



Human Resources

Maternity Policy & Procedures

Document Control - Version History/Revision Record

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4.0	28 th March 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Revised in line with the Maternity Protection, Employment Equality and Preservation of Certain Records Act 2024• Updated contact details• Minor formatting updates
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Section 1 - Maternity Policy

1. Purpose of the Company's Maternity Policy

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to assist managers and staff in managing the period during pregnancy, maternity leave and upon return from maternity leave so as to make this a positive experience for those involved.
- 1.1 An Post is aware of the need for protection of employees under various Irish Laws and is committed to supporting the safety, health and welfare of its employees. The Company is also committed to working effectively with its group of trade unions to ensure the wellbeing of its employees. Together we have devised the Maternity and Related Leave Policy and Procedures.

2. Legislative Entitlements

- 2.1 Employees who give birth are protected by provisions outlined in the Maternity Protection Acts as amended most recently by the Maternity Protection, Employment Equality and Preservation of Certain Records Act 2024 and the Work Life Balance and Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2023 as well as by; the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007; the Parental Leave Amendment Act 2019, the Family Leave & Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2021 and the Employment Equality Acts 1998 to 2015 (particularly the family status ground and the gender ground under which specific protection is provided for pregnant employees and maternity leave).
- 2.2 Maternity legislation provides a number of basic rights to birthing parents in employment (and their partners in certain circumstances) in respect of maternity leave, ante and post-natal care appointments, ante-natal classes, breastfeeding breaks and in certain circumstances health and safety leave. If an employee becomes pregnant while in employment, they are entitled to take Maternity Leave.
- 2.3 The entitlement to a basic period of Maternity Leave from employment extends to all employees who give birth, regardless of how long they have been working for the Company or the number of hours worked per week. Additional unpaid maternity leave may also be availed of. All employees who are pregnant, who have recently given birth, or who are breastfeeding up to the 104th week after the birth date of the child, are protected under Irish Law.
- 2.4 These Acts provide for statutory minimum entitlements in relation to maternity at work and prohibit pregnancy related discrimination. Employees who are pregnant in Ireland are entitled to 26 weeks' maternity leave plus the option to avail of 16 weeks' additional unpaid maternity leave. At least 2 weeks must be taken before the end of the week of the baby's expected birth and at least 4 weeks after. The employee can decide how to take the remaining weeks.

The following entitlements apply under the Maternity Protection Acts:

The right to:

- (i) paid time off for medical appointments, examinations and tests related to the pregnancy and on a once-off basis for ante-natal classes (other than the last three classes normally occurring during maternity leave). An expectant father or partner of the birthing parent is entitled, on a once-off basis, to paid time off to attend the last two antenatal classes before the birth
- (ii) retain full entitlement to annual leave and public holiday benefit while on maternity leave and additional maternity leave
- (iii) have a risk assessment undertaken
- (iv) health and safety leave, where appropriate
- (v) time off from work or reduced working hours to allow breastfeeding

2.5 In addition to the above, employees are protected from dismissal and suspension when on maternity leave and are entitled to return to their normal job or a similar position with the same pay and grade.

2.6 Entitlement to pay and superannuation during maternity leave depends on the terms of your contract of employment. You may qualify for the Department of Social Protection Maternity Benefit payment if you have sufficient PRSI contributions. Further pay-related information can be found at [Section 1.6](#) below.

