



# **Control of Risks to New and Expectant Mothers at Work Policy**

## Document Information

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## **Contents**

<b>Control of Risks to New and Expectant Mothers at Work Policy</b> .....	1
<b>Document Information</b> .....	2
<b>Control of Risks to New and Expectant Mothers at Work Policy</b> .....	2
<b>Contents</b> .....	3
<b>Control of Risks to New and Expectant Mothers at Work Policy</b> .....	4
<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b> .....	4
<b>2. RESPONSIBILITIES</b> .....	4
<b>3. MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL OF RISK</b> .....	5
<b>APPENDIX 1</b> .....	7

## **Control of Risks to New and Expectant Mothers at Work Policy**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Women of child bearing age are at a particular risk from certain workplace hazards, should they become pregnant and for a period following childbirth the risks presented by these hazards can become more significant.

Whilst the law requires that all risks to Council employees are controlled to an acceptable level, specific consideration must be given to certain categories of people, including New and Expectant Mothers (NEMS).

The Council, in addition to this policy, has a Maternity Provisions Policy, dealing with the various, non-health and safety, issues around NEMS.

#### **SCOPE**

The council recognises it has a responsibility towards its staff for their health and safety including NEMS. By implementing this policy the Council ensures that the any particular risks are adequately controlled in relation to NEMS.

This policy sets out the procedures to be followed in respect of the management of the particular risks to which NEMS are more vulnerable and meets its legal duties under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1999.

This policy in no way reduces the Councils general responsibility for managing risks to its workforce, visitors or contractors but rather outlines the extra specific considerations that relate to NEMS. It may be necessary to refer to other health and safety policies for specific guidance on some issues (e.g. the COSHH policy for hazardous substances).

#### **AIMS**

The policy:

- Sets out the responsibilities members of staff have in respect of the minimisation of specific risks to which NEMS may be exposed
- Describes the methods by which the risks to NEMS are controlled
- Provides information about the system by which any additional training is provided

### **2. RESPONSIBILITIES**

It is expected that general risk assessments will already be in place for Council workplaces and activities that will keep members of staff safe, whether they are pregnant or not. The general requirement under this policy is to consider whether any specific risks that pose a hazard to pregnant employees are present and if so these should be risk assessed.

All staff should:

- Notify their manager that they are pregnant – note that whilst there is no requirement to inform your employer that you are pregnant, the specific health and safety and other protections relating to NEMS do not apply to you until you do so, see the Maternity Provisions Policy for more details
- Comply with any work place instructions given for the protection of health and safety
- Not misuse or interfere with anything put in place for the protection of health and safety

Managers must:

- Upon notification that a member of staff for which they are responsible is pregnant complete a New and Expectant Mothers assessment checklist (see appendix 1)
- Following completion of the check list conduct a risk assessment in relation to any specific hazards identified
- Ensure any control measures identified by the risk assessment are implemented
- Repeat the assessment process at 6 and 8 months of pregnancy and if the pregnant member of staff reports experiencing any issues
- Carry out the assessment again once the member of staff returns to work after having the baby

Health and Safety Liaison Officers should:

- Support their manager in ensuring that the manager's responsibilities under this policy are fulfilled

The Health Safety and Welfare section will:

- Provide advice for the control of risks to NEMS
- Carry out monitoring visits that include reviews of arrangements for the assessment of risks to NEMS and the provision of suitable rest areas and record the results of such visits

### **3. MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL OF RISK**

In order to comply with its duties to manage and control risks to pregnant workers and new mothers in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1999 the Council will:

- Ensure that risks in the workplace are adequately assessed
- Upon notification of pregnancy carry out an assessment of risks to a pregnant worker and if required follow this up with a specific risk assessment
- Where risks cannot be adequately controlled then an offer of temporary alternate employment or other arrangement will be made (see maternity provisions policy)
- Where an employee returns to work after having had a baby the assessment will be repeated

**4. INFORMATION AND TRAINING**

Employees who are required to carry out assessments and risk assessments in relations to NEMS will be given the necessary information, instruction, training in risk assessment and supervision to enable them to effectively carry out this task. Training needs should be assessed as part of an individual's personal development plan.

## APPENDIX 1

### New and expectant mother's checklist

<b>Employee's Name:</b>	
<b>Directorate / Dept:</b>	<b>Job Title:</b>
<b>Medical certificate received? Y/N</b>	<b>Expected Date of Birth:</b>

Does Employee's job involve:	Yes / No	Comments
Shocks, vibration or movement?		
Manual handling of loads?		
Exposure to high levels of noise?		
Extremes of heat or cold?		
Regular movement and change of posture, mental and physical fatigue?		
Occupational stress?		
Chemical agents?		
Passive smoking?		
Work with display screen equipment for periods of an hour or longer?		
Lone working?		
Any other hazards? (please list)		
Biological agents (e.g. Rubella)?		
<b>Further comments:</b>		
<b>Completed by:</b>	<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Position:</b>	<b>Link to Risk Assessment:</b>	

Other factors to consider may include working at height, violence at work, use of work equipment, exposure to ionising radiation. Deciding the level of risk will inevitably call for judgement.