

VIAMED Ltd

Company Personnel Manual

CPM 05 — ABSENCE: MATERNITY LEAVE AND PAY

Effective date: 27 July 2026

Review frequency: Annual, or following any relevant legislative change

1. Purpose

This policy explains employees' rights and responsibilities concerning:

- pregnancy notification;
- paid time off for antenatal care;
- pregnancy health and safety;
- Statutory Maternity Leave;
- Statutory Maternity Pay;
- pregnancy-related sickness;
- Keeping in Touch days;
- contact during maternity leave;
- returning to work;
- employment protection; and
- related family-leave entitlements.

Maternity Leave is separate from:

- Unpaid Parental Leave;
- Paternity Leave;
- Shared Parental Leave;
- Neonatal Care Leave;
- Parental Bereavement Leave; and
- Adoption Leave.

Employees should refer to the relevant Company Personnel Manual policies available through Intrastats.

2. Eligibility for Statutory Maternity Leave

An employee qualifies for Statutory Maternity Leave where they:

- are legally classed as an employee; and
- give Viamed the required notice.

There is no minimum length-of-service requirement and eligibility does not depend on:

- the employee's working hours;
- their earnings; or

- how long they have worked for Viamed.

An eligible employee may take up to **52 weeks of Statutory Maternity Leave**. This consists of:

- 26 weeks of Ordinary Maternity Leave; and
- 26 weeks of Additional Maternity Leave.

An employee does not have to take the full 52 weeks but must take at least two weeks' leave immediately following childbirth. The compulsory period is four weeks where the employee legally works in a factory.

Statutory Maternity Leave does not normally apply to an intended parent in a surrogacy arrangement. Statutory Adoption Leave and Pay may instead be available.

3. Notification of pregnancy and maternity leave

The employee should normally notify Viamed no later than the end of the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth.

The notification should confirm:

- that the employee is pregnant;
- the expected week of childbirth; and
- the date on which the employee wishes maternity leave to begin.

Viamed requests that this information is supplied using **CPMF 07 — Maternity Leave and Pay Record**.

Where it is not reasonably practicable to provide the information by the normal deadline, the employee must notify Viamed as soon as reasonably practicable.

Viamed will write to the employee within 28 days of receiving the required notification, confirming:

- the agreed maternity leave start date;
- the expected maternity leave end date; and
- the expected return-to-work date.

The employee may change their maternity leave start date by giving at least 28 days' notice, or as much notice as reasonably practicable where this is not possible.

4. Antenatal care

A pregnant employee is entitled to reasonable paid time off during working hours for antenatal care recommended by a registered medical practitioner, midwife or nurse.

Antenatal care may include:

- medical examinations;
- scans;
- midwife or hospital appointments;
- relaxation or parentcraft classes; and

- other pregnancy-related care recommended by an appropriate healthcare professional.

After the first appointment, Viamed may request:

- evidence of the appointment, such as an appointment card or letter; and
- confirmation that the appointment was recommended by a doctor, midwife or nurse.

The employee should give as much notice as reasonably practicable and should provide at least 48 hours' notice where possible.

Viamed will not unreasonably refuse paid time off for qualifying antenatal care.

Reasonable travelling and waiting time associated with the appointment will be treated as part of the authorised absence.

5. Pregnancy health and safety

Employees should notify Viamed of their pregnancy as early as they feel able so that any relevant workplace risks can be considered.

Once Viamed has been informed in writing, the company will review relevant workplace risk assessments and consider risks to:

- the pregnant employee;
- the unborn child;
- a new mother; or
- a breastfeeding employee.

Where a significant risk is identified, Viamed will consider appropriate action, which may include:

- adjusting working conditions or hours;
- modifying duties;
- providing additional rest arrangements;
- avoiding identified substances or activities;
- offering suitable alternative work; or
- suspending the employee on maternity grounds on full pay where the statutory conditions are met and no suitable alternative is available.

Employees should report any concern about workplace risks promptly to the Human Resources Controller, their line manager or a director.

6. When maternity leave may start

The earliest maternity leave can normally begin is 11 weeks before the expected week of childbirth.

Maternity leave will begin automatically:

- on the day after the baby is born, where the baby is born before the intended maternity leave start date; or
- where the employee is absent because of pregnancy-related sickness during the four weeks before the expected week of childbirth.

Where leave begins automatically, the employee should notify Viamed as soon as reasonably practicable.

7. Statutory Maternity Pay

7.1 Eligibility

Statutory Maternity Pay is separate from the right to Statutory Maternity Leave.

