



People and Performance

V2 October 2015

Health and Safety Guidance: New and expectant mothers at work



Introduction

Health and safety implications for expectant and new mothers can be addressed by implementing normal health and safety management procedures and risk assessment.

The term 'expectant or new mothers' includes

- Those who are pregnant;
- Those who are breast feeding; and
- Those who have recently given birth (up to 6-12 weeks post-delivery or longer if breast-feeding).

RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk assessment of the workplace and work operations should identify hazards and risks to females of childbearing age, including new and expectant mothers. These risks shall be identified when completing general task risk assessments (Stage 1) because there may be a period where a pregnant worker may not be aware that they are pregnant.

When a manager is notified in writing that a member of staff is pregnant or is intending to return to work and wishes to breast feed or express milk an individual risk assessment must be carried out (Stage 2). This should be reviewed at each trimester throughout pregnancy and also on return to work where you are notified of the intention to breast feed or express milk. During pregnancy, risk assessment should be completed at each trimesters. The identified hazards and risks may remain constant in some cases but, the likelihood of harm occurring may differ at each stage of the pregnancy

due to e.g. dexterity, agility and impaired mobility created by increased size.

Additional Areas of Risk

Expectant and nursing mothers are at additional risk when carrying out specified work activities involving exposure to chemical, physical (e.g. noise, manual handling), biological (e.g. Viral Infections, Chickenpox) and working condition hazards. Other factors may include morning sickness, tiredness, and the need for frequent visits to the toilet.

Irregular Work Patterns Where an expectant mother participates in shift work and the risk assessment identifies it to be detrimental to the mother and/or baby's health, she should be transferred to day work on her existing salary/wage level and conditions of service (including any shift working premium payments).

Similarly, where a new or expectant mother works at night, and her GP/midwife has issued her with a certificate indicating that for her health and safety she should not work at night, she should be transferred to day work on her existing salary/wage level and conditions of service (including



any night working premium payment). Where a transfer is not possible such employees should be given paid leave from work for the period designated in the medical certificate or Fit Note.

Every effort should be made to adjust the working environment, so far as is reasonable practicable, to suit the needs and requirements of the pre and post birth mother, with regards to their health and safety. Amended work arrangements may become increasingly necessary in the last 8-12 weeks of pregnancy due to increasing size (e.g. need to review suitability of workstation, personal protective equipment etc).

Suitable Alternative Employment

Where an assessment identifies a risk to the health and safety of the worker then action must be taken to remove her from the risk. For example

- Can the working conditions and/or hours be altered to remove the risk?
- Can suitable alternative work (at the same rate of pay) be offered for as long as necessary?

If the risk cannot be eliminated expectant mothers should be given paid leave on normal pay, including all contractual payments, for as long as is necessary in order to protect their health and safety.

Resting/ Breastfeeding

Suitable and sufficient facilities for pregnant or nursing mothers to rest shall be provided: identify a room which has a 'bed' or similar and a

means of privacy e.g. a turnbuckle lock.

There is no time limit on how long a nursing mother can continue breastfeeding.

It is good practice to provide a healthy and safe environment for nursing mothers to express and store milk. These facilities could be included in the 'rest area' that you must provide for pregnant and nursing mothers.

A rest area could be achieved by having a 'multipurpose' first aid room, which typically has access to washing facilities and a bed to rest on. A small refrigerator could be provided to store expressed milk. The room must afford privacy and the ability to enable high standards of hygiene. Toilets are not considered to be an acceptable area for this purpose

