20 weeks half pay until they have returned to work and completed the three months' service.
- 3.3.6. If the member of staff does not intend to return to work, they are entitled to:
- six weeks at 90% of your average weekly earnings (the higher rate of SMP), plus
 - a further 33 weeks at the lower SMP rate.
- 3.3.7. Any entitlement to SMP or SMA is offset against the first six weeks of contractual maternity pay. The combination of half pay and/or SMP/SMA will not exceed full pay. If it does, SMP is reduced, as necessary.
- 3.3.8. Members of staff will need to complete and return the [Contractual Maternity Declaration form](#) to indicate whether they would like to receive or postpone contractual maternity payment.
- 3.4. **Placing a Child for Adoption/ Surrogacy**
- 3.4.1. If a member of staff decides to place a baby for adoption or is carrying the baby as a surrogate mother, they are still entitled to maternity pay and remain on leave during the period of Ordinary Maternity Leave.

- 3.4.2. The member of staff may return to work any time after two weeks following the birth of the baby, provided they are medically fit and have given 28 days' notice of their return date. Please see the [Adoption Leave procedure](#) for further information.
- 3.5. **Maternity Leave during a Career Break**
- 3.5.1. If a member of staff becomes pregnant during a career break, they must notify Employee Relations as soon as reasonably possible.
- 3.5.2. In these circumstances, the career break is suspended 11 weeks before their expected due date and the member of staff's maternity leave automatically commences.
- 3.5.3. The member of staff will receive normal maternity benefits, in accordance with this procedure, as if they were at work. The resumption of a career break on completion of maternity leave is subject to further agreement between the member of staff and their Head of Department
- 3.5.4. Where a request for a career break follows on from maternity leave, the member of staff must have completed two years continuous service with the Service at the start of maternity leave.
- 3.5.5. A career break does not constitute a return to work under the terms of this procedure. Please refer to the [Career Break procedure](#) for further information.
- 3.6. **Salary Sacrifice Scheme**
- 3.6.1. If the employee is participating in a salary sacrifice scheme, they will need to consult the relevant procedure for information on any changes during maternity leave.
- 3.6.2. Please refer to the [Childcare Vouchers](#) or [Cycle to Work Scheme](#) for further information.
- 3.7. **Essential Car Users and Corporate Car Scheme**
- 3.7.1. If the member of staff is an essential car user or part of the corporate car scheme, they will need to contact the finance department to see how their contract and payments may be affected by Maternity Leave and Pay.
- 3.8. **Pension Implications**
- 3.8.1. If members of staff are paying contributions into a Pension Scheme, they will need to contact Pensions for guidance on how these pension contributions will be continued to be paid during Maternity Leave and any implications.
- 3.9. **Annual Leave during Maternity**
- 3.9.1. Ordinary and Additional Maternity Leave is regarded as service for the purpose of calculating all annual leave entitlement.
- 3.9.2. Annual leave and public holidays continue to accrue during Ordinary and Additional Maternity Leave and can be taken at the start or end of the maternity leave.
- 3.9.3. If members of staff do not return to work after maternity leave, they are paid any outstanding entitlement.