To qualify for Statutory Maternity Pay, an employee must normally:

- be on Viamed's payroll during the qualifying week;
- have been continuously employed by Viamed for at least 26 weeks up to and including a day in the qualifying week;
- earn at least the statutory earnings threshold during the relevant eight-week period;
- give the required notice; and
- provide acceptable proof of pregnancy.

The qualifying week is normally the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth.

For the 2026/27 tax year, the employee must normally earn an average of at least **£129 per week**.

7.2 Proof of pregnancy

Before Statutory Maternity Pay can be paid, the employee must provide evidence confirming the expected week of childbirth.

This will normally be:

- a MATB1 certificate; or
- a letter from a doctor or midwife.

The employee should normally provide this evidence within 21 days of the proposed Statutory Maternity Pay start date, or as soon as reasonably practicable.

Viamed will normally request a MATB1 certificate and retain a copy in accordance with its Data Protection Policy and document-retention requirements.

7.3 Amount and duration

Statutory Maternity Pay may be paid for up to 39 weeks.

For the 2026/27 tax year, it is paid as follows:

- the first six weeks at 90% of the employee's average weekly earnings, with no statutory upper limit; and
- the following 33 weeks at £194.32 per week or 90% of the employee's average weekly earnings, whichever is lower.

The statutory rate and earnings threshold are reviewed annually. Viamed will apply the rates in force at the relevant time.

Statutory Maternity Pay will normally be paid through payroll in the same way as normal wages.

Tax and National Insurance will be deducted where applicable.

Where an employee takes the full 52 weeks of Maternity Leave, the final 13 weeks will normally be unpaid.

7.4 Where an employee does not qualify

Where Viamed decides that an employee is not eligible for Statutory Maternity Pay, it will provide form SMP1 within seven days of making the decision and explain the reason.

The employee may then be able to apply for Maternity Allowance.

8. Early birth, stillbirth or death of the baby

The employee may remain entitled to Statutory Maternity Leave and Statutory Maternity Pay where the baby:

- is born early;
- is stillborn from the start of the 24th week of pregnancy; or
- is born alive and later dies.

The employee should contact the Human Resources Controller or a director as soon as they feel able so that the available leave, pay and support can be considered sensitively.

Other entitlements may include:

- Parental Bereavement Leave and Pay;
- Neonatal Care Leave and Pay; and
- compassionate support under other company arrangements.

9. Pregnancy-related sickness absence

Pregnancy-related sickness will be recorded separately from ordinary sickness absence.

It will not normally be included when applying standard attendance-review indicators.

The employee should tell Viamed where a sickness absence is pregnancy-related so that the appropriate legal protections and records can be applied.

Where pregnancy-related sickness occurs during the four weeks before the expected week of childbirth, maternity leave may begin automatically.

The normal sickness-notification procedure in CPM 03 should still be followed unless another arrangement has been agreed.

10. Contact during maternity leave

Viamed may maintain reasonable contact with an employee during maternity leave.

Contact may include:

- confirming maternity leave and pay arrangements;
- discussing Keeping in Touch days;

- communicating significant workplace developments;
- discussing organisational changes;
- consulting about a potential redundancy situation;
- discussing training opportunities;
- planning the return to work; and
- considering flexible working or adjustments.

The employee and Viamed may agree a preferred method and reasonable frequency of contact before maternity leave begins.

Contact will be proportionate and should not place pressure on the employee to work during maternity leave.

11. Keeping in Touch days

An employee may agree to work for up to ten Keeping in Touch days during maternity leave without bringing maternity leave or Statutory Maternity Pay to an end.

Keeping in Touch days may be used for:

- work;
- meetings;
- training;
- workplace updates;
- return-to-work planning; or
- another agreed work-related purpose.

Any work carried out on a day will normally count as one complete Keeping in Touch day, even where the employee works for only part of the day.

Keeping in Touch days must be agreed by both Viamed and the employee.

Neither party is required to offer or accept Keeping in Touch work.

Pay for a Keeping in Touch day will be agreed in advance, taking account of any Statutory Maternity Pay due.

12. Employment rights during maternity leave

During Statutory Maternity Leave, the employee's contract of employment will continue, except for terms relating to normal remuneration.

The employee will continue to benefit from applicable contractual rights, including:

- accrual of statutory and contractual holiday;
- contractual benefits that continue during maternity leave;
- applicable pay rises;
- continuity of employment;
- pension contributions during paid maternity leave, subject to scheme rules; and

- protection from dismissal, detriment or unfavourable treatment because of pregnancy or maternity.

Annual leave cannot normally be taken at the same time as maternity leave. The employee and Viamed should discuss whether accrued holiday will be taken before or after maternity leave.

