



1. Introduction

1.1 The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 require employers to take particular account of significant work related risks to new or expectant mothers. If those risks cannot be adequately controlled changes may need to be made to working conditions and/or hours. As a last resort the employee may have to be suspended.

1.2 It is unlikely that these regulations will cause significant or frequent operational problems at the Telford and Wrekin Council.

2. Key Action Points

Identify the key risks to new and expectant mothers.

Discuss the control measures needed with the new/expectant mother.

Implement the agreed measures and review them regularly, changing them where appropriate.

3. Definitions

3.1 A new or expectant mother means an employee who:

- is pregnant or
- has given birth within the last 6 months or
- is breast feeding or
- has given birth to a stillborn child after 24 weeks of pregnancy

3.2 A significant risk is a risk arising out of work which is beyond the level of risk expected outside the workplace

4. Employee's responsibilities

New and expectant mothers must:

- Inform their manager in writing as soon as they become aware that they are pregnant.
- Report any work related concerns or problems they have that are connected with being a new or expectant mother.

- Pass on any work related advice they receive from their doctor or midwife about risks to their health or that of their baby.
- Co-operate fully with any reasonable measures required to protect their health and that of their unborn child.

5. Risk Assessment

5.1 In all situations: Whilst carrying out or reviewing risk assessments identify the hazards within the section or business unit which might pose a risk to a new or expectant mother and her unborn child (see list in table 1). Indicate on the documented risks assessments which these are.

Table 1: Examples of Hazards

HAZARD	TYPE OF WORK	LEGISLATION
PHYSICAL HAZARDS		
Shocks, vibration	Cleaners Drivers	Control of Vibration at Work Regulations
Manual handling of loads/people handling	Cafe assistants Drivers	Manual Handling Operations Regulations
Physically challenging behaviour, Violence	Cafe Assistants Drivers	Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations
Prolonged standing	Café assistants	Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations
Prolonged static posture	Administration staff Computer users Drivers	Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations
BIOLOGICAL AGENTS		
Communicable diseases <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varicella (chicken pox) – risk to mother and unborn baby • Rubella (German Measles) – risk to unborn baby • Blood borne viruses HIV, hepatitis Band C • TB 	Cafe assistants Drivers	Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations(COSHH)
HAZARD	TYPE OF WORK	LEGISLATION
CHEMICAL HAZARDS		
Cigarette smoke		COSHH

OTHER HAZARDS		
Lone working	Anyone working alone where assistance in a medical emergency might be delayed.	Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations
OTHER HAZARDS cont		
Mental/psychological pressure	Drivers Café Assistant	Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations

Note that the level of risk from these hazards may differ depending on whether the worker is pregnant, has recently given birth or is breast feeding and may also vary in significance during the course of pregnancy.

5.2 Identify those persons who may be potentially at risk. These may be women defined as new or expectant mothers or may be women of child bearing capacity.

5.3 Tell those employees about the risks and the measures required to avoid those risks to new or expectant mothers.

5.4 Control or prevent exposure to risk. If the control measures are robust enough to adequately protect everyone there may not be a need to change anything once a new or expectant mother is in the workplace.

5.5 **When there is a new or expectant mother at work** - discuss with the employee any aspects of her work that are likely to pose a risk to her and the baby and agree practical ways of controlling these. Table 2 below lists some aspects of pregnancy that may affect work that also need to be considered. The impact of these will vary during the course of the pregnancy and their effects will need to be kept under review.

5.6 **Table 2: Aspects of pregnancy that may affect work**

Aspects of pregnancy	Factors in work
Morning sickness	Exposure to nauseating smells Early shift work
Backache	Standing/ manual handling/ posture
Varicose veins	Standing/ sitting
Haemorrhoids	Working in hot conditions
Frequent visits to the toilet	Travelling Difficulty leaving the work site
Aspects of pregnancy	Factors in work

Increasing size	Use of protective clothing Working in confined or awkward spaces. Manual handling
Tiredness	Rest breaks
Balance	Slippery or wet floor surfaces steps
Possible impairment of dexterity, agility, co-ordination, speed of movement and reach due to increasing size.	Work requiring dexterity, agility, co-ordination, speed of movement or reach.