Section 2 - Maternity & Related Leave Procedures

1. Maternity and Maternity Related Leave

- 1.1. Maternity Leave consisting of 26 consecutive weeks' paid leave plus the option to avail of 16 weeks' additional unpaid Maternity Leave is available to all *eligible employees (*[Section 1.6](#) below refers). At least 2 weeks must be taken before the end of the week of the baby's expected birth and at least 4 weeks after. The employee can decide how to take the remaining weeks.
- 1.2. A pregnant employee who wishes to avail of the entitlement to Maternity Leave must notify the Company (Line Manager/HR Section/Regional Office) in writing as soon as reasonably practicable, but no later than 4 weeks before the beginning of the leave and they should provide a medical certificate specifying the expected week of confinement.
- 1.3. If the employee wishes to avail of additional Maternity Leave, again they must notify the Company in writing no later than 4 weeks before the day on which their additional maternity leave is due to commence. Alternatively, the employee may ask their doctor to contact the An Post HR Help Desk and supply the appropriate medical confirmation.
- 1.4. Maternity Related Leave refers to time off for attendance at ante-natal and post-natal medical appointments and separately refers to time off for attendance at ante-natal classes.
- 1.5. Leave for Ante-Natal Care and Ante-Natal Classes
 - (i) Pregnant employees are entitled to paid time off for ante-natal and post-natal care without loss of pay for pregnancy related medical appointments and post-natal care appointments.
 - (ii) Employees should give their Manager as much notice as possible but should give, where practical, at least two weeks' notice of their first visit. After that the employee should produce their appointment card as evidence of attendance and give as much notice as possible to their Manager.
 - (iii) There is no maximum or minimum time off for such medical visits but employees are entitled to as much time off as is necessary to attend each visit. This includes the time travelling to and from the visit.

- (iv) Pregnancy is not an illness, and employees do not need to produce a sick certificate or sick note for such attendances but must produce their appointment card if requested.
- (v) Pregnant employees are also entitled to time off without loss of pay for attendance at one set of antenatal classes (other than the last three classes in the set). The employee must notify their Manager in writing of the times and date of each class as soon as possible and at least two weeks before the date of the first class. If required they should be able to produce a document showing the dates and times of the class or classes they wish to attend.
- (vi) Employees who are partners of the birthing parent are entitled to, on a once off basis, paid time off to attend the last two antenatal classes before the birth.

1.6 Eligible Employees and Payment During Maternity Leave

All pregnant employees, other than those employed from time to time on a casual basis¹, can avail of paid Maternity Leave. All pregnant employees including casual staff may avail of time off for attendance at ante-natal and post-natal medical appointments, and also for attendance at ante-natal classes.

An employee on a fixed-term contract is entitled to full maternity leave. However, if their fixed-term contract ends before the last day of maternity leave, this counts as the last day of maternity leave as well as their last day of service. In circumstances where the employee concerned becomes entitled to a permanent contract or continues in employment following the expiry of their current contract then they should continue on maternity leave.

1.6.1 Maternity Leave (Paid):

- (i) Eligible employees who pay full PRSI contributions (Class A) and have made the necessary contributions are entitled to Maternity Benefit from the State and must apply for this benefit to Department of Social Protection. In such circumstances, the Company will pay the difference between the Maternity Benefit and the eligible employee's normal salary for the first 26 weeks. They are entitled to 26 consecutive weeks' paid leave, 2 of which must be taken prior to the end of the week the baby is due (as medically certified) and ending not earlier than 4 weeks after the birth.

¹ Casual basis refers to staff employed for short periods of less than 13 weeks.

- (ii) Maternity pay for part-time employees who have worked additional basic hours will be calculated on a pro-rata basis according to the number of basic hours worked in the twelve-month reference period immediately before the commencement of the Maternity Leave.

Maternity Benefit Section

Department of Social Protection

McCarter's Road

Buncrana

Donegal

Ph: (01) 471 5898 or 081890 690 690

Website: <https://www.gov.ie/en/service/apply-for-maternity-benefit/>

- 1.6.2 Additional Maternity Leave (Unpaid):
Employees may take an optional additional 16 weeks of unpaid Maternity Leave, immediately after the period of paid Maternity Leave. There is no payment given to employees who avail of Additional Maternity Leave from either the Company or the State. Unpaid Maternity Leave is not reckonable for pension purposes. The Company will complete an [application form for maternity leave credits \(pdf\)](#) after the employee's return to work.
- 1.6.3 Termination of Unpaid Additional Maternity Leave:
If you are sick and you wish to end your unpaid additional maternity leave, you may ask your HR Manager to end this leave at any time. **Please refer to Section 1.7 (v) for further information regarding the right to postpone maternity leave owing to a serious medical condition.**
- 1.6.4 If your additional maternity leave is ended by your own request as a result of a non-serious medical condition, the following will apply:
 - (i) any absence from work (after the additional maternity leave is over) is treated in the same way as any absence from work due to sickness; and
 - (ii) the additional leave is lost and you are not entitled to it at any later date.
- 1.6.5 Maternity Leave is not Sick Leave and will be granted irrespective of an employee's sick absence record and does not reckon as sick leave.
- 1.6.6 Impact on other terms and conditions of employment:
 - (i) Paid Maternity and Maternity Related Leave (i.e. time off for natal medical appointments and ante-natal classes) as service or "time worked":

