

# Pregnancy Loss Policy & Procedure

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# Pregnancy Loss Policy & Procedure

## Part 1 – Pregnancy Loss Policy

Please note: This guidance covers topics and issues that some readers may find difficult or upsetting. You may be someone that is currently experiencing loss, or a manager or colleague with your own experience of loss, or you may be an expectant parent managing someone that has experienced a loss.

If this is the case, you may want to speak to your own line manager or HR for advice or to direct you to the relevant part of the guidance.

### 1. Aim

The Authority is committed to the well-being of its workforce. This Policy is designed to support employees experiencing Pregnancy Loss.

### 2. Principles

Our policy is based on the following key principles:

All types of pregnancy loss can be a frightening, lonely and traumatic experience for both women and men. It is often both physically and emotionally painful, with effects that can last for a very long time.

Everyone's needs will be different. For example, some people may feel that they can continue to work as normal. Others may need more support. You may have your own experiences or opinions about the impact of pregnancy loss. Everyone will experience their loss differently. It's important not to make any assumptions about how they feel or how they want to be treated.

Partners, as well as grandparents and other close relatives, might be affected by the miscarriage. Those who are either primary carers or partners of the primary carers in surrogacy arrangements, who have acquired or intend to acquire legal parenthood for the child are also covered in this Policy.

CPCA will support them all as much as possible.

You may find it helpful to read the Miscarriage Association's information on [supporting employees before, during and after a loss](#).

### 3. Scope

This policy applies to all Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority employees as far as possible, except where there is a specific local agreement, or a clause within the contract of employment, which is at variance with the provisions as contained within the NJC agreement. There is no qualifying period.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment, and it may be amended at any time. It does not apply to Agency Worker or Contractors. Vision and Values Our vision is for a prosperous and sustainable Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Driven by our values and using our collective voice and strengths, we seek inclusive good growth for

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an equitable resilient, healthier and connected region.

Our values define what is important in the way we deliver this vision. At Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority our core values are Collaboration, Integrity, Vision, Innovation and Leadership. We are committed to ensuring our culture enables our employees to display these values regardless of their roles within the organisation. Managers and employees alike must ensure our core values are upheld when implementing this policy.

## 4. Information for employees who experience any pregnancy loss

- We're very sorry for your loss. We understand work may be the last thing on your mind right now, but we have put together this information to help you understand your rights. It is based on guidance supplied by the Miscarriage Association.
- We've included links to charities and support groups you may find helpful at the end of this document.
- Time off during and after pregnancy loss is protected as 'pregnancy-related' leave. If you have personally suffered an early or late miscarriage, any sick leave should be recorded as sickness absence in the 'pregnancy-related' category. Any period of sick leave will not count towards sickness absence trigger points.

### **Stillbirth or miscarriage**

If you have a stillbirth on or after the 25<sup>th</sup> week of your pregnancy you will still be eligible for SMP in the usual way and Occupational Maternity Pay if you qualify for this. You will also still be entitled to the full maternity leave allowance.

### **Live birth before the 25<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy onwards**

If you give birth to a live child even if the child later dies, at any point in your pregnancy, you will be entitled to SMP in the usual way and Occupational Maternity Pay if you qualify for this.

For more details, please speak with a HR Team member.

## 5. Guidance for all staff

Everyone's experience is different. You can discuss bespoke arrangements with your line manager and HR if needed, based on your circumstances.

This applies to you whether you have experienced a physical loss, or if you are the partner of someone who has. You can use up to 2 weeks paid Compassionate Leave (full pay). Often this may be at the time of the loss, but it can be taken within 6 months of the loss.

If after this 2-week Compassionate Leave, you still do not feel well enough to work, then you can self-certify as unfit for work for up to 7 calendar days. After this point, if you still do not feel well, then you will need to get a fit note from a medical professional.

Any sickness absence after the 2-week compassionate leave will be paid according to your sick pay entitlement. If you are unsure about your entitlement, please speak to your line manager or HR.

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## For partners

If you are unable to work, this may be because your partner needs extra support or because you do not feel well enough to work.

If you are not well enough to work after the 2 weeks Compassionate Leave, you can initially self-certify (up to 7 calendar days), and then get a Fit Note, if you are still unwell. Sickness absence from work in relation to this loss would be excluded from absence triggers.

## Part 2 - Pregnancy Loss Procedure

### 1. Guidance for all staff

Please follow your usual absence reporting procedures, contacting your line manager on the first day of absence from work, or as soon as is reasonable.