- 3.9.4. Annual leave built up during the unpaid maternity leave period is only taken if the member of staff returns to work.
- 3.9.5. If the member of staff does not intend to return to work, they are advised to use up any outstanding annual leave before the beginning of their maternity leave period.
- 3.9.6. Where maternity leave overlaps two leave years, the accrued leave is added to the new year's entitlement and must be taken before the end of that year.
- 3.9.7. Before members of staff commence maternity leave, they are encouraged to take any outstanding leave they have accrued.
- 3.9.8. If members of staff return to work on a job-share or part-time basis having previously worked full-time, they will accrue annual leave on a full-time basis and then on a pro-rata basis, calculated on the number of hours worked upon your return. Please see [Job share Procedure](#) and [Flexible Working procedure](#) for further information.
- 3.10. **Promotion Opportunities and Service Vacancies**
- 3.10.1. Whilst pregnant or on maternity leave, members of staff may apply for a job that is advertised as a DWFRS vacancy.
- 3.10.2. It is the Line Managers responsibility to keep members of staff updated with any Service vacancies during maternity leave.
- 3.10.3. If the member of staff is successful in their application during maternity leave, they are promoted or placed in the new role and receive the relevant rate of pay on the date advertised as commencement of the post. The member of staff will commence duties of the new post on return from maternity leave.
- 3.11. **Keeping in Touch days (KIT days)**
- 3.11.1. During maternity leave members of staff are allowed to work up to 10 days without it affecting their maternity leave or pay. These are called 'Keeping in Touch days' or KIT days. They should be used for the purpose of keeping in touch with your team and the wider organisation.
- 3.11.2. Please see [Guidance Document – Keep in Touch \(KIT\) Days](#) for further information.
- 3.12. **Contact Details/Remote Access to DWFRS Service Information**
- 3.12.1. The Service is entitled to make reasonable contact with members of staff during Maternity Leave to discuss return to work plans, KIT days, or flexible working arrangements.
- 3.12.2. Members of staff will need to make sure that their contact details are up to date, and that they have provided the Service with an up to date current address, telephone number and email address before a period of leave commences.
- 3.12.3. Members of staff will be provided with contact details for their line manager/ point of contact if they need to contact the Service whilst they are on leave.
- 3.12.4. The Service will endeavour to provide members of staff with temporary remote access to service information whilst they are on leave. This will allow remote

access to service information to view Connect, Weekly updates, vacancies, policies and procedures and more. If this is not possible or not required, the line manager will keep in contact and provide relevant service information.

- 3.12.5. If a member of staff requires a temporary account, they will need to request this to be set up by ICT.

4. Procedure Principles for New Mothers Returning to work

4.1. Right to return to Work

- 4.1.1. Wherever possible, the Service will hold the member of staff's previous post open for their intended return. However, if this is not possible by reason of redundancy or exceptional circumstances (reorganisation that would have occurred if you had not been absent) they are entitled to be offered a suitable alternative vacancy, where one exists. Please refer to the [Reorganisation; Redeployment & Redundancy](#) procedure for further information.
- 4.1.2. A suitable vacancy is work that is suitable for the member of staff and appropriate to their role and capacity. The member of staff terms and conditions are not less favourable than in their previous position.
- 4.1.3. If the member of staff declared before maternity leave they did not intend to return to work, they may approach the Service for re-employment. It may not be possible to re-employ the member of staff in their previous post but DWFRS will attempt to find a suitable alternative post in terms of duties and salary.
- 4.1.4. If this is not possible within a reasonable timescale, the Service regrets that they will be unable to re-employ the member of staff.

4.2. Notification of change of return to work date while on maternity leave

- 4.2.1. If a member of staff wishes to return to work before the end of maternity leave they must give Employee Relations eight weeks' notice of their return to work by completing a [Notification of Return to Work form](#).
- 4.2.2. This notice requirement applies during both ordinary and additional maternity leave.
- 4.2.3. If a member of staff attempts to return to work earlier than the end of their maternity leave without giving eight weeks' notice, the Service may postpone their return until the full eight weeks' notice is given.
- 4.2.4. If the member of staff's return has been postponed under these circumstances, they are not entitled to receive wages or salary if they return to work during the period of postponement. However, if the Service did not provide appropriate notification of when your leave should end, you are not obliged to give the eight weeks' notice.
- 4.2.5. If the member of staff wishes to return to work later than previously notified, they are required to give the Service notice of this new/later date of return at least eight weeks before the earlier date.
- 4.2.6. If the member of staff does not wish to return to work after maternity leave, they must give notice of termination required by their contract of employment. However, it would help if they can give as much notice as possible. As long as they specify

the date on which they wish to terminate the contract this does not mean they are no longer entitled to maternity leave or pay for the rest of the maternity leave period.

