



**The  
United  
Synagogue**

**PREGNANCY LOSS  
POLICY**

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# US Pregnancy Loss Policy

## Introduction

Based on fundamental Jewish ethics of gemilut chasadim (altruistic loving-kindness), The United Synagogue is committed to supporting all employees who suffer the loss of a pregnancy, whether it happens directly to them, their partner, or their baby's surrogate mother, regardless of the nature of their loss, and whatever their length of service. The organisation recognises that pregnancy loss can be a bereavement, and one not isolated to women or heterosexual couples.

## Purpose

This policy outlines the support, advice and resources that are available to an employee who is experiencing or has experienced pregnancy loss, or to line managers and colleagues who wish to support fellow employees through such a loss.

## Scope

This policy and its provisions apply to all employees that suffer a pregnancy loss, wherever employed across the organisation and irrespective of their length of service. Whether it happens directly to them, their partner or their baby's surrogate mother.

## Pregnancy Loss

Pregnancy loss is sadly more common than many people think. An estimated one in four pregnancies ends in miscarriage, one in every two hundred 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.

Pregnancy loss includes but is not limited to:

- **Miscarriage:** the spontaneous loss of pregnancy until 24 weeks of gestation
- **Stillbirth:** the loss of a baby after 24 weeks, before or during birth.
- **Abortion:** a medical or surgical procedure to end a pregnancy
- **Ectopic pregnancy:** when a fertilised egg implants and grows outside of the uterus.
- **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.
- **Neonatal loss:** the loss of a baby within the first 28 days after they are born, often caused by premature births or genetic disorders.

## Support

United Synagogue is committed to supporting anyone experiencing pregnancy loss, regardless of their length of service, and whether they are in the office or working remotely. Everyone's experience is different, and an employee is entitled to discuss bespoke arrangements with their line manager and their HR Business Partner if needed, based on their individual circumstances.

All employees who have been affected by a pregnancy loss (including partners and those with a surrogate mother) are entitled to a minimum of two weeks' leave on full pay. If additional time off is required, the sickness absence policy should be followed.

Emotional and physical recovery from a pregnancy loss does not have a time limit and employees may find they need to take further sickness leave after having returned to work, which they are entitled to. Employees should not feel judged or discriminated against when requesting time off to recover from loss.

### Paid leave for medical appointments

Employees are entitled to paid time off to attend appointments (or to 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. Line managers should recognise that it will not always be possible for employees to arrange these around the demands of their work due to the nature of pregnancy loss and should support employees in managing the impact of time away from work.

### Flexibility

When an employee is not on leave, we recognise that flexibility is key to anyone suffering a pregnancy loss and aim to facilitate flexible working wherever possible. In the event an employee should require a temporary/flexible change, working arrangements could include:

- A phased return to work
- More breaks and time away from their computer
- Flexibility to work in other areas of the building when in the office.
- Earlier start and finish times, to avoid peak travel times, when travelling into the office
- A request to reduce working hours on a temporary basis.
- Turning their camera off when on video calls

These should be discussed and agreed with the employee's line manager and reviewed on a regular basis to ensure these adjustments continue to meet the needs of the employee.

It is our aim to facilitate an open, understanding working environment, and as such we encourage employees to inform their line manager that they are experiencing pregnancy loss at an early stage, to ensure that the necessary support can be arranged.

Employees who do not initially feel comfortable discussing the issue with their direct line manager may find it helpful to have a confidential conversation with a member of the HR Team.

### Return to work.

Returning to work after pregnancy loss can be incredibly challenging. Employees are encouraged to have an ongoing discussion with their line manager about necessary adjustments. Employees are welcome to approach their HR Business Partner directly about this, for a confidential discussion in the first instance, if preferred.

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

Female employees carrying the pregnancy are entitled to maternity leave and maternity pay and should refer to the Maternity policy.

## Colleagues

Individuals are encouraged to support colleagues who suffer pregnancy loss, contacting their HR Business Partner for advice if needed.

## Line Manager

Line Managers are encouraged to familiarise themselves with this policy and use the resources available on EAP website, to ensure they are able to support employees through pregnancy loss.

It is important that:

- They treat all parents and partners equally.
- Ensure they listen to the needs of each employee individually and are open and willing to have discussions about pregnancy loss, ensuring confidentiality where requested by the employee.
- Work together with the employee to ensure that the right support is provided that satisfies the employee and the charity's needs.
- Agree a suitable time and date to check-in with an employee before they return to work after pregnancy loss and put in regular follow up check-ins to review any support and make any necessary adjustments that an employee may need. These regular check-ins are particularly important when working remotely, as it can be harder to spot when an employee is suffering.

## Review of Policy and Provisions

United Synagogue will:

- Ensure it reviews its health and wellbeing policies and practices on a regular basis.
- Ensure its EAP has provisions to support employees experiencing pregnancy loss.
- Listen to and work with employees to support and drive change in relation to pregnancy loss.

## Employee Assistance Programme

To access the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), you can log on to the website

<https://healthassuredeap.co.uk> or call the helpline on: **0800 028 0199**