If you are unable to make contact (for example, if you have been admitted to hospital), then your next of kin/emergency contact should contact your line manager or HR as soon as possible.

If you do not feel comfortable enough to talk to your line manager, you can contact HR advising that you have a personal matter to discuss urgently, and someone will get back to you as quickly as possible during working hours.

This initial contact will be different for every individual. We recommend that the employee and the line manager arrange a follow up call in the second week, so support can be discussed. Contact can be more frequent; but it should be led by what the employee wants.

### 2. Guidance for managers

Please note that this guidance is intended to help managers provide appropriate practical and emotional support to an employee affected by all types of pregnancy loss, including miscarriage, ectopic or molar pregnancy (loss of a pregnancy before 24 weeks gestation) and termination of a pregnancy. It is based on a policy template supplied by the Miscarriage Association.

For ease, we have used the word 'miscarriage' to refer to all these types of loss in this document. When referring to the person experiencing miscarriage, we use 'person', 'they', 'their' or 'employee'. Further information, guidance and support can be found on the Miscarriage Association's website:

<https://www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk/information/miscarriage-and-the-workplace/>.

### 3. How to help

If the loss occurs at work:

- A pregnancy loss may happen at work. You may not be aware that an employee is pregnant: they are not obliged to tell their manager of their pregnancy until 15 weeks

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before their estimated due date, or as soon as is reasonably practicable after then (approximately 6 months pregnant).<sup>1</sup>

- If an employee suspects that they have started to lose their baby they may have bleeding, severe abdominal pain, and may be faint or collapse. They may be very distressed and panicked, embarrassed and frightened.
- You can help by ensuring that they have very quick access to a toilet, and you may need to help them by calling their preferred contact or colleague to assist them in getting home or to hospital or a first aid room. In severe cases you may need to call an ambulance.
- If a pregnant person's partner, relative or close friend is told of the loss while at work, they may need to leave at short notice to provide practical and emotional support.

### How can I talk about miscarriage?

You should acknowledge the loss rather than ignore it, unless the person requests otherwise. You should not make light of it. The Miscarriage Association has more information on [talking about miscarriage in the workplace](#).

They may be very confused and upset. They might find it difficult to contact you to tell you what has happened, and to discuss what happens next with work. They may find [this page from the Miscarriage Association](#) helpful.

When appropriate, someone should speak to them about what they would like colleagues to know about their loss. This could be their manager or another trusted colleague. If they do not wish to share this information, you should respect their wishes. They should not feel pressured either way. This contact can help your colleagues to understand what has happened, what the effects might be on the team member, and how to be supportive. It can also make it easier for the team member to speak to colleagues when they return to work. Here are links to the Miscarriage Association's [information for colleagues](#) and the leaflet [Supporting someone you know](#).

### Communicating the news

You will need to consider carefully how to explain the sudden absence of your employee to respect their privacy, especially as they might not want others to know the details.

### Recording leave and absence

- Time off during and after a miscarriage is protected as 'pregnancy-related' leave.
- If an employee has suffered an early or late miscarriage, any sickness absence should be recorded as such, choosing the 'pregnancy-related' category. Any such period of sickness absence will not count towards sickness absence trigger points.
- For the employee, where they are the partner of the pregnant person, treat absence as "pregnancy related" and exclude from sickness triggers.
- For periods of absence longer than seven days, the team member will need to get a Fitness for Work statement from her doctor or health professional at hospital. [This section of the Miscarriage Association's website has more information on an employee's rights](#).

### Future leave

- The pregnant person who has had a miscarriage, and perhaps their partner, may need time off in the future to attend appointments related to their loss.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/working-when-pregnant-your-rights>

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- In any future pregnancy, extra scans and monitoring may be required. This should always be accommodated. Employees have a right to take reasonable time off for antenatal care<sup>2</sup>. Partners of pregnant people have a statutory right to time off to attend two antenatal appointments. Please see the Family Policy for more information.
- Requests by partners for more time off to attend further scans or other antenatal appointments should also be accommodated wherever possible, allowing employees to work flexibly or take annual leave or flexitime to attend.

