

## During maternity leave

When someone is on maternity leave, managers should:

- tell them about important changes
- keep information shared confidential

### Keeping each other informed

Before maternity leave starts, the employer and employee should agree on how to keep in touch.

Employers should try to agree on a way of keeping in touch that's comfortable for the employee. For example, they can ask if they prefer email to phone calls.

### Things employers must tell the employee about

The employer must tell the employee about important changes that might affect them. For example:

- promotions or other job opportunities
- training
- redundancies
- any reorganisation

If they do not, this could be [pregnancy and maternity discrimination](#).

### Other things they can tell the employee

Employers could also tell the employee about:

- social events
- colleagues who are leaving or joining
- arrangements for their return to work

It's a good idea for employers to:

- let the employee decide how much contact they want, unless it is about things the employer must tell them
- remind the employee they do not have to work during maternity leave

### Confidentiality

Employers must keep information shared during maternity leave confidential.

They should only tell others if the employee makes it clear they can share. This includes other employees, clients or customers.

This also applies if an employee tells an employer that their baby needs [neonatal care](#).

## Keeping in touch days

An employee could have up to 10 keeping in touch (KIT) days during their maternity leave.

Keeping in touch days need agreement from the employer.

Keeping in touch days help an employee stay in contact with their organisation. For example, by joining training sessions or team meetings.

An employee should agree with their employer:

- if they want to work keeping in touch days
- how many days they want
- what type of work they'll do on the days
- how much they'll be paid for the work

If an employee works part of a keeping in touch day, it still counts as a full day.

Employees cannot work more than 10 keeping in touch days. Their statutory maternity leave and pay will automatically end if they do.

## Pay for keeping in touch days

An employer and employee should agree pay for keeping in touch days in advance. The easiest option is to pay normal pay for the day.

Employers can sometimes pay less than normal pay. This depends on what someone is doing on their keeping in touch day. Paying someone less than they normally get for doing the same thing could be [discrimination](#).

Employers must not pay less than the [minimum wage](#).

## If someone is taking shared parental leave

An employee taking shared parental leave might be able to take 20 extra days for keeping in touch. These are on top of the 10 maternity keeping in touch days.

These extra days are called shared parental leave in touch (SPLIT) days.

[Find out more about when an employee is on shared parental leave](#)

## Entitlement to bonuses

If the employer awards a bonus while an employee is on maternity leave they might be eligible to get the bonus.

This depends on whether the bonus is based on:

- performance of the organisation
- performance of an individual employee

[Find out more about bonuses when someone is off work](#)

## If the employee becomes pregnant on maternity leave

An employee might become pregnant while on maternity leave. If they do, they're entitled to an additional 52 weeks' statutory maternity leave.

The employee cannot start their next statutory maternity leave until the 11th week before their baby is due.

If their first statutory maternity leave ends before the 11th week, they'll need to either:

- return to work until at least the 11th week before the baby is due
- see if they can stay off work by taking another type of leave (such as holiday leave)

It's up to the employer to decide if they can stay off work by taking another type of leave. The employee must give the correct notice for other leave.

## Maternity cover

An employer can choose to employ someone else to do the work while the employee is on maternity leave. This is sometimes called 'maternity cover'.

The maternity cover can be an existing or new employee.

Usually these roles are temporary with a fixed end date.

The employer must tell the maternity cover what happens when their role ends. For example:

- if they're an existing employee, whether they'll go back to their previous role or to a different one
- if they're a new employee, whether their job will end – if so the employer must end their contract fairly

An employer must not dismiss an employee on maternity leave and replace them with maternity cover. This would be [pregnancy and maternity discrimination](#).