Paid Maternity Leave and paid Maternity Related Leave are reckonable as service for incremental, superannuation and other relevant purposes, including probation and seniority. They are also deemed to be "time worked" for the purposes of calculating an employee's annual leave entitlement and do not affect an employee's entitlement to other statutory leave such as Parental Leave, Parent's Leave, Adoptive Leave or additional Unpaid Adoptive Leave.

(ii) Pension Contributions:

Contributions will continue to be made during paid Maternity Leave. The 16 weeks' unpaid leave is not reckonable for pension purposes.

(iii) Unpaid Maternity Leave as service or "time worked":

The 16 weeks' additional unpaid maternity leave is also classified as "time worked" and is similarly reckonable as service, except for superannuation purposes.

(iv) Public Holidays:

An employee on Paid Maternity Leave or additional unpaid Maternity Leave qualifies for paid leave in lieu of any public holiday occurring during the period of leave.

1.7 Maternity and Exceptional Circumstances

The following situations are also catered for in the leave arrangements operated by the Company:

(i) Premature births or late births:

From 1st October 2017, maternity leave has been extended for birthing parents whose babies are born prematurely. In addition to the current 26 weeks of paid maternity leave, the birthing parent is entitled to an additional period of leave and benefit. The timeframe refers to the time between the baby's actual birth date and the expected start date of the maternity leave. The employee is required to notify the Human Resources (HR) Department in writing within fourteen (14) days of the early birth or of changed circumstances. If the birth occurs later than the expected week of delivery, no extension of maternity leave is given and the expected return to work date will remain the same.

(ii) Postponement in the event of hospitalisation of a child:

Subject to the Company's agreement, an employee may postpone maternity leave/additional unpaid maternity leave in the event of the

hospitalisation of the child. Maternity leave may only be postponed if the employee has taken at least 14 weeks' maternity leave, including 4 weeks after the birth. The maximum period of postponement is 6 months.

(iii) Miscarriage or still births:

There is no entitlement to statutory maternity leave for a miscarriage occurring up to and including the 24th week of pregnancy. However, where a miscarriage or still birth occurs after the 24th week of pregnancy the employee is covered under the Act and may avail of their statutory leave.

(iv) Leave for the partnering parent on the death of the birthing parent:

Where following the birth of a child, the death of the birthing parent occurs within 40 weeks, the partnering parent is entitled to avail of the remainder of the maternity leave entitlement in respect of that child. The leave commences within 7 days of the birthing parent's death or following the conclusion of Compassionate Leave.

(v) Postponement of Maternity Leave owing to a Serious Health Condition

- i. As introduced by the Maternity Protection, Employment Equality and Preservation of Certain Records Act 2024, employees have a right to postpone all or part of their maternity leave for a period between 5 weeks up to 52 weeks in the event of them having a serious health condition. The legislation defines a serious health condition as a health condition that entails a serious risk to the life or health, including the mental health, of an employee, and in order to address the risk, the employee requires necessary medical intervention for a period of time to be carried out.
- ii. In notifying An Post the employee must directly or indirectly specify in writing the date on which the maternity leave postponement is to commence and end (which must be at least 5 weeks from the commencement of the postponement) with a medical cert that specifies those dates. This notification to the Company must be made at least 2 weeks before the employee's postponement is due to commence.
- iii. Where a notification is made in accordance with the above, the employee will be entitled to resume their maternity leave in one continuous period on the day immediately after the postponement end date.

- iv. Where the employee has already postponed their maternity leave, they may notify the Company in writing of their intention to postpone their leave one further time only to a date that is not later than 52 weeks from the date on which the first postponement commenced. This second postponement request must also be tendered to the Company in writing at least two weeks prior to the commencement date of the second postponement.
- v. The legislation does not entitle an employee to postpone their maternity leave owing to them having a serious medical condition in addition to accessing a postponement in the event of the hospitalisation of a child in respect of the same birth. An Post will address such requests exercising due sensitivity.