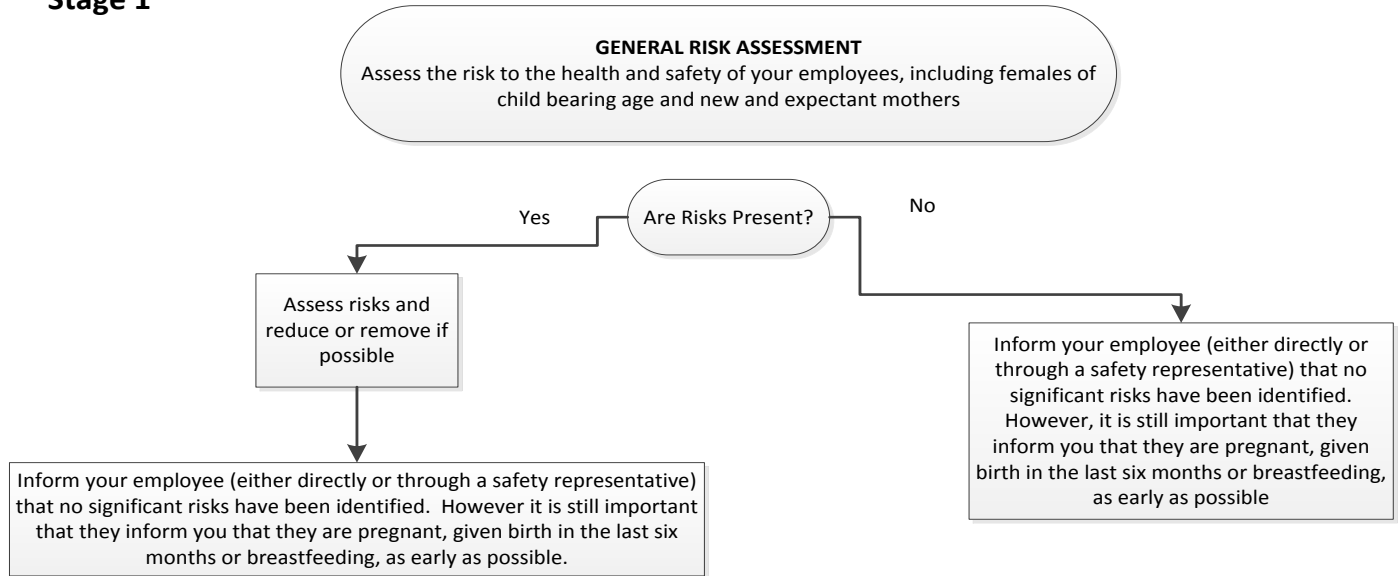
Passive Smoking

Some employees may be exposed to passive smoking while meeting clients in their home. Under these circumstances the employee can ask the person(s) to refrain from smoking for the duration of the visit. If they decline to do so, the employee has the right to suspend the visit and report the matter to their line manager who will make alternative arrangements with the client.

