

New guidance released on navigating fertility journeys in the workplace

Fertility Matters At Work (FMAW), an organisation focused on raising awareness of how employers can support those experiencing infertility or going through fertility treatment, has released new guidance for employers.

- The guidance is aimed at helping employers become fertility friendly organisations by, for example, understanding the challenges of balancing fertility treatment with work, educating the workforce and providing support to employees experiencing fertility issues.
- It highlights the benefits of employers providing paid time off for treatment and recovery, and giving employees access to private areas to accept sensitive phone calls related to their fertility journey during working hours.
- Other steps employers are encouraged to take include being flexible with last minute leave requests, providing a space for employees to administer and store medication and training managers to be able to hold appropriate discussions, so employees don't feel they have to suffer in silence.
- The guidance emphasises that not all fertility journeys are the same, employers need to find the right approach for their employees and make sure support is tailored to individual needs.
- Raising awareness of fertility issues in the workplace and implementing a Fertility Journey Policy can help to create a more inclusive and supportive working environment, enabling employers to stand out as an employer of choice.

Employers plan to reduce pay for home workers

A survey carried out by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) has revealed that 10% of companies plan on reducing pay or benefits for home workers. The survey found that 4% of businesses have already reduced pay or benefits for people who continue to work from home and a further 13% are on the cusp of doing so. However, the CIPD has warned that there are potential legal risks with this approach.

Did you know?

Employers who want to reduce pay or benefits for their remote workers will need to have a robust business case and follow a full and fair consultation process before implementing any such changes.

Menopause not a protected characteristic

The Minister for Work and Pensions and Minister for Women has confirmed that the government has no plans to introduce menopause as a new protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. Instead, the government will consult with Acas and the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) to assess if existing guidance adequately reflects good practice and the growing number of cases where menopause is cited.

Did you know?

Although there is no separate protection in the Equality Act 2010 for employees going through the menopause, there is still a risk of claims for age, disability and/or sex discrimination.

Tribunal finds long-Covid is a disability

A Scottish employment tribunal has held that an employee experiencing symptoms of long-Covid met the criteria to be considered disabled under the Equality Act 2010. The tribunal concluded that, although he had good days and bad days, overall, there was a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his ability to undertake daily activities. The tribunal will now consider his claims for unfair dismissal and disability discrimination.

Did you know?

The tribunal considered his inability to walk to the nearby shop and the fact he needed help with cooking and ironing. He also had difficulty concentrating and reading for any length of time.

Introducing a Fertility Journey Policy can be a great way to demonstrate an organisation's commitment to supporting employees experiencing fertility issues. Contact our 24-hour Advisory Service for up-to-date guidance on this and more.

Please contact the 24 Hour Advice Service for advice on your specific situation before acting on the information in this publication.