



ST HELENS
BOROUGH COUNCIL

New and Expectant Mothers at Work Policy

DOCUMENT CONTROL	
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Ratified by:	Corporate Health & Safety Section
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Target Audience:	All managers with responsibilities within the policy and all staff who require information in relation to the arrangements for new and /or expectant mothers.

New and Expectant Mothers at Work

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 require employers to take account of the risks to the health and safety of new and expectant mothers when assessing workplace risks.
- **'New and Expectant mother'** means a worker who is pregnant, who has given birth within the previous six months or who is breast-feeding.
 - **'Giving birth'** is defined as having 'delivered a living child or, after 24 weeks of pregnancy, a still born child'.
- 1.2 This procedure sets out the steps that Managers **shall** follow, in order to ensure that the requirements of the Regulations are met in St Helens Council.

2.0 Assessment Procedures

- 2.1 Upon notification from an employee that they are a new or expectant mother, the Manager shall review the service/risk assessment with advice where required from the Corporate Health & Safety Section/Occupational Health Unit as necessary, using the proforma attached at appendix 1.
- 2.2 The Proforma, identifies the hazards and potential risk factors that Managers should consider when undertaking the risk assessment with the employee. **The right hand side of the form gives 'suggested/example control measures to implement', these are 'not an exhaustive list' and 'not all the controls listed will be applicable in each case'.** Managers should introduce any other additional controls as necessary.
- 2.3 The layout of workstations (where applicable) may need to be re-assessed for expectant mothers to make working arrangements more comfortable
- 2.4 Where a significant risk is identified to the health or safety of a new or expectant mother, which goes beyond the level of risk to be expected outside the workplace, then the following steps must be taken to remove the employee from the risk:-
- STEP 1** temporarily adjust her working conditions and/or hours of work: or if it is not reasonable to do so, or would not avoid the risk;
- STEP 2** offer her suitable alternative work if any is available; or if that is not feasible, you must;
- STEP 3** suspend her from work (give her paid leave), for as long as necessary to protect her safety or health or that of her child.
- The above actions are required only where a significant risk has been identified. Prior to taking action, Managers must consult with the Corporate Health & Safety Section.
- 2.5 Once a suitable course of action has been identified, Managers must explain the procedures and actions that will be taken to ensure that new and expectant mothers are not exposed to a risk, that could cause them harm. Managers must also ensure that employee representatives are given information about any action taken.

- 2.6 Managers should retain the original assessment form and ensure that copies should be forwarded to the employee, Human Resources, Health & Safety and Occupational Health Sections.
- 2.7 When assessment reviews have been undertaken, a copy of the form must also be forwarded onto the sections identified in 2.6.
- 2.8 Human Resources, Health & Safety and Occupational Health Sections, will review the completed document(s) to ensure their validity.
- 2.9 Guidelines for employees are attached to this code at Appendix 2 and should be issued to all female employees on a recorded basis.

3.0 Night Work

- 3.1 If an employee, who is a new or expectant mother, **works at night, and has a medical certificate stating that night work could affect her health and safety**, you must either:-

STEP 1 offer her suitable alternative daytime work if any is available; or if that is not reasonable;

STEP 2 suspend her from work (give her paid leave) for as long as is necessary to protect her health and safety.

- 3.2 The above steps are required to be taken only if the risk to health arises from work. It is the view of the HSE, that risks to pregnant or breast-feeding workers do not arise per se from night work.
- 3.3 If an employee states that she cannot work at night, and if there is a question as to whether the cause arises from her work, further advice must be sought through referral to the Council's Occupational Health Team.

4.0 Reviewing the Risk Assessments

- 4.1 Although any hazards are likely to remain constant, the possibility of damage to the foetus as a result of a hazard will vary at different stages of the pregnancy.
- 4.2 The risk assessment needs to be regularly reviewed during the pregnancy, with informal discussions with the expectant mother and, if any changes are required, these should be formally noted.
- 4.3 Managers will need to ensure that employees who are breast feeding are not exposed to risks that could damage health or safety for as long as they continue to breast-feed. The Regulations do not put a time limit on breast-feeding. The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 require suitable facilities to be provided for workers who are pregnant or breast-feeding, to enable them to rest. Suitable facilities would normally be a room in which pregnant women or those who are breast-feeding may rest.
- 4.4 Where workers continue to breast-feed for many months risks assessments should be reviewed on a regular basis. In reviewing risks it will be necessary to repeat the steps outlined earlier in this code.



