

MATERNITY LEAVE





If you are reading this document you are probably either expecting a baby, or considering your options.

This simple guide contains everything you need to know about how we support our people during maternity at LSH, hopefully leaving you plenty of time to enjoy every second of being pregnant, and spending time with your growing family.

This policy is non-contractual.

PREGNANCY



PREGNANCY

To apply for maternity leave, you will need to advise your manager and complete our maternity leave request [e-form](#) by no later than 15 weeks before your due date (or 25 weeks pregnant). This formally advises us of your pregnancy, and allows us to start supporting you.

NEW AND EXPECTANT MOTHERS RISK ASSESSMENT

To ensure the safety of both you and your unborn child, we are required to assess any workplace risks that may exist while you are pregnant. To do this we will ask you to complete a simple risk assessment for us. We will then discuss and agree with you and your manager any necessary changes to your role and review the risk assessment periodically as your pregnancy progresses.

MATERNITY MENTOR

Our volunteer maternity mentors are more than happy to share their personal experiences, and to offer advice. This may be about deciding when to start maternity leave, what to think about when returning to work, planning childcare or submitting a flexible working request.

If you would like to be matched to one of our mentors, please contact [HR Operations](#).

ANTE-NATAL APPOINTMENTS

We strongly encourage you to attend all of your ante-natal appointments, all of which will be paid. All we ask is that you give your manager sufficient notice of any appointments and make every effort to arrange them at times that minimise disruption to your normal day.

MAT B1 FORM

In order to be eligible for maternity leave, you will need to provide HR Operations with your MAT B1 form.

You should expect to receive this from your midwife or GP around your 20 week scan.

MATERNITY LEAVE

MATERNITY LEAVE

Statutory maternity leave is designed to allow you to rest during the last stages of your pregnancy, to recover after the birth of your baby and to care for your child in their early months.

Irrespective of your length of service, you are lawfully entitled to take up to one year's maternity leave, consisting of;

- Ordinary Maternity Leave (OML) 26 weeks leave
- Additional Maternity Leave (AML) 26 weeks leave

WHEN CAN I BEGIN MY MATERNITY LEAVE?

The earliest that you can start maternity leave is at the beginning of the 11th week (or 29 weeks pregnant) before your due date (unless of course your child is born prematurely). Whenever you decide to start your leave, we ask that you make every effort to provide us with a minimum of 28 days' notice in writing.

Please also note that if you are signed off work by your GP due to a pregnancy related illness at any time during the 4 weeks before your baby is due, your maternity leave will automatically be triggered on the first day that you are absent.

Unless you inform us otherwise, we will assume that you will be taking one year's maternity leave.

SHARED PARENTAL LEAVE

Shared parental leave is designed to give parents more flexibility in how to share care responsibilities in the baby's first year.

It enables you and your partner to share a pot of leave, allowing you to either take leave at the same time and/or take it in turns to have periods of leave to look after your child.

For further information, please see our shared parental leave policy and [Shared Leave Campaign](#)



MATERNITY PAY & BENEFITS

STATUTORY MATERNITY PAY (SMP)

If you have 26 weeks continuous service (but less than 1 year) at the beginning of the 14th week before your due date, you are entitled to the following:

- 6 weeks at 90% of your basic pay;
- 33 weeks of the fixed weekly SMP allowance;
- continued car/car allowance benefits (if applicable).

CORPORATE ENHANCED MATERNITY PAY

If you have 1 or more years' continuous service at the beginning of the 14th week before your due date, LSH will support you with the following:

- 12 weeks at 100% of your basic pay;
- 12 weeks at 50% of your basic pay;
- 15 weeks of SMP*
- continued car/car allowance benefits (if applicable).

All the above enhanced maternity payments are inclusive of any SMP entitlement.

STATUTORY MATERNITY ALLOWANCE

If you do not qualify for either of the above payments, you may be entitled to claim a maternity allowance, which is paid weekly by your local Social Security/Jobcentre Plus Office. In this situation, HR Operations will issue you with an SMP1 form, which you will need in order to make your claim.

If your employment ends for any reason (other than redundancy) prior to the start of, or during your maternity leave, then your entitlement to enhanced maternity payments will cease on the termination date. However, you will still be eligible for SMP if you are still employed at the start of the 15th week before your due date (circa 25 weeks pregnant).

For more information, please contact [HR Operations](#) or visit the [government website](#)



T&Cs AND EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

When you are on maternity leave, all your terms and conditions (except those relating to salary) will continue. However there are a few key changes to some employee benefits that you will need to be aware of:

PENSION

Provided that you continue to make contributions during your period of paid maternity leave, LSH will continue to make employer contributions (based on what your earnings would have been if you had not been on maternity leave) for the duration of your maternity leave.

If you would like to temporarily stop or change your pension contributions, please do so by updating your contribution on [My Reward](#).

FLEXIBLE BENEFITS VIA MY REWARD

Maternity leave is considered a 'life event' in which you can amend your flexible benefits outside of our annual flexible benefits window. So, if you would like to extend your Private Health Care or Health Cash Plan to include your child(ren), set up a childcare voucher account or apply for a reimbursement for your season ticket loan, please contact [Sophie Brooks](#).

We will also write to you while you are on maternity leave to notify you when our flexible benefits window is open on the My Reward portal.

RICS MEMBERSHIP

If you are a member of the RICS (or another professional body) you may be entitled to apply for a concession on your membership and CPD requirements. To find out more about these provisions with RICS, please visit the [RICS website](#), or email professionalrenewals@rics.org.uk

HOLIDAY

You will continue to accrue your contractual holiday entitlement for the duration of your maternity leave.

