



Somerset
Council

HS17 New and Expectant Parents Policy.

Organisation	Somerset Council
Title	New and Expectant Parents Policy
Author	Francesca Benson
Owner	The Corporate Health & Safety Unit
Protective Marking	Official – Unclassified
Primary legislation	<u>Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974</u> <u>Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1999</u>

Policy on a page

This policy aims to reduce any identified risks to new and expectant parents and to provide practical guidance on measures to protect them. Somerset Council (The Council) will ensure that all employees, who are new or expectant parents, are not exposed to unacceptable risks whilst they are at work.

In order to comply with the above, this policy provides the Council's rules that must be followed, the standards to be maintained, and signposts to further guidance. It also highlights the risks to users, clients and the Council and the potential consequences of breaching this policy.

This document will be available to: **All Elected Members, Somerset Council Staff, and Volunteers.**

Key Messages

- This policy and associated guidance apply to all employees who are pregnant, who have given birth in the last 6 months, and those breastfeeding, this includes transgender and non-binary people. Therefore, to ensure the document is inclusive, 'new and expectant parents' is the term used to describe all relevant employees.
- Employees who are pregnant, have given birth in the last 6 months, and those breastfeeding, must notify their manager in writing as soon as possible.
- Managers must use the risk assessment process, identified in this document, and described in the associated guidance, to ensure that all risks facing new or expectant parents are assessed and reduced so far as is reasonably practicable.
- Managers must ensure that any necessary control measures, identified by the risk assessment, are implemented, followed, monitored, reviewed and, if necessary, revised.

This "policy on a page" is a summary of the detailed policy and guidance documents, please ensure you read, understand, and comply with the arrangements stated.

Responsibilities

Somerset Council	Directors and Delegated Senior Managers
Managers	Employees
Corporate Health and Safety Unit (CHSU)	

Somerset Council will:

- Ensure that all employees, who are new or expectant parents, are not exposed to unacceptable risks whilst they are at work.
- Use the risk assessment process, explained in this document and associated guidance to ensure that all risks facing new or expectant parents are assessed and reduced so far as is reasonably practicable. This process has two key elements namely:
 - identifying potential hazards in the workplace to pregnant employees, and passing this information on to all relevant employees of child-bearing age
 - specific assessments, which should be reviewed regularly, for any employee who is pregnant, or who has returned to work following a birth or miscarriage, or who is breast-feeding (see HS F17).
- Provide suitable facilities, including:
 - providing a place for pregnant and breastfeeding parents to rest
 - where practicable, provide a private room for nursing parents to express and store breast milk (toilet facilities are not suitable for this purpose).

Directors and Delegated Senior Managers will:

- Ensure that those managers, responsible for carrying out risk assessments, are aware of this policy, associated guidance, and the required risk assessment process.

Managers will ensure that:

- New and expectant parents are encouraged to inform their employer, of their condition, at the earliest possible opportunity.
- The highest level of confidentiality is maintained at all times.
- Risk assessments are carried out:
 - that identify the risks to pregnant workers, from work activities, and that all relevant employees of child-bearing age are informed of these risks for each individual new or expectant parent (see form HS F17) to assess and reduce the risks to that specific employee.
- Any necessary control measures, identified by the risk assessment, are implemented, followed, monitored, reviewed and, if necessary, revised.
- Where significant risk cannot be controlled or removed, managers must take the following action:
 - Action 1 – Adjust the working conditions or hours to avoid the risk, if that's not possible;
 - Action 2 – Give them suitable alternative work, if that's not possible;

- Action 3 - Suspend the worker on paid leave for as long as necessary to protect their health and safety and that of their child. Managers should discuss this process with the CHSU and the council's HR Advisory Team.
- New and expectant parents are informed of any risks, to them and/or their child, and the measures taken to protect them.
- Any adverse incidents are immediately reported and investigated.
- Provision is made to support new and expectant parents who need to take time off work, for medical reasons, associated with their condition.
- HR receive a copy of the F17 risk assessment, which will be kept on the employee personnel file.

Employees who are new or expectant parents will:

- Inform their general practitioner or midwife of the nature of their work.
- Notify their manager in writing as soon as possible, if they are pregnant, have given birth in the last 6 months, or are breast feeding.
- Follow any arrangements implemented for their protection at work, including attending training sessions and complying with any relevant control measures stated in the risk assessment.
- Not act in a manner that adversely affects their own health and safety, that of their child and/or anyone else.
- Keep their manager informed of any concerns or difficulties they may have.
- Keep their manager informed of any appointments which will take place during work hours.

Human Resources will:

- Where reasonable, support staff and managers regarding any changes to duties or work patterns.
- Offer advice and guidance which relates to the relevant HR policy for new and expectant parents.
- Where required, ensure appropriate provision of Occupational Health Service and Counselling service.

The Corporate Health and Safety Team will:

- Maintain and communicate this policy.
- Offer advice on the requirements of this policy and associated guidance.
- Audit compliance with this policy.
- Review this policy at intervals not exceeding 3 years.

Governance Arrangements

Policy Compliance

If any employee is found to have breached this policy, they may be subject to Somerset Council's disciplinary procedure.

Policy Governance

The following table identifies who within Somerset Council is Accountable, Responsible, Informed or Consulted with regards to this policy. The following definitions apply:

- **Responsible** – the person(s) responsible for developing and publishing the policy.
- **Accountable** – the person who has ultimate accountability and authority for the policy.
- **Consulted** – the person(s) or groups to be consulted prior to final policy implementation.
- **Informed** – the person(s) or groups to be informed after policy implementation.

Responsible	Corporate Health & Safety Unit
Accountable	Chief Executive
Consulted	LGR JNF Union Group, LGR H&S Sub-Workstream, Health, Safety and Wellbeing Steering Group (HSWSG)
Informed	All members, employees, contractors (on request), volunteers & 3rd parties (on request)

Review and Revision

This policy will be reviewed as it is deemed appropriate, for instance when there is a change in statutory requirements and/or HSE guidance is revised, but no less frequently than every 36 months. Policy review will be undertaken by rolling programme established by the CHSU and agreed by the Health, Safety, and Wellbeing Steering Group.

Version History

Revision Date	Author	Version	Description of Revision
	Francesca Benson	V1.0	New policy - draft

Document Notification

Approval	Name	Date
Corporate H&S Advisor		
Service Director of Workforce and chair of HSWSG		
HR Committee		