NEW AND EXPECTANT MOTHER RISK ASSESSMENT

Name of New or Expectant Mother:		Due Date:	
Date of Birth:		No. of Weeks Pregnant at initial assessment:	
Occupation:		Date of Initial Assessment:	
Section/Department:		Date of 1st Review:	
Supervisor/Manager:		Date of 2nd Review:	
Hours employed:		Date of 3rd Review:	
Additional Occupation: (please specify where applicable)		Date of 4th Review:	

Is this the employee's first child?	Yes / No <i>(please circle as appropriate)</i>
Does the employee have any known medical condition that would put her at greater risk than normal vulnerability? (ie, gestational diabetes or other pregnancy related medical conditions such as: high blood pressure, history of miscarriages, Symphysis Pubis Dysfunction (SPD)). <i>If so, please specify:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee to take into account any medical advice from their GP or Midwife about their health and adjust their working conditions accordingly. Occupational Health to be contacted for advice where potential work related issues are raised, including reduced mobility due to SPD.

Detail any recommendations/advice given by Doctor and/or Midwife:

WORKING HOURS		Yes / No <i>(please circle as appropriate)</i>
Risk Factors:	Long working hours or shift work patterns can affect the health of new and expectant mothers through physical and mental fatigue	
MEASURES TO BE IMPLEMENTED TO CONTROL RISK		Control Measures for Consideration:-
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Work adjustments made, where necessary, to accommodate tiredness and nausea, particularly in first and last 3 months of pregnancy.</i> • <i>Night work/waking nights to be avoided and alternative day work organised where a medical certificate from the employee's GP or Midwife states that night work is affecting the health and safety of the woman or her unborn child.</i> • <i>Work hours to be modified as necessary in consultation with Occupational Health Advisor.</i>
WORKING CONDITIONS		Yes / No <i>(please circle as appropriate)</i>
Risk Factors:	Tiredness increases during and following pregnancy and may be exacerbated by work related factors. Pressure on the bladder and other associated changes associated with pregnancy mean pregnant mothers may have to go to the toilet more frequently and urgently than others. Without easy access to toilets and associated hygiene facilities, including access to drinking water, there may be an increased risk of infection and kidney disease. Increased fluid intake to promote breast milk production may also be necessary for breastfeeding mothers.	
MEASURES TO BE IMPLEMENTED TO CONTROL RISK		Control Measures for Consideration:-
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Rest breaks provided.</i> • <i>Suitable and accessible toilet and hygiene facilities provided.</i> • <i>Access to fresh drinking water available.</i> • <i>Access to room for employee to rest.</i> • <i>Exposure to nauseating smells avoided or minimised, where feasible.</i> • <i>No Smoking Policy enforced within all Council premises.</i> • <i>Separate, designated smoking rooms/areas provided in residential care home settings which are adequately ventilated to prevent cross contamination into smoke free areas.</i> <p><i>*Facilities for mothers to breastfeed, express and store milk can be arranged as necessary. Contact the Corporate Safety Team for further advice.</i></p>