2. Health and Safety

2.1 Pregnancy Risk Assessment

Under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007 the Company has a duty of care in respect of the health and safety of any employee who is pregnant, breastfeeding, or has recently given birth and who has provided an appropriate medical certificate. This duty involves assessing the workplace for hazards which may pose a risk to the employee or their pregnancy (i.e. a Pregnancy Risk Assessment).

2.1.1 Once the employee notifies the Manager of their pregnancy, the Manager will carry out a risk assessment and provide the employee with the 'Assessment of Risk during Pregnancy' Guide.

2.1.2 Typical risks may include:

- Manual Handling
- Prolonged Standing
- Longer Working Hours - Overtime
- Cycling and Seat Belt Wearing
- Night/Shift Work

2.1.3 Should an employee be dissatisfied with the outcome of a risk assessment or have any concerns about how they were treated during this period, the matter can be raised through the Company's Grievance Procedures.

2.2 Health and Safety Leave

An Post is committed to safeguarding the health, safety and welfare of its employees. In this regard, it is the Company's aim to allow employees to continue to work in a safe and risk-free environment during and after pregnancy. In circumstances where the employee's continued presence at work, during the pregnancy or immediately after maternity leave, would put the employee's or child's health at risk, and that risk cannot be adequately addressed through altering work and/or attendance requirements, Health and Safety Leave will be applied.

2.2.1 An employee is entitled to full pay for the first three weeks of Health and Safety Leave. Such a period of Health and Safety Leave will reckon as service in all aspects.

2.2.2 If Health and Safety leave extends beyond three weeks, the employee will continue to be paid subject to the same arrangements and limits that apply to all employees under the Company's Sick Pay regulations. Any

such period of Health and Safety Leave will reckon as service on the same basis as if it were a period of sick leave and will not be recorded on the Attendance Support and Management Process [ASMP].

2.2.3 Health and Safety leave can end in a number of ways:

- when maternity leave begins;
- in the case of breastfeeding employees who are at risk, when they stop breastfeeding (within the statutory period);
- if the Company takes steps to make your workplace risk-free or can move you to suitable and appropriate employment;
- if you are employed under a fixed-term contract, at the end of the fixed term (Section 1.6 refers);
- seven days after you are notified by the Company that you can return to work; or if you return to work earlier than the seven days, then the Health and Safety Leave will end on the first day back at work;
- if the employee is no longer pregnant.

2.3 Health and Safety Benefit

For employees who pay PRSI Class A and who qualify² for Health and Safety Benefit from the Department of Social Protection, deductions will be made from the pay (as determined by the Department of Social Protection) after the first three weeks of Health and Safety leave.

For further information about the payment of Health and Safety Benefit, you can contact:

The Department of Social Protection
Health and Safety Benefit Section
Ph: (01) 471 5898
www.welfare.ie

² To qualify for Health and Safety Benefit while on Health and Safety Leave an employee must have:

- At least 13 weeks PRSI paid in the 12 months immediately before the date the child is due or;
- 104 weeks PRSI paid since first starting work, and
- 39 weeks PRSI paid or credited in the relevant tax year, or in the year following the relevant tax year, of which at least 13 must be paid contributions or;
- 26 weeks PRSI paid in the relevant tax year and 26 weeks PRSI paid in the tax year before the relevant tax year.

3. Returning to Work Following Maternity Leave

- 3.1 Following maternity leave an employee is entitled to return to work to the same job, under the same contract and terms and conditions as would have applied before they went on maternity leave (or in certain circumstances return to suitable alternative work under terms or conditions of employment that are not substantially less favourable than those of their contract of employment immediately before the start of the period of absence from work while on protective leave). The right to return to work is conditional on compliance with the appropriate notification procedures under legislation. The employee must provide the Company with written notification four weeks in advance of their intention to return to work.
- 3.2 An employee returning to work following maternity leave can feel anxious about leaving their child and coping with new responsibilities at home and in work. A welcoming and supportive environment will help them allay concerns they may have about returning to work; will enable any issues they face to be dealt with; and will help them to settle back into the work environment.
- 3.3 The following guidelines can help a successful transition back into the workplace:
- (i) If the employee is in agreement, the Line Manager can arrange an informal meeting with the employee some weeks prior to their return to:
 - discuss their return, role and responsibilities;
 - ensure the employee is aware of any organisational changes that might affect them;
 - discuss any concerns they may have and enable them to ask any questions;
 - identify any training needs;
 - explore possible flexible working arrangements, if required.
 - (ii) Line Manager to ensure the employee's workstation is ready for their return and that their team is advised of their return so that someone can be available to welcome them back.
 - (iii) On their first day back take the time to meet with the employee to hold a short return to work meeting, welcoming them back, updating them on changes which may have occurred since the previous meeting, and listening to and addressing any concerns they might have.
 - (iv) Allow time for the employee to meet with team members as appropriate and re-establish social contacts.