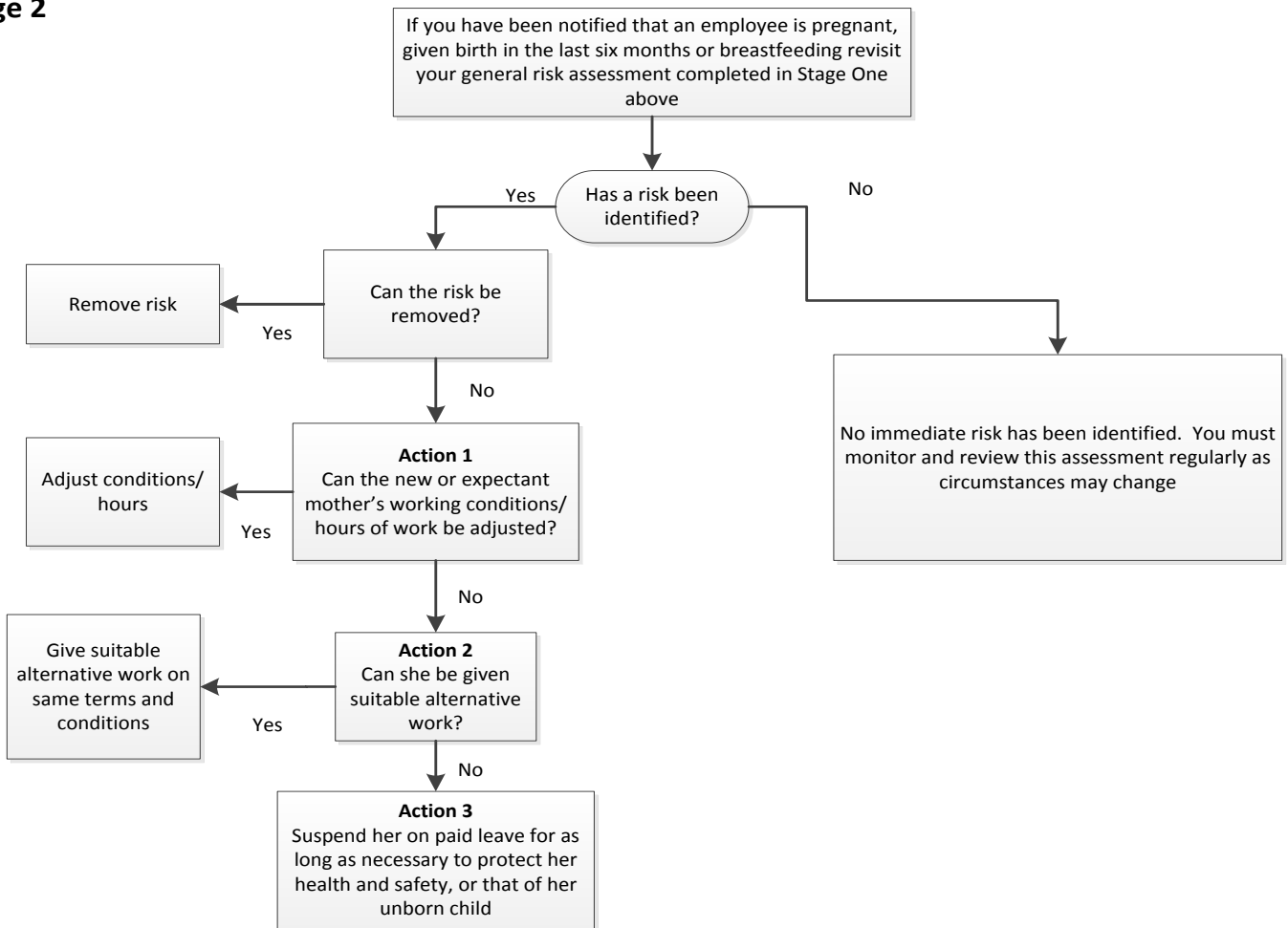


Appendix 1 – Risk Assessment Decision Chart

Stage 1



Stage 2



Note: Employers have a legal duty to revisit, review and revise the general risk assessment if they suspect that it is no longer valid, or there have been significant changes to anything it relates to



Appendix 2 – RISK ASSESSMENT FOR EXPECTANT OR NEW MOTHERS

In order to help them fulfil their work commitments to the best of their ability full and proper consideration must be given to the condition of expectant and new mothers throughout the term of their pregnancy and post-natal period. This assessment will assist in highlighting any hazards and, through subsequent appropriate action, eliminate or minimise any risk posed to new and expectant mothers.

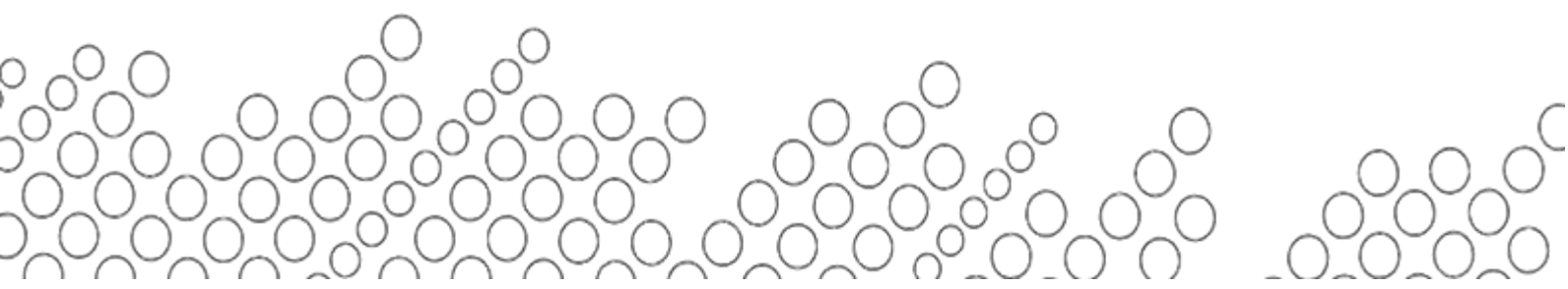
Employee's Name:	
Post Held:	Location:
Service	