MOVEMENT AND POSTURES (INCLUDING WORK WITH DISPLAY SCREEN EQUIPMENT)		Yes / No <i>(please circle as appropriate)</i>
Risk Factors:	Constant sitting during pregnancy could increase the risk of thrombosis or embolism (DVT). Prolonged standing may cause dizziness, faintness and fatigue. In the latter stages of pregnancy, women are likely to experience backache. Dexterity, agility, coordination, speed of movement and reach may be impaired due to increasing size. Confined space working/non-adjustable workstations may lead to strain and sprain injuries in the latter stages of pregnancy.	
MEASURES TO BE IMPLEMENTED TO CONTROL RISK		Control Measures for Consideration:-
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee to avoid sitting and standing for long periods of time. • Opportunities to be provided for employee to alternate between standing and sitting and to exercise/move to maintain healthy circulation. • Regular Rest breaks provided. • DSE assessment completed and reviewed regularly to take account of employee's changing shape and posture. • Workstation/work area/work tasks redesigned/adjusted/modified to accommodate increased abdominal size/reduced physical capabilities. • DSE Guidance for Users issued to employee. • Keyboard tilt removed, gel wrist rest provided and telephone advice sought from Occupational Health where employee complains of tingling sensation, numbness or pain in the wrists.
SLIPS AND TRIPS		Yes / No <i>(please circle as appropriate)</i>
Risk Factors:	Increased risk of injury due to physical and hormonal changes. Injury as a result of tripping on stairs or items that have been left in walkways. Slipping on wet floors indoors or in bad weather conditions outdoors.	
MEASURES TO BE IMPLEMENTED TO CONTROL RISK		Control Measures for Consideration:-
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular workplace inspections conducted. • Standards of housekeeping maintained within the work area. • Work tasks modified to avoid walking significant distances or traversing flights of stairs. • Relocation of employee should negotiating stairs become a problem in the latter stages of pregnancy. • Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan to be completed should employee require assistance to evacuate the premises. • External paths gritted in icy and snowy conditions. • Employees encouraged to wear suitable footwear (flat, sturdy, non-slip).

WORK EQUIPMENT AND PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (INCLUDING CLOTHING)		Yes / No <i>(please circle as appropriate)</i>
Risk Factors:	Work equipment and standard issue Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is not generally designed for use by pregnant women. Physiological changes may make some existing work and protective equipment not only uncomfortable but also unsafe for use in some cases.	
MEASURES TO BE IMPLEMENTED TO CONTROL RISK	Control Measures for Consideration:-	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suitable alternative equipment provided to allow work to be conducted safely, where necessary. • Alternative PPE (with the same level of protection) and uniform sourced and issued, as required. • Where alternative PPE cannot be sourced, alternative activities where PPE is not necessary for safety will be offered. 	
MANUAL HANDLING		Yes / No <i>(please circle as appropriate)</i>
Risk Factors:	Hormonal changes can affect the ligaments and may contribute to fluid retention. Conditions such as: Symphysis Pubis Dysfunction (SPD) and pregnancy related Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (CTS) can develop. Increased susceptibility to musculo-skeletal injury and postural problems may increase as the pregnancy progresses. Limitations on moving and handling capability are also likely during recovery from a caesarean section (3-4 months following the birth).	
MEASURES TO BE IMPLEMENTED TO CONTROL RISK	Control Measures for Consideration:-	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced amount of physical work undertaken. • Significant manual handling avoided. • Employee to request assistance from another member of staff. • Mechanical aids provided to reduce risk. • Employee trained in manual handling/client handling techniques. 	

VIOLENCE		Yes / No
Risk Factors: Violence or fear of violence during pregnancy, after giving birth or whilst breastfeeding can lead to miscarriage, premature delivery and underweight birth and may also affect ability to breastfeed.		<i>(please circle as appropriate)</i>
MEASURES TO BE IMPLEMENTED TO CONTROL RISK		Control Measures for Consideration:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Face to face contact with known or potentially violent clients to be avoided for the duration of the pregnancy.</i> • <i>Modified or alternative work offered where there is a perceived significant risk of violence or threat of violence/abuse.</i>
LONE WORKING		Yes / No
Risk Factors: Risk of physical injury and vulnerability due to working alone.		<i>(please circle as appropriate)</i>
MEASURES TO BE IMPLEMENTED TO CONTROL RISK		Control Measures for Consideration:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Location, frequency and working pattern of lone working re-assessed, taking into account the needs of the new and expectant mother.</i> • <i>Lone working to be avoided where significant risk identified.</i> • <i>Modified or alternative work to be offered, as necessary.</i> • <i>Dual working to be undertaken where there is a significant perceived risk of physical injury or vulnerability.</i> • <i>Signing in and out system in operation.</i> • <i>Mobile communication provided.</i>