4.3. Occupational Health

4.3.1. Members of staff are required to attend an occupational health appointment prior to returning to work to assess their fitness for operational duties. Any adjustments to their working pattern will be determined at this assessment and will be considered on an individual basis. Please refer to the [Occupational Health procedure](#) for further information.

4.4. Return to work plan (Operational Staff)

4.4.1. Staff employed in an operational role (Wholetime or On Call) will undertake a return to work plan to ensure operational competencies and fitness are achieved prior to returning to full duties.

4.4.2. The return to work plan will run for a maximum period of 13 weeks and will commence at the end of the maternity leave period.

4.4.3. Payment during this period will be at full pay.

4.4.4. The working hours and pattern will be agreed in advance and there will be a requirement for the member of staff to work flexibly during this period to undertake all appropriate training. There is no requirement to shadow the substantive working pattern / shift pattern, but this can be considered on request.

4.4.5. It will be the member of staff's responsibility as part of this return to work plan to book training and to ensure that the targets set out are achieved within the timescales.

4.4.6. An initial assessment will be undertaken with Occupational Health to identify any restrictions which may need to be considered within the plan.

4.4.7. The plan will set out the required training to achieve the following:

- An in date Operational Licence.
- 80% of competencies achieved.
- Fitness to the required standard.
- Confirmation from Occupational Health of a return to full duties.

4.4.8. Progress will be assessed at three, six and 12 weeks.

4.5. Flexible Working

4.5.1. The service operates a range of flexible working arrangements to support members of staff return to work and to support a healthy work/life balance including:

- [Flexible Working](#)
- [Homeworking](#)
- [Job share](#)
- [Smarter Working](#)

4.6. **Sickness Absence after Maternity Leave**

- 4.6.1. If a member of staff is unable to attend work at the end of maternity leave and the sickness is non-maternity related, the [Attendance Management procedure](#) will apply.

4.7. **Breastfeeding**

- 4.7.1. If a member of staff wishes to continue breastfeeding when they return to work they must notify their Line Manager and a [Maternity Risk Assessment](#) will need to be completed to consider additional risks.
- 4.7.2. If the risk assessment shows no significant risk, facilities are put in place to allow the member of staff to continue to breastfeed. The provisions made include:
- a lockable room to express milk privately
 - private facilities for secure storage including a fridge to store milk
 - adequate rest, meal and refreshment breaks.
- 4.7.3. If the risk assessment reveals a sufficiently significant risk, the Service will discuss any need to modify the employee's role for reasons of health and safety. Suitable alternative work elsewhere in the organisation is offered, appropriate to your role, skill and abilities.
- 4.7.4. For reasons of health and safety and in the absence of childcare facilities within the Service workplaces, it is not possible for babies to be fed on work premises.
- 4.7.5. If suitable alternative work is not available, the member of staff will be able to claim suspension on full pay, so that she may continue to breastfeed.

4.8. **Training on Return**

- 4.8.1. When the member of staff returns to work following Maternity Leave, they may require refresher training. The line manager will update the member of staff of any changes in the Service and arrange refresher training as required.
- 4.8.2. Operational Staff will be required to undertake a return to work plan as set out in 4.4 above.

4.9. **Postnatal Care**

- 4.9.1. New parents are entitled to attend health clinics or postnatal clinics with full pay – an appointment card or other proof may be requested. In the event of miscarriage or stillbirth, paid time off for counselling is given.