- (v) After two weeks ask the employee how they are settling back in to ensure there are no difficulties.
- (vi) For first time parents returning from maternity leave, it can be a hugely supportive resource to link in with other employees who have been through a similar experience.

3.4 Breastfeeding Provisions

- (i) An Post recognises that breastfeeding is a sustainable source of nutrition for infants, protecting them from illnesses and contributing to their growth and development. Breastfeeding also has considerable health benefits for the parent. Supporting employees who provide breast milk to their babies is therefore essential.
- (ii) The statutory entitlement to breastfeeding breaks extends to two years from the child's date of birth.
- (iii) An Post celebrates that every family is unique and recognises the rich diversity of family structures. This policy seeks to ensure that employees feel supported and empowered in their choice to breastfeed.

(iv) Breastfeeding Breaks

The entitlement to paid time off for breastfeeding purposes is set out in the Maternity Protection (Amendment) Act 2004, as amended by the Work Life Balance and Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2023.

Employees may avail of breaks for breastfeeding or expressing milk up until the child reaches two years of age.

Arrangements **for the purposes of breastfeeding** may be as follows:

- Where appropriate facilities are available, the employee may take an additional break at work without loss of pay for 1 hour each full working day. The employee may take one break totalling 60 minutes or shorter breaks throughout the day totalling 60 minutes.
- Where no facilities are available, the employee may have a reduction in working hours by 1 hour each full working day without loss of pay.

For part-time employees, time off from work or a reduction in working hours will be arranged on a pro-rata basis.

(v) Storage

- Employees should be aware that facilities at Company sites are shared.
- The employee is responsible for labelling and securely storing breast milk in available facilities on Company property.
- An Post is not responsible for managing or removing milk stored in refrigerators in breastfeeding/expressing facilities.

(vi) Accessing Breastfeeding Arrangements: 3 Steps

1. Employees should notify their Line Manager in writing of their intention to access breastfeeding breaks at least four weeks before returning to work following maternity leave.
2. An Post will undertake a risk assessment for breastfeeding employees in line with health and safety legislation. A risk assessment can assist in determining safe, private & comfortable arrangements that suit the employee.
3. The employee should then complete a Breastfeeding Arrangements Form, agreeing to notify the Company if their intended end date for breastfeeding changes.

If an employee requires changes to agreed arrangements, they should inform their Line Manager or Occupational Support Specialist as soon as possible.

The Company will make every effort to offer flexibility in accommodations provided.

3.5 Work Life Balance Initiatives: Supporting Working Parents

There are a number of statutory entitlements and non-statutory arrangements facilitated by the Company which may be of benefit to working parents.

Statutory Entitlements	Non-Statutory Arrangements
Parental Leave	Term Time
Parent's Leave	Work Sharing
Paternity Leave	Part-time Working
Adoptive Leave	Flexitime
Leave for (Serious) Medical Care	Career Break
Force Majeure	Special Leave for Domestic Reasons (Unpaid)

Non-statutory arrangements may be limited to certain grades, are subject to the exigencies of the service and are generally at the discretion of the Company. Line Managers can provide information about these entitlements and arrangements to employees who request it.

All related documents are accessible from your Line Manager as well as from the intranet at <https://anpost.sharepoint.com/sites/LiveWell/SitePages/wlb.aspx>.