CHEMICALS		Yes / No <i>(please circle as appropriate)</i>
Risk Factors:	Some hazardous substances classified under COSHH as R40, R45, R46, R49, R61, R63, R64 and R68 may cause harm to the unborn child or breastfed baby dependant on how they are used in the workplace. (Refer to individual COSHH Assessments for risk phrases)	
MEASURES TO BE IMPLEMENTED TO CONTROL RISK		Control Measures for Consideration:-
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harmful substances substituted wherever possible. • Employee exposure to hazardous substances avoided or reduced to the lowest level reasonably practicable. • Alternative work offered to employee, where significant risk of exposure to harmful substance which could have an adverse effect on the unborn child is identified. • COSHH risk assessments reviewed and additional controls put in place, as required. • Good housekeeping maintained. • Personal Protective Equipment provided and worn, as necessary.
BIOLOGICAL / INFECTIONS		Yes / No <i>(please circle as appropriate)</i>
Risk Factors:	Increased risk of exposure to staff who have contact with infected human blood and body fluids, infected animals, first aid duties, water or food contaminated by human or animal faeces.	
MEASURES TO BE IMPLEMENTED TO CONTROL RISK		Control Measures for Consideration:-
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good hygiene practices to be followed at all times. • Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to be worn, as necessary. • St Helens Council's Good Hygiene Practice booklet issued. • Employee in direct contact with someone with a potentially infectious rash/disease to seek medical advice from their GP or Midwife. • Employee to avoid exposure to biological agents unless protected by their state of immunity. • Employee to avoid contact with sheep during lambing time, where appropriate.

OCCUPATIONAL / NON-OCCUPATIONAL STRESSORS		Yes / No <i>(please circle as appropriate)</i>
Risk Factors: <i>New and expectant mothers may be vulnerable to occupational stressors due to hormonal, physiological and psychological changes affecting susceptibility to stress, anxiety or depression. Financial, emotional and job insecurity may also be issues and it may be difficult to organise work/private life for a variety of reasons.</i>		
MEASURES TO BE IMPLEMENTED TO CONTROL RISK	Control Measures for Consideration:-	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Work demands to be monitored and modified as necessary.</i> <i>Employee to meet with Manager regularly to discuss work related matters.</i> <i>Advice and support available to employee through the Council's Occupational Health Unit.</i> <i>Adjustments to working conditions/hours implemented, where necessary.</i> 	
DRIVING FOR BUSINESS		Yes / No <i>(please circle as appropriate)</i>
Risk Factors: <i>Poor posture/prolonged sitting increases risk of deep vein thrombosis (DVT). Fatigue and discomfort may be experienced when travelling longer distances. In latter stages of pregnancy, size of abdomen may restrict driving position. Pregnant mothers may need to visit the toilet more frequently and urgently than others.</i>		
MEASURES TO BE IMPLEMENTED TO CONTROL RISK	Control Measures for Consideration:-	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Longer distance driving to be minimised or avoided, if necessary.</i> <i>Journeys planned to include adequate provision for rest breaks.</i> <i>Travel times chosen to reduce levels of fatigue, where possible.</i> 	

WORK AT HEIGHT		Yes / No <i>(please circle as appropriate)</i>
Risk Factors:	New or expectant mothers may experience difficulties working at height due to loss of agility, dexterity, co-ordination, speed of movement, reach and balance.	
MEASURES TO BE IMPLEMENTED TO CONTROL RISK		Control Measures for Consideration:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Employee to avoid working at height.</i> • <i>Work at height tasks to be completed by other members of staff.</i>
EXTREMES OF COLD AND HEAT		Yes / No <i>(please circle as appropriate)</i>
Risk Factors:	Heat stress and fainting can be a risk when a new and/or expectant mother is exposed to prolonged periods in hot environments. They tolerate heat less well and may more readily faint or be more liable to heat stress. Breastfeeding may be impaired by dehydration. Extremes of cold may also pose a hazard.	
MEASURES TO BE IMPLEMENTED TO CONTROL RISK		Control Measures for Consideration:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Temperature within work environment suitably controlled.</i> • <i>Rest breaks provided with access to fresh air.</i> • <i>Access to fresh drinking water provided.</i> • <i>Desk fan or heater provided to cool or heat the work area, where required.</i>