4.10. **Family Friendly Leave**

- 4.10.1. The Service offers a range of family friendly leave options that can be used alongside Maternity Leave. Please see the relevant procedure for further information:
- [Shared Parental Leave](#)
 - [Parental Leave](#)
 - [Maternity/Paternity Support Leave.](#)

5. Responsibilities

5.1 Members of staff

5.1.1 Members of staff will need to:

- notify your Line Manager as soon as practically possible after you become aware of your pregnancy. For operational roles this will need to be as soon as possible and any early notifications of pregnancy will be treated in confidence
- complete monthly [Maternity Risk Assessments](#) with your Line Manager following 7 days notification of your pregnancy
- keep the Service informed of any changes or any advice recommended by your doctor which needs to be considered in respect of the on-going individualised risk assessment
- submit your MATB1 form to Employee Relations at around 20 weeks or the date it is issued to you
- submit your [Notification of Maternity Leave form](#) to Employee Relations and HRBP allowing 8 weeks' notice before leave is due to commence
- inform the Employee Relations of the actual date of the baby's birth as soon as reasonably possible using the [Notification of Date of Birth Form](#)
- if you would like to change your return to work date you will need to give Employee Relations 28 days' notice using the [Notification of Return to Work Form](#)
- refer to the [Guidance Document – Maternity – Health and Safety](#)
- complete and return the [contractual maternity declaration form](#) to Employee Relations
- request remote access from ICT whilst you are on maternity leave if this is required to keep up to date with Service related information
- inform your line manager if you are planning on breast feeding upon your return to work
- attend Occupational Health on request to assess your fitness to return to work following maternity leave and to ensure that any reasonable adjustments can be made
- undertake any appropriate training on your return to work including attendance at courses
- undertake a fitness assessment, where applicable, to confirm your fitness to perform your role
- read this procedure and contact your Line Manager /HRBP for any further assistance relating to this procedure.

5.2 Line Manager

5.2.1 Line managers will need to:

- remove any operational firefighter from duty IMMEDIATELY on finding out they are pregnant
- contact the relevant Head of Service/Station Manager and Employee Relations to ensure they are aware of the pregnancy

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- discuss confidentiality issues and as far as is possible ensure staff confidentiality is maintained where requested
- familiarise yourself with the procedures for pregnant members of staff contained in this procedure
- give consideration to the area and type of work undertaken by the member of staff
- complete monthly [Maternity Risk Assessments](#) with your member of staff to highlight any health and safety issues and put in preventative measures to avoid these risks where possible
- refer to the [Guidance Document – Maternity – Health and Safety](#)
- complete relevant forms to notify Employee Relations if the member of staff completes a KIT day. This should be sent to Employee Relations for monitoring purposes (pay is at contractual rate, not overtime rate)
- seek guidance from HRBP regarding any aspect of this procedure
- send copies of the Weekly Update on a regular basis to a member of staff during their absence so they are aware of Service activities and vacancies
- make sure a [Maternity Risk Assessment](#) is completed when a member of staff returns from maternity leave.
- monitor, review and evaluate any training for staff returning from maternity leave
- oversee the return to work plan (operational staff).

5.3 Employee Relations

5.3.1 Employee Relations will:

- write to pregnant members of staff confirming their entitlements and issuing the [Maternity - Important dates](#), document [notification of date of birth form](#), [notification of return to work form](#), and [contractual maternity declaration form](#)
- provide a forecast of earnings to pregnant members of staff on receipt of form MATB1
- make sure confidentiality is maintained where appropriate
- make necessary payroll adjustments for members of staff in receipt of statutory maternity pay and contractual maternity pay.

5.4 HR Business Partner (HRBP)

5.4.1 HRBP's will:

- provide advice and guidance to managers and staff on maternity pay and provisions
- provide support to new and expectant parents throughout the maternity period
- meet with pregnant members of staff to discuss maternity benefits, procedures and entitlements, and any other issues.
- support the line manager with any training for staff returning to work from maternity leave.

6. Monitoring & Assurance

6.1. Procedure Management

- 6.1.1. This procedure will be raised with all new staff at induction and will be published and made available to all members of staff.
- 6.1.2. HR Services will monitor the number of requests for maternity leave and pay.

6.2. Learning and Development

- 6.2.1. This procedure will be reviewed and updated in line with changes in legislation and good practice.