4. Communication and Confidentiality

- 4.1 As the earliest stages of pregnancy are the most critical for the developing child, it is in the employee's best interest to let their Line Manager know of their pregnancy as soon as they become aware of it. This will help local management and pregnant employees assess the risk to their health and safety so that the employee concerned can continue to work safely in An Post until they take maternity leave.
- 4.2 While it is necessary for a pregnant employee to inform the Company of their intention to avail of maternity leave, it is their choice as to if and when they wish to inform others. Communication preferences at work about pregnancy can be influenced by many factors including cultural practices. Some employees might not wish to disclose that they are pregnant until late in the pregnancy. Some employees may feel more comfortable talking with a manager of a particular gender. An alternative manager can be made available to discuss pregnancy-related arrangements in these circumstances.
- 4.3 Information provided by the employee to their Line Manager or local HR Department will be treated as confidential. Information will only be disclosed to other parties within the Company (e.g. the Occupational Health Service) where absolutely necessary and the employee will be advised of this in advance.

Appendix A: Checklist for Pregnant Employee and Line Manager

Pregnant Employee	Line Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notification of pregnancy: It is in your best interest and that of your unborn child to let your Line Manager know that you are pregnant as soon as you become aware of it so that a risk assessment can be made. You can discuss with your Manager when and how you would like to inform your team. Be assured that your Manager will treat all information confidentially. Risk Assessment: Participate in a Pregnancy (postnatal, breastfeeding) Risk Assessment (PRA) with your Line Manager and with Occupational Health Services. Uniform or Work-wear: If it is a requirement of your duty that you wear a Uniform or Work-wear, contact your Line Manager regarding arrangements for the wearing of alternative garments during your pregnancy. You are entitled to time off for ante-natal appointments and ante natal classes and post-natal appointments up to 14 weeks after the birth. Please inform your Manager at least 2 weeks in advance. Notification of intent to take Maternity Leave: Notify HR in writing at least 4 weeks prior to the due date of the child of your intent to take Maternity Leave. You must also provide a medical certificate confirming pregnancy and the expected week of birth. Notification of intent to take Additional Maternity Leave: Notify HR in writing 4 weeks in advance of the expiry of the paid period of Maternity Leave. Notification of intent to return to work following a period of paid Maternity Leave: Notify HR in writing at least 4 weeks in advance of the expiry of the paid Maternity Leave period. Maternity Related Leave-Ante Natal Classes-Notification Requirements: Entitlement to this leave requires written notification to HR 2 weeks in advance and the production of appropriate documentation by the employee indicating dates and times. Breastfeeding: If you are breastfeeding and are returning to work you should contact your Line Manager at least 2 weeks prior to return to work. Plan for your return to work: be sure that you have notified the Company of your intended date of return 4 week prior to returning. If desired, arrange to meet with your Line Manager some weeks prior to your return. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confidentiality to be maintained at all times. Read this Maternity Policy and any legal requirements; demonstrate an attitude of support and concern for the pregnant employee. Conduct the Pregnancy Risk Assessment Part 1[PRA] of the employee's work setting. This should be carried out by the Supervisor/ Manager (or other competent person who possesses sufficient training, knowledge and experience appropriate to the nature of the work undertaken) using the PRA Form in discussion with the employee. The assessment should take place as soon as practicable once the employee informs you of their pregnancy. Forward the completed Risk Assessment form to the relevant Occupational Health Advisor. Seek advice from the Occupational Health where there are issues of concern regarding the woman's health. Implement recommended actions immediately as required. The Occupational Health Advisor will conduct Part 2 of the Risk Assessment. S/He will forward a copy of the completed PRA Form to the Employee, HR Manager, and the Line Manager. At an early date, contact the relevant section in HQ regarding the provision of alternative Uniform or Work-wear garments for the employee. Facilitate employee attending Ante Natal Care Identify how the workload will be managed in her absence and allow time for shadowing or handover where applicable. Discuss what sort of contact the employee would like to have with you, if any, while they are on maternity leave. Keep employee apprised of any relevant information in their absence e.g. job applications, organisational changes, training opportunities and promotions Ask employee to confirm their return date and to discuss their role and / or any organisational changes at least 4 weeks before they return to work. Acknowledge and congratulate employee on the birth of their baby. Ensure employees work station is prepared prior to their return. Welcome and support employee on their return to work in a way that makes the transition back into work as successful as possible. Listen to any concerns. For additional maternity leave, complete an application form for maternity leave credits (pdf)

Appendix B: Health & Safety Leave - Payment and Deductions Examples

Example 1: Ms. A. goes on Health and Safety Leave. She has had no sick leave in the 365 days leading up to her first day of Health and Safety Leave. She will then receive paid Health and Safety Leave (subject to the criteria below) for up to 26 weeks. If the Health and Safety Leave extends beyond 26 weeks, she will be reduced to Health and Safety Leave at half pay.