5.7 Some examples of practical control measures that have been successfully used are listed below:

- **Temporary reallocation of tasks to another employee** eg working at manual handling tasks
- **Adjustment to working hours or patterns** eg allowing a later start time whilst morning sickness is problematic
- **Avoiding certain situations** eg driving (if high blood pressure is causing dizziness), prolonged static posture by allowing more frequent changes in activity or breaks.

5.8 Record the changes that have been agreed. The form in appendix 2 can be used for this.

5.9 Inform the employee of the rest facilities that are available to her during work breaks..

5.10 If the employee is particularly anxious about certain risks, has had difficult pregnancies in the past or is experiencing health problems then a work program will be discussed

5.11 Monitor regularly as the risk to the mother and the possibility of damage to the unborn child can vary at different stages of the pregnancy. Monitoring should be carried out at least every three months. Make any necessary changes to the agreed control measures as the pregnancy progresses and make a note of these. The completed form in appendix 1 gives an example of the sort of detail that is needed.

5.12 Where significant risk is unavoidable during normal work and you have been told in writing that an employee is pregnant you may have to consider any of the following:

- Adjustment to her working conditions or hours of work
- Offer suitable alternative work
- Suspend her from work on full paid leave

5.13 There are at least six separate pieces of employment legislation relating to new and expectant mothers and you should consult the café manager or a trustee if the situation of unavoidable significant risk arises and you are unsure of the procedure.

6. Special Situations

6.1 Some special hazards of significance to pregnant employees are covered under specific legislation eg lead, radiation etc. If the employee's work exposes her to such hazards then the relevant regulations must be complied with.

7. References and useful contacts

7.1 Useful publications can be obtained from:
HSE Books, PO Box 1999, Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 2WA Tel: 01787 881165
fax 01787 313995 www.hsebooks.co.uk. Particularly:

- "New and Expectant Mothers at Work: A guide for employers" (HSG122)
- "A guide for new and expectant mothers who work"

These and others can also be viewed electronically and down loaded from:
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/mothers/index.htm>

Appendix 1

Worked example of risk assessment for a new/expectant mother

Example: New and Expectant Mothers at Work Risk Assessment

First Assessment: carried out by J Bloggs on 28.04.06

NAME: A Anon – **Job:** P/T Cleaner/Key Holder – lifelong centre

Hours of Work: 7am – 9am and 3pm Mon-Fri (As a key holder on call in an emergency)

Hazard	Nature/Extent of Risk	Action Required	Follow Up Date	Possible Further Actions
PHYSICAL				

Manual Handling	Emptying bins Carrying/pushing/pulling equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use trolley provided whenever possible. • Carry small loads, one at a time to reduce weight. • Get assistance to move items • Ensure that manual handling training has been provided and techniques put into practice. 	31.05.06	

Hazard	Nature/Extent of Risk	Action Required	Follow Up Date	Possible Further Actions
Movement/Posture	Bending/Stooping whilst cleaning stretching & retrieving items under cupboards .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None at present. 	31.05.06	May have to adapt her duties in the latter stages of pregnancy due to size.
Working Alone	Personal Safety issue, maybe a requirement for urgent medical attention.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anon has received personal safety training on induction. • Anon has been instructed to carry mobile phone whilst at work, area supervisor's number programmed in. • Anon to make other members of staff aware of her movements. 	31.05.06	

CHEMICAL				
Cleaning Agents	None used of known potential risk to any employee.	None	31.05.06	
WORKING CONDITIONS				
Work times	Suffering from morning sickness		31.05.06	

Appendix 2:

New and Expectant Mothers at Work Risk Assessment New and Expectant Mothers at Work Risk Assessment

First Assessment carried out by:

Date:

Name of employee:

Job:

Hours of Work:

Hazard	Nature/Extent of Risk	Action Required	Follow Up Date	Possible Further Actions