7. Document Reference

7.1. Forms to complete

[HR016 – Notification of Maternity Leave Form](#)

[HR017 – Maternity Risk Assessment Checklists \(Ops \(A\) & Corporate \(B\)\)](#)

[HR045 – Notification of Date of Birth](#)

[HR046 – Notification of Return to Work](#)

[HR047 – Contractual Maternity Declaration](#)

[C012 – Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan \(PEEP\) Form](#)

7.2. Document References:

[EDI 3 – Flexible Working \(All Staff\)](#)

[EDI 4 – Special Leave](#)

[EDI 7 – Parental Leave](#)

[EDI 8 – Maternity Support Leave \(incorporating Paternity Leave\)](#)

[EDI 9 – Adoption Leave](#)

[EDI 10 – Shared Parental Leave](#)

[EDI 11 – Job Share](#)

[EPR 11 – Homeworking](#)

[EPR 20 - Childcare Voucher Scheme](#)

[EPR 21 – Career Break](#)

[EPR 27 – Reorganisation; Redeployment & Redundancy](#)

[EPR 38 – Cycle to Work Scheme](#)

[HW 6 – Occupational Health](#)

[HW 8 – Attendance Management](#)

[Smarter Working Principles](#)

7.3. Supporting Information

[EDI 2SI – Maternity Health & Safety Guide](#)

[EDI 2SI – KIT Days, Guidance Notes](#)

[EDI 2SI – Important Dates](#)

8. Document Management

Policy Statement Reference: People			
Owner	Review Date	Author	Status
Carol Swan	01/04/2023	Sadie Price	Published

8.1. Version Control:

Version	Page & Par Ref	Date	Changes Made	Authorised By
V13.0	Page 6 / Section 2.11.2	10/01/2023	<p>Replaced 2.11.2 Maternity Leave will commence on the Sunday following the birth of the child.</p> <p>With 2.11.2 Maternity Leave will commence the day following the birth of the child.</p> <p>No other changes made.</p>	Mark Stone
V12.0	Page 17, section 7.1	10/11/2022	<p>HR017 Title change to reflect Operational and Corporate forms. (HR017 – Maternity Risk Assessment Checklists (Ops & Corporate)).</p> <p>No other changes made.</p>	Jo Di Francesco
V11.1	Page 7, section 2.13	17/06/2021	Updated section to clarify the terms of authorised absence when travelling abroad for treatment	Sadie Price
V10.0	Entire document	02/12/2020	Inclusion of information regarding a new 13 week return to work plan for operational staff	Sadie Price
V9.0	Entire Document	1/4/2020	Updated links within Relevant Document section to point from BrigadeHQ3 to http://pandp.dwfire.org.uk . No other changes made.	Lea Morris

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V8.0	Page 1 & 16	19/06/2018	Updated Policy reference in accordance to new framework.	Tonya Saben
V7.0	Entire document	21.05.2018	Review complete to consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR services and HRBP's responsibilities • Career break procedure • Smarter working principles 	Felicity Williams/ Fiona Bacon
V6.0	Page 17/Para 7.4	26/05/2017	Updated KIT Days, Guidance Notes link as it was going to the wrong link as pointed out by a member of staff	Tonya Saben
V5.0	Page 9/ Para 3.3.2	07/11/2016	Removed bullet point referencing receipt of SMP as this is already referenced in the bullet points	Felicity Williams
V4.0	Page 3 para 2.1.9	30/09/2016	Reference to pregnant members of staff will need to complete a PEEP form with their line manager as part of the Maternity risk assessment.	Felicity Williams
V 3.0		27/09/2016	Added reference to new Notification of Pregnancy letter, Notification of Date of Birth, Notification of Return to Work and Contractual Maternity Declaration forms	Felicity Williams
V2.0	Page 1 Page 16 / 7.1 – 7.4	13/06/2016	Added link to EDI Policy. Added section 7.1 and completed links where available in 7.2 – 7.4.	Tonya Saben
V1.0		23/03/015	Final published document	Louise Fielding

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