NOISE		Yes / No
Risk Factors: Prolonged exposure to loud noise may lead to increased blood pressure and tiredness.		(please circle as appropriate)
MEASURES TO BE IMPLEMENTED TO CONTROL RISK	Control Measures for Consideration:-	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noise risk assessment to be reviewed. • Safe working practices in place to keep noise exposure as low as is reasonably practicable (below the national exposure limit values). • PPE provided and worn, as necessary. • Beyond 23 weeks of pregnancy, alternative work to be offered where the lower exposure action value (80dB) is exceeded. 	
SHOCKS AND VIBRATIONS		Yes / No
Risk Factors: Regular and prolonged exposure to shocks, low frequency whole body vibration may increase the risk of miscarriage. Long term exposure may lead to increased risk of prematurity or low birth weight.		(please circle as appropriate)
MEASURES TO BE IMPLEMENTED TO CONTROL RISK	Control Measures for Consideration:-	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee to avoid work likely to involve uncomfortable whole body vibration, especially at low frequencies, or where the abdomen is exposed to shocks/jolts. • Alternative work to be offered, as necessary. 	

RADIATION (IONISING AND NON-IONISING) Risk Factors: Significant exposure to ionising radiation can be harmful to the unborn child if significant amounts or radioactive contamination is breathed in or ingested by the mother and transferred through the placenta. Nursing mothers working with radioactive liquids or dusts can cause exposure to the child through skin contact.	Yes / No <i>(please circle as appropriate)</i>
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MEASURES TO BE IMPLEMENTED TO CONTROL RISK	Control Measures for Consideration:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safe working practices in place to keep exposure as low as is reasonably practicable (certainly below the statutory dose limit for new and expectant women). Expectant Mother will not accompany child/service user when attending hospital for an x-ray, where support may be required during the x-ray.
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Any further Recommendations/Restrictions

Any other Problems Identified

Manager's Signature:		Employee's Signature:	
Date:		Date:	

Original assessment form to be retained by the Manager. Copy must be forwarded to:

Employee Human Resources Corporate Health & Safety Occupational Health

Part 2 - Risk Assessment Review(s)

Any Further Recommendations/Restrictions

Any Other Problems Identified

1st Review

Manager's Signature:		Employee's Signature:	
Date:		Date:	

2nd Review

Manager's Signature		Employee's Signature:	
Date:		Date:	

3rd Review

Manager's Signature:		Employee's Signature:	
Date:		Date:	

4th Review

Manager's Signature:		Employee's Signature:	
Date:		Date:	

New and Expectant Mothers at Work: Guidance for Employees

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 require employers to take account of the risks to the health and safety of new and expectant mothers when assessing workplace risks.
- 1.2 Under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999:-
 - **'New and Expectant mother'** means a worker who is pregnant, who has given birth within the previous six months or who is breast-feeding.
 - **'Giving birth'** is defined as having 'delivered a living child or, after 24 weeks of pregnancy, a still born child'.

2.0 What You Should Do

- 2.1 If you are a 'new or expectant mother', you should notify your Supervisor in writing as soon as your pregnancy is confirmed by your GP.
- 2.2 Your Supervisor/Line Manager will ensure that your work is assessed to ensure that your work does not pose a risk to you or your baby. This will usually involve reviewing current risk assessments in conjunction with the Occupational Health Advisor/Corporate Health & Safety Section when required.
- 2.3 The results of the assessment, including any significant risks if these are identified, will be communicated to you along with any changes that may be required, to your work pattern.
- 2.4 Should your General Practitioner place any constraints on your work, you should report these to your Supervisor in writing as soon as they are known to you.
- 2.5 Suitable facilities will be provided for workers who are pregnant or breast-feeding, to rest. Where workers continue to breast-feed for many months, risks assessments will be subject to review on a regular basis.