Criteria for an employee to remain on Health and Safety leave apply until:

- she becomes entitled to Maternity Leave or;
- 14 weeks after the date of birth or;
- 26 weeks following the date of birth (in case of breastfeeding mothers who are at risk) or;
- the date on which a fixed term contract expires or;
- the risk no longer exists or;
- the employee is no longer vulnerable to the risk or; suitable alternative work becomes available.

Example 2: Mx. B. has been on sick leave at half pay for 13 weeks within the last four years. They commence Health and Safety Leave following a risk assessment. They will receive full pay for the first 3 weeks and half pay for the following 10 weeks of Health and Safety Leave. If, however the Health and Safety Leave extends beyond 13 weeks they will be reduced to pension rate of pay.

Example 3: Ms. C. has been on sick leave at full pay for 26 weeks in the period immediately before her Health and Safety Leave. She commences Health and safety Leave following a risk assessment. She will receive full pay for the first 3 weeks and half pay for the remaining period of Health and Safety Leave up to 26 weeks. If she continues on Health and Safety Leave after 26 weeks, she will be placed on pension rate of pay.

Appendix C: Internal and External Resources

Occupational Health Service		
Ann Colohan	Occupational Health Advisor, GPO	01 705 8865
Barbara Keane	Occupational Health Advisor, Sligo	071 9142730
Emer Waters	Occupational Health Advisor, Galway	091 778746
Mary Hodgins	Occupational Health Advisor, Cork	021 4851001
Niamh Brady	Occupational Health Advisor, GPO	01 705 7865
Orla Corcoran	Occupational Health Support, GPO	0861705454
Sinead McIntyre	Occupational Health Advisor, GPO	01 705 8867

Company Circulars which refer:	
19/1984	Special Leave for Adoptive Mothers
35/1996	Maternity Protection Act, 1994.
31/2001	Extension of Maternity & Adoptive Leave.
03/2002	PRSI Credits Unpaid Maternity, Adoptive and Parental Leave
49/2003	Maternity & Adoptive Leave for employees on Fixed Term/Specified Purpose contract. (this Circular update Circulars 19/84 & 35/96)
38/2004	Maternity & Adoptive Leave Changes.
17/2006	Maternity & Adoptive Leave Changes.
114/2008	Definition of a Family - Changes to Special Leave for Domestic Reasons and Bereavement Leave.
30/2009	Part-time employees working full-time hours - sick pay and maternity pay.
1/2011	Health and Safety Leave - pregnant employees
43/2013	Parental Leave
58/2016	Paternity Leave
03/2018	Maternity Policy and Procedures HRP 4.3.3
242/2023	Work Life Balance & Miscellaneous Provisions Act - Statutory Leave Entitlements
53/2025	Revised An Post Policy on Statutory Leave Available for Parents (V3.0)

Company Policies which refer:	
Paternity Leave Policy	Effective date: 1/9/2016
Statutory Leave Available for Parents Policy Version 3.0	Effective Date: 31/03/2025

External Resources
<p> www.citizensinformation.ie/en/birth_family_relationships www.mummyspages.ie/pregnancy www.rollercoaster.ie www.eumom.ie www.hsa.ie www.childcare.ie https://mybellamama.com/ https://www.ihrec.ie/download/pdf/pregnancy_at_work_a_national_survey.pdf </p>

Regulations and Acts which refer:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maternity Protection Acts 1994 -2022 • Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007 • Employment Equality Acts 1998 to 2011 • Parental Leave Act 2006 • Paternity Leave and Benefit Act 2016 • The Parent's Leave and Benefit Act 2019 • The Family Leave and Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2021 • The Work Life Balance and Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2023 • The Maternity Protection, Employment Equality & Preservation of Certain Records Act 2024