### 4. Facilitating a return to work

- When an employee is ready to return to work their manager should offer them a meeting where any specific needs can be discussed.
- This might include a temporary workplace adjustment, which is aimed at enabling a person to remain at work rather than taking sick leave – for example more working from home, or a phased return to work. This can be particularly important if an employee has ongoing hospital appointments to attend. It might also be very difficult for someone who has suffered a miscarriage to work closely with or near to a colleague who is pregnant or has recently given birth. If this is the case, it may also be worth exploring whether working in a different location within the office would be possible and helpful.
- **The Miscarriage Association has [more information on ways you can support your team member's return to work and supporting an employee before, during and after a loss](#).**
- A Wellness Action Plan may be useful for the employee to complete, which will help to highlight what support they may need. Please see the HR Hub Links below for more information. HR or Mental Health First Aiders can provide support with this.

You have a right to keep your miscarriage private if you choose. Your manager will ask you what, if anything, you would like other people at work to know.

You may find it helpful to look at the Miscarriage Association's [information for employees](#) here. This includes information on [going back to work after a miscarriage](#).

### 5. Helpful Links

[HR Hub](#)

#### **Other CPCA Policies:**

Attendance and Absence Management Policy  
Flexible Working Policy

#### **Links:**

Please contact the HR Team or speak to your line manager for links to the Employee Assistance Programme.

[Wellness Action Plans: You might find this helpful when planning to return to work.](#)

Mental Health First Aiders

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<sup>2</sup> <https://maternityaction.org.uk/advice/time-off-for-antenatal-care/>

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### 6. Further information

#### **Miscarriage Association**

[www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk](http://www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk)

01924 200799, [info@miscarriageassociation.org.uk](mailto:info@miscarriageassociation.org.uk)

Information and support to help you through a miscarriage, ectopic pregnancy, or molar pregnancy.

#### **Citizens Advice Bureau**

[citizensadvice.org.uk](http://citizensadvice.org.uk) (search for your local office on this link)

Free and confidential advice on benefits, work, and family

#### **Ectopic Pregnancy Trust**

[www.ectopic.org.uk](http://www.ectopic.org.uk) 020 7733 2653

Information and support for ectopic pregnancy

#### **Maternity Action**

[www.maternityaction.org.uk](http://www.maternityaction.org.uk)

Information on rights and benefits around pregnancy, pregnancy loss and maternity

#### **Mind**

[www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)

Information on mental health support including Wellness Action Plans and reducing stress at work

#### **Sands**

[www.sands.org.uk](http://www.sands.org.uk)

0808 164 3332, [helpline@sands.org.uk](mailto:helpline@sands.org.uk)

Information and support for stillbirth and neonatal death

#### **Working families**

[www.workingfamilies.org.uk](http://www.workingfamilies.org.uk)

0300 012 0312, [advice@workingfamilies.org.uk](mailto:advice@workingfamilies.org.uk)

Advice for working families via website and helpline

#### **Miscarriage Association leaflets**

- [Why Me?](#)
- [Recurrent Miscarriage](#)
- [Management of Miscarriage](#)
- [Your feelings after miscarriage](#)
- [Thinking about another pregnancy](#)
- [Partners Too](#)
- [Men and miscarriage](#)
- [Pregnancy after Loss](#)
- [Looking after your mental health during and after pregnancy loss](#)
- [Supporting someone you know](#)
- [Your miscarriage](#)
- [Miscarriage: The facts and your feelings](#)
- [Targeted advertising and how to stop it](#)
- [Contact Card – Miscarriage Association](#)

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### Miscarriage Association Case Studies

- [Talking about miscarriage in the workplace](#)

Leanne and Mark talk about how they've spoken out about pregnancy loss in their workplace following their experience of miscarriage.

[Continue reading »](#)

- [Faye's story](#)

Faye talks about her experience of having a miscarriage at work and the support she would have liked.

[Continue reading »](#)

- [My partner's early miscarriage](#)

Peter shares his feelings of shock, distress and helplessness after the diagnosis of early miscarriage.

[Continue reading »](#)

*More Case Studies (written and videos) can be found [here](#).*



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## Governance: Pregnancy Loss Policy & Procedure

**References:**  
Attendance and Absence Management Policy  
Family Policy  
Flexible Working Policy

### Document Control Sheet

Purpose of document:	This Policy is designed to support employees experiencing Pregnancy Loss.
Type of document:	Policy & Procedure
Checked by Legal	
Document lead and author:	The HR Team
Dissemination:	
What other documents should this be read in conjunction with:	Guidance documents listed in policy
Who will review the document (job title):	The HR Team
Why is this document being reviewed?	New Policy & Procedure
Mandatory read	No

### Revisions

Version No.	Page/ Paragraph No.	Description of amendment	Date approved