<i>EXPECTANT MOTHER</i>
Tick box which best describes the employee's stage of pregnancy
1 st trimester 1-14 wks
2 nd trimester 15-28 wks
3 rd trimester 29-40 wks

<i>NURSING MOTHER</i>
Tick box which best describes the employee's state as nursing mother
Up to 3 months post birth
Between 3 and 6 months post birth
Breast Feeding

MAIN ELEMENTS OF POST

DOES THE JOB PRESENT RISKS FROM THE FOLLOWING:	YES	NO
SHIFT WORK		
Does the employee work nights/split shifts? (if yes, alternative arrangements may be required)		
DISPLAY SCREEN EQUIPMENT		
Does the employee use this type of equipment on a daily basis and normally for continuous spells of one hour at a time? (If Yes, you will need to complete the DSE assessment at each trimester)		



DOES THE JOB PRESENT RISKS FROM THE FOLLOWING (those marked ✓ need action)	YES	NO
BIOLOGICAL AGENTS		
Exposure to harmful biological agents? e.g. Hepatitis, HIV, Weill's Disease, etc. (check the HSE guide at www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/hsg122.htm)		
Rubella or other childhood diseases e.g. Chicken Pox		
Risk of exposure to animal diseases		
Risk of contact with sewage		
PHYSICAL AGENTS		
Exposure to stress/ mental fatigue		
Exposure to shocks, repeated movements or actions		
Require you to sit/stand awkwardly/stand for lengthy periods		
Lifting carrying, pushing, pulling of loads which may present risks		
Exposure to 'high' noise levels (where you need to shout to be heard)		
Exposure to extremes of heat/cold		
Risks from travelling/ driving due to posture or fatigue		
Exposed to risk from violence or aggression at work		
Work at height or confined spaces		
Lone worker		
Has to work at a pre-determined pace		
CHEMICAL AGENTS		
Contact with hazardous substances? (If yes, review COSHH assessments paying particular attention to 'Toxic' and 'R' markings that can have an effect on the unborn child and breast-fed babies.		
Exposure to passive smoking at work (including home visits)		
Exposure to: carbon monoxide		
lead		
asbestos		
mineral oils		
If yes, employee must be removed from tasks where exposure is likely.		
PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT		
Does the employee wear PPE at work? (If yes, review to ensure 'suitable' for her current condition)		
WORKPLACE FACILITIES – Are/is there		
Facilities to rest/lie in private?		
Fresh supply of wholesome drinking water?		
Adequate ventilation?		
Comfortable range of temperatures?		
Clean toilet facilities?		
Access to first aid- people and equipment?		
BREASTFEEDING		
Is there a private, healthy and safe environment to express milk (not toilets)?		



Give details of any issues regarding the workplace and/or aspects of pregnancy that may be causing concern e.g. morning sickness, comfort, and health.

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DISCUSSION BETWEEN MANAGER AND EMPLOYEE

Discussion Point	Action Agreed	Outcome

The Line Manager is required to review this assessment at all stages of pregnancy and breast-feeding to ensure suitable and sufficient controls are in place

I confirm that the employee has received a copy of this completed statement

Risk Assessment carried out by:

Name:		
Job Title:		
Signature:		Date:



