

Pregnancy Loss Guidance

This policy must be read in conjunction with the Parenthood Policy.

Whitbread is committed to supporting anyone experiencing pregnancy loss. Everyone's experience is different, and team members must discuss individual needs with their line manager.

Who is this for?

This policy applies to:

- Team members
- Colleagues who wish to support fellow team members through pregnancy loss.
- Line managers

In the following countries:



When does it apply?

Pregnancy loss is sadly more common than many people think. An estimated one in four pregnancies ends in miscarriage (source: The Miscarriage Association); one in every 200 births in the UK each year is classed as stillborn; and it is estimated that one in three women will have an abortion in their lifetime.

The experience of pregnancy loss is poorly understood due to the silence surrounding it. It varies from person to person, but it can be an incredibly painful event that has a lasting physical and emotional impact on those experiencing it and their families, no matter the nature of the loss or when it happens. Every individual's experience is unique.

It can be hard to find the right language to use when describing pregnancy loss and this guidance uses the most widely-used and accepted terms which is subject to change and revision.

'Pregnancy loss' includes but is not limited to:

- Miscarriage: the spontaneous loss of pregnancy until 24 weeks of gestation. [Learn more about miscarriage.](#)
- Stillbirth: the loss of a baby after 24 weeks, before or during birth. [Learn more about stillbirth.](#)
- Abortion: a medical or surgical procedure to end a pregnancy. [Learn more about abortion.](#)

- Ectopic pregnancy: when a fertilised egg implants and grows outside of the uterus. [Learn more about ectopic pregnancy.](#)
- Molar pregnancy: a rare form of pregnancy in which a non-viable fertilised egg implants in the uterus and will fail to reach full term. [Learn more about molar pregnancy.](#)
- Neonatal loss: the loss of a baby within the first 28 days after they are born, often caused by premature births or genetic disorders. [Learn more about neonatal loss.](#)

What makes it work?

Team members should be encouraged to speak to their GP when they are experiencing pregnancy loss. Team members experiencing symptoms of pregnancy loss whilst at work, should in the first instance contact a first aider who can then support the team member in getting further support from a healthcare professional.

All types of pregnancy loss:

Our [Compassionate Leave](#) policy is available to support team members who have been affected by a pregnancy loss (including partners and those with a surrogate mother). The policy outlines that team members should provide as much information as possible relating to the request to support the line manager in determining the amount of leave and what support is required. Emotional and physical recovery from a pregnancy loss does not have a time limit and team members may find they need to take further [sickness leave](#) after having returned to work, which they are entitled to. Team members should not feel judged or discriminated against when requesting time off to recover from loss.

Team members are entitled to paid time off to attend appointments (or accompany their partners) relating to pregnancy loss which do not fall within an agreed period of leave, including but not limited to medical examinations, scans and tests, and mental health-related appointments. Team members must show their line manager a copy of the appointment card for any appointments and if possible, try and arrange appointments for times when not scheduled to work i.e. at the start or at the end of a shift.

Flexibility is key to anyone suffering pregnancy loss and line managers must work closely with team members taking into consideration what the team member will be experiencing and the additional support that may be required. This may include reviewing the hours, days or times of work to ensure a balanced approach to home and work life. The [Parenthood Policy](#) outlines some of the other policies and areas that can support throughout the different stages of Parenthood. These include use of the [Flexible Working](#) and [Workplace Adjustments](#) policies and the support available on the Wellbeing Hub and from [Nest](#) who work in partnership with [Hospitality Action](#).

Team members suffering pregnancy loss may find it most useful to speak to someone who is specially trained in their specific type of loss. Through our Employee Assistance Programme, provided by [Hospitality Action](#) and Nest Parenting, support can be accessed from a Nest Parenting advisor to talk through any concerns and provide counselling if required.

Returning to work after pregnancy loss can be incredibly challenging. Team members are encouraged to have an ongoing discussion with their line manager about necessary adjustments and support available.

Pregnancy loss after 24 weeks (stillbirth) and neonatal loss:

Refer to the Parental Bereavement policy which outlines what leave and pay is available for those suffering parental bereavement after 24 weeks.

How does it work?

Related policies and what further support is available can be found in the links below.

[Flexible Working Policy](#)

[Hospitality Action](#)

[Parental Bereavement Policy](#)

[Compassionate Leave Policy](#)

[Wellbeing](#)

[Workplace Adjustments Policy](#)

The Miscarriage Association - miscarriageassociation.org.uk Founded in 1982 by a group of people who had experienced miscarriage, the Miscarriage Association continues to offer support and information to anyone affected by the loss of a baby in pregnancy, and works to raise awareness and promote good practice in medical care. Whilst they do not provide counselling services themselves, they provide more information on counselling services that are available.

SANDS sands.org.uk - SANDS is an organisation that can offer you support if your baby dies during pregnancy or after birth. They also run a helpline 10am - 3pm Monday to Friday and 6pm - 9pm on Tuesday and Thursday evenings: 0808 164 3332.

Tommy's tommys.org - Tommy's is a charity that funds research into pregnancy problems but also provides information for parents-to-be.

Petals petalscharity.org - Petals is an organisation providing specialist counselling services after a pregnancy loss.

Arc arc-uk.org/about-arc - Arc is a national charity offering parents support during antenatal screening and following a termination.

Updates to this guidance

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