

KEY EMPLOYMENT POLICIES

EMPLOYEE INFORMATION BRIEFING

ISSUE 34: JANUARY 2022



NEW POLICY



POLICY REVIEW



REGULAR REMINDER

MENOPAUSE POLICY

POLICY OVERVIEW

There has been much recent publicity around support for employees experiencing peri-menopausal and menopausal symptoms. Symptoms that on average can last around 4 years, with 1 in 10 experiencing symptoms for up to 12 years. It was recently reported that almost one-third of UK working women aged 50 – 64 have taken time out of the working week to alleviate menopausal symptoms. Some of those women having left or considered leaving their career because dealing with menopause symptoms in the workplace was too difficult.

As an employer of approximately 8,500 employees, over 70% of those being women, and over 50% aged between 41 – 60, the council recognises its obligation to support employees in working through and beyond menopause. The council is committed to providing an inclusive and supportive working environment and a workplace culture that enables employees experiencing menopause to feel confident to raise issues about their symptoms and ask for help.

This policy will demonstrate the council's commitment to ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of the workforce, and will ensure the workplace does not make the menopausal symptoms of employees worse.

KEY INFORMATION FOR EMPLOYEES

Employees experiencing menopause and peri-menopause may have a wide range of physical and psychological symptoms and may encounter difficulties at work as a result of their symptoms. While some may not experience any difficulties, each person will be affected in different ways and to different degrees over different periods of time, and menopausal symptoms can often indirectly affect their partners, families and colleagues as well.

As well as affecting women, menopausal symptoms can also affect transgender people and non-binary people. Some trans men may experience natural menopausal symptoms. Some trans women may experience pseudo-menopausal symptoms related to their hormone therapy treatment. Some non-binary people may experience menopausal symptoms.

All staff have a personal responsibility to look after their health, safety and wellbeing at work and that of others. Employees experiencing menopause are encouraged to let their line manager or Human Resources know if they are struggling with symptoms that may impact on their work, so that appropriate support can be provided. Such information will be treated in the strictest confidence.

Existing council policies will be useful in supporting employees experiencing menopause symptoms including:

- Supporting Attendance Policy – providing a framework to support employees who are absent as a result of menopausal symptoms through reasonable adjustments, management discretion and occupational health referral.
- Supporting Performance – identifying where menopausal symptoms are a contributing factor in under performance and managing under performance as a capability issue.
- Risk Assessment – ensuring that the work environment does not make menopausal symptoms worse.
- Flexible Working – assisting employees to remain at work and cope with menopausal symptoms by supporting flexible working where possible.
- Bullying and Harassment Policy – protecting employees from bullying, harassment, victimisation and discrimination resulting from issues relating to menopause.

Further confidential support is available for individual employees through the [Employee Assistance Programme](#) where practical information and advice can be accessed including counselling where appropriate. In addition, employees are encouraged to seek support through their GP and other external organisations as listed below:

NHS at www.nhs.uk/conditions/menopause or www.nhs.uk/conditions/early-menopause

National Institute for Health & Care Excellence (NICE) guidelines on 'Menopause: diagnosis and treatment' at: www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng23/ifp/chapter/About-this-information

Menopause Matters at www.menopausematters.co.uk

Women's Health Concern at www.womens-health-concern.org

Daisy Network at www.daisynetwork.org

The Menopause Exchange at www.menopause-exchange.co.uk

Employees are encouraged to read the Menopause Policy in full. The policy can be accessed from work or home on [Mytoolkit](#).

**HR Policy and Advice
January 2022**