



Exeter College

FERTILITY TREATMENT LEAVE POLICY

1. Introduction

Exeter College recognises the emotional and physical challenges which may arise from undergoing fertility treatments, and is committed to supporting employees who wish to undertake fertility treatment. This policy outlines the provisions for employees who require time off for fertility treatment, and is intended to assist eligible employees in the logistical and emotional aspects of undergoing treatment.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees of Exeter College, with effect from their first day of employment (i.e. there is no qualifying length of service).

It does not apply to casual workers, agency workers, or contractors.

3. Confidentiality

We will endeavour, as far as is practicable, to maintain the confidentiality of employees undergoing fertility treatments, and normally only those with a legitimate need to know will be informed.

4. Eligibility and entitlement

Investigations regarding infertility, consultations exploring treatment options, and medical interventions aimed at assisting conception, should normally be regarded as **medical appointments**. Entitlement to time off to attend medical appointments is outlined in our Employee Handbook.

In addition, any employee (regardless of gender) who is undergoing fertility treatment is entitled to take up to 2 working days of **paid Fertility Treatment Leave** in any rolling 12-month period.

This might be used, for example, to allow the individual some time to deal with the logistical or emotional effects of fertility investigations or interventions.

Whilst all forms of fertility treatment are covered by this policy, there are some specific legal provisions related to In Vitro Fertilisation (IVF). In the case of IVF, a person is deemed legally to be pregnant once a fertilised egg has been implanted in their uterus. From that time, they are legally protected from unfavourable treatment related to their pregnancy for the duration of their pregnancy, and are entitled to time off for antenatal care as outlined in our Maternity, Adoption, Paternity & Shared Parental Leave policy.

In the unfortunate event that the IVF cycle is not successful, the employee will remain legally protected for a further 2 weeks.

5. Requesting leave

This policy is non-contractual – it does not form part of your terms and conditions of employment.

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You are encouraged to discuss your situation with your line manager or with the HR Manager as early as possible. We will endeavour to treat such information with sensitivity and confidentiality.

In common with other leave options, you should request Fertility Treatment leave in advance where possible, although we recognise that in some circumstances you may require unforeseen time off before or after fertility treatment.

Where possible, appointments should be made for times that will cause the minimum disruption to your normal working day. We do also ask that you provide as much notice as possible of the days and times on which time off is required.

We may ask you to provide a statement from a qualified medical practitioner to confirm that fertility treatment has been recommended and/ or approved. We may also, in some instances, request copies of appointment cards for each occasion on which time off is required.

Whilst the normal arrangements concerning absence notification will apply, you may request retrospectively (when you return to work) that up to 2 days of your absence is treated as paid fertility treatment leave.

Leave for fertility treatment is designed to be flexible, and managers are advised to discuss the leave options available with the employee, and to grant leave at their discretion and with sensitivity. Managers should bear in mind the usual Health and Safety procedures associated with employees who are, or who may be, pregnant and should follow the College's guidance on this.

6. How different types of leave could be used

You may wish to combine the 2 days' fertility treatment leave with other types of leave to suit your needs. This may include annual leave, unpaid leave, time off for medical appointments, and/or sickness leave.

The following are examples of different types of leave which could be used for the purposes of undergoing fertility treatment:

a. Medical appointment

Reason this type of leave might be used: investigating reasons for infertility; initial exploratory consultations regarding treatment options; medical interventions and any fertility-related treatment options.

As above, you are entitled to reasonable time off to attend medical appointments related to fertility treatments, in line with the provisions outlined in our Employee Handbook.

You may also wish to speak to your manager if you feel that flexible working, or working from home on particular days during the treatment, might be helpful

b. Fertility treatment leave

Reason this type of leave might be used: monitoring; taking additional time to rest and recover before or after a procedure; taking time away from the workplace to deal with emotional impact of treatment, or unsuccessful outcomes.

c. Sick leave

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Reason this type of leave might be used: physically recovering from the effects of a procedure; illness arising from fertility treatment; illness arising from pregnancy.

d. Annual leave

Reason this type of leave might be used: need for leave associated with fertility treatment once the annual 2-day entitlement has been exhausted.

e. Leave for partners

The entitlement to 2 days of paid fertility leave in any rolling 12-month period is also available to ‘partners’ (i.e. anyone, of any gender, who will co-parent with the mother/person who may become pregnant).

If they are undergoing medical investigations or treatments themselves, the standard rules about absence for medical treatments, or sickness, apply.

This time off is also available to staff going through a surrogacy arrangement.

7. Monitoring and review of this policy

This policy will be reviewed regularly, and will be updated to ensure compliance with any statutory requirements. Any queries or comments regarding this policy should be addressed to the HR Manager.

8. Related policies

We also have the following related policies:

- Equality and Diversity
- Flexible Working
- Maternity, Adoption, Paternity & Shared Parental Leave policy
- Parental leave
- Time off for dependents

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