If the holiday year is due to end while you are on maternity leave, you are advised to take your current full year's entitlement before starting your maternity leave. A popular way to do this is to use your accrued holiday in the lead up to your due date, postponing your maternity leave start date.

Maternity leave will automatically start from the date your baby arrives, so any leave you have not taken by this point will be carried over. You may then wish to use the remainder of your accrued annual leave prior to your return to work. For further details, please see the Return to Work section of this policy.

You are encouraged to discuss how you will take your annual leave entitlement with your manager as early as possible in your pregnancy so that we can plan for this properly.

KEEP IN TOUCH

We believe it is important to maintain contact while you are on maternity leave. As part of our maternity leave request form, we will confirm your personal email address and mobile phone number for this purpose.

BY REMAINING IN CONTACT, WE HOPE TO ENSURE THAT YOU:

- Receive all business updates and other relevant publications and communications;
- Are invited to any company events that may be relevant to you and that you may wish to attend;
- Are kept up to date with any significant developments within your team.

Alongside your manager, we will contact you at regular intervals while you are on maternity leave and will be available to answer any questions that you may have. In particular, we will contact you to plan and prepare for your return to work.

KEEPING IN TOUCH DAYS (KIT DAYS)

You may, if you wish, work for up to 10 days during your maternity leave without bringing your maternity leave or SMP to an end. You will be paid for KIT days at your normal daily rate (inclusive of SMP) as long as you are at work for a minimum of 3 hours in any given KIT day.

KIT days are ideal for allowing you to attend any relevant training days and team meetings but can also be used as part of an organised phased return to work plan. All KIT days must be agreed with your manager in advance and please also let the HR team know so we can keep track.



RETURNING TO WORK

Unless you inform us otherwise, we will assume that you will be taking one year's maternity leave. Your return date will be confirmed to you in writing within 28 days of you submitting your maternity leave request form.

If you would like to return to work sooner, you must advise your manager and HR Operations, giving them at least 8 weeks' notice of your proposed return to work date.

Please note that you may not return to work for two weeks after the birth of your child. This is a statutory period to protect your health at this time.

CAN I RETURN TO MY OLD ROLE?

If you return to work during OML, you normally have the right to return to your old role, on the same terms and conditions.

If you return to work during AML, you normally have the right to return to your old role on the same terms and conditions unless this is not reasonably practicable. If it is not reasonably practicable to return to your old role you may be entitled to return to a similar role on terms and conditions that are the same as or better than your old role.

PHASED RETURN TO WORK

You may wish to consider a phased return to help you return to work, perhaps using your KIT days closer to your return, or using your annual leave to reduce your hours in the first few weeks.

This can alleviate any anxiety you may feel about having been out of the workplace for a prolonged period, and also allow you flexibility while you and your child adjust to your new routine and childcare arrangements.

FLEXIBLE WORKING

If you are looking to return to work under a new flexible working arrangement, allow plenty of time to discuss your request with your manager and consider the impact of your request on your role and colleagues.

Please submit a flexible working request as early as possible so that we have enough time to consider this and talk to you about the arrangements.

BREASTFEEDING AT WORK

If upon your return to work you wish to continue breastfeeding, we ask that you notify your HR Business Partner prior to your return to work, and as soon as reasonably possible. We will then discuss and agree appropriate arrangements with you and your manager on a case by case basis.

WHAT IF I DO NOT WANT TO RETURN TO WORK AFTER MY MATERNITY LEAVE?

If you do not want to return to work after your maternity leave, you must give us notice that you are resigning in accordance with your contract of employment.

WELCOME BACK

REGULAR REVIEWS AND OBJECTIVES

When you return to work, your manager will sit with you to provide both a business update, and detailed summary of your teams' current objectives and achievements in your absence.

Take some time to agree with your manager short term objectives which will allow you the opportunity to reacclimatise to the workplace and reacquaint yourself with your role and your team.

We recommend that you agree regular weekly reviews with your manager for the first month, to report back on what is working well and raise any issues or concerns you may have. Let your manager know if you are struggling to settle back into work, or if you require assistance.

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT & CONTINUED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- H&S compliance modules including a New Mothers Risk Assessment (particularly relevant if you are continuing to breastfeed)
- Access to the LSH Training Calendar and CoreHR training module to book onto Elective Training courses.
- Access to e-training modules on fLaSH
- If you are a Chartered Surveyor, you will also be provided with access to the RICS CPD training modules.

If there are any training courses that aren't on the calendar that you feel would be of benefit to you, please get in touch with [Mark Winsor](#), Learning Operations manager.

WHAT TO EXPECT - PSYCHOLOGICALLY

Whether you are returning from maternity or shared parental leave, secondment or a sabbatical, transitioning in and out of the workplace can be a challenge, and everyone deals with this situation differently.

Many people find that they have lost confidence when they go back to work, while others feel empowered and are eager to pick up and add value from day one. Either way, it can be difficult to know where and how to fit back in.

Maintaining contact with your team, and using KIT days, even just a few weeks before going back, can help to make your first day back less daunting.

Give yourself time to settle back and don't forget to ask lots of questions. You have been out of the workplace for a while so it is to be expected that you won't know everything that has happened in your absence.

Be honest about how you are coping and whether or not you require more or less responsibility. If there is an area of work you are keen to get involved in, speak with your manager.

Arrange a formal review at 3 months with your manager, to review your objectives and discuss career goals.

Finally, be prepared for your child to become unwell in the first six months of your return to work. Any new social environment invariably leads to children developing common childhood illnesses. Discuss and agree how to best manage this eventuality with your manager, and put plans in place so that you are prepared for when these situations arise. For further detail, please also see our Parental Leave Policy and Dependents Leave Policy.