13. Returning to work

Where the employee takes the full 52 weeks of maternity leave, they are expected to return on the date confirmed by Viamed unless they provide notice of a different return date.

An employee who wishes to return earlier or later than the confirmed date must normally give Viamed at least eight weeks' notice.

Where the employee takes no more than 26 weeks of maternity leave, they will normally have the right to return to the same job.

Where the employee takes more than 26 weeks, they will normally have the right to return to:

- the same job; or
- where that is not reasonably practicable, another suitable and appropriate job on terms that are no less favourable.

The employee should discuss any requirement for:

- breastfeeding arrangements;
- workplace adjustments;
- a phased return;
- flexible working;
- accrued annual leave; or
- other support

before returning where reasonably practicable.

An employee who decides not to return must give the contractual notice required to end their employment.

14. Redundancy protection

Pregnant employees and employees taking or returning from maternity leave have enhanced statutory redundancy protection.

Where an employee is selected for redundancy during the protected period, they have the right to be offered any suitable alternative vacancy that is available, ahead of employees who do not have the same statutory priority.

For maternity leave, the protected period can continue until 18 months after the child's date of birth.

The protection does not prevent a genuine redundancy where there is no suitable alternative vacancy, but Viamed must follow a fair procedure and clearly justify the reason for the redundancy.

15. Neonatal Care Leave and other family leave

An employee whose baby receives qualifying neonatal care may be entitled to up to 12 weeks of Neonatal Care Leave in addition to Maternity Leave.

Neonatal Care Leave is a day-one right and must be taken within 68 weeks of the child's birth.

An employee on maternity leave will normally take any Neonatal Care Leave after maternity leave has ended.

Eligibility for Statutory Neonatal Care Pay is assessed separately.

Employees should refer to CPM 06 for the full Neonatal Care Leave and Pay procedure.

An employee may also wish to consider:

- Shared Parental Leave and Pay;
- Unpaid Parental Leave;
- annual leave;
- flexible working; or
- Parental Bereavement Leave and Pay.

16. Shared Parental Leave

An eligible employee may choose to end their Maternity Leave and Pay early so that the remaining leave and pay can be shared with an eligible partner through Shared Parental Leave and Pay.

Shared Parental Leave is subject to separate:

- eligibility rules;
- notices;
- declarations;
- leave-booking requirements; and
- pay requirements.

Employees considering Shared Parental Leave should notify the Human Resources Controller as early as possible.

Ending Maternity Leave or Pay for Shared Parental Leave can have significant consequences and may not always be reversible.

17. Records and confidentiality

Viamed will maintain appropriate records concerning:

- pregnancy notification;
- maternity leave dates;
- MATB1 or other medical evidence;
- Statutory Maternity Pay calculations;
- payments made;
- periods not paid and the reason;

- Keeping in Touch days;
- return-to-work arrangements;
- pregnancy-related sickness;
- workplace adjustments; and
- decisions made under this policy.

Statutory Maternity Pay records will be retained for at least three years from the end of the tax year to which they relate.

Pregnancy and maternity information will be treated as confidential and processed in accordance with Viamed's Data Protection Policy and document-retention requirements.

18. Equality and non-discrimination

No employee will be treated unfavourably because of:

- pregnancy;
- pregnancy-related illness;
- maternity leave;
- childbirth;
- breastfeeding;
- a request for a pregnancy-related adjustment; or
- exercising another statutory maternity right.

Pregnancy and maternity are protected under the Equality Act 2010.

Concerns about discrimination, harassment or unfavourable treatment should be raised through the appropriate company procedure.

19. Responsibilities

The Human Resources Controller is responsible for:

- receiving pregnancy and maternity notifications;
- checking leave and pay eligibility;
- maintaining appropriate records;
- confirming maternity leave dates;
- arranging payroll instructions;
- considering workplace adjustments;
- maintaining reasonable contact;
- supporting return-to-work arrangements; and
- ensuring current statutory rates are applied.

Managers are responsible for:

- allowing authorised antenatal appointments;
- referring pregnancy health and safety concerns;
- treating employees sensitively and fairly;
- maintaining appropriate confidentiality; and

- referring maternity matters to the Human Resources Controller.

Employees are responsible for:

- giving the required notice;
- completing CPMF 07;
- supplying the MATB1 or other evidence where required;
- notifying Viamed of relevant changes;
- maintaining agreed reasonable contact; and
- giving the required notice of a changed return date.

20. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually and whenever there is a significant change to maternity legislation, statutory pay rates or official government guidance.

Where there is any conflict between this policy and a statutory employment right, the statutory right in force at the relevant time will apply.