

## Maternity Leave Policy

### 1. Policy Statement

Keltech will ensure that all employees are facilitated to avail of their entitlements in relation to maternity leave.

### 2. Purpose

- 2.1. To inform employees of their rights and entitlements in relation to maternity leave.
- 2.2. To outline the procedures that must be followed in relation to instances of maternity leave.

### 3. Scope

This policy applies to all employees of Keltech who are covered by the terms of the Maternity Protection Acts 1994 and 2004.

### 4. Responsibilities

- 4.1. Employees availing of maternity leave are required to familiarise themselves with and adhere to the provisions outlined in this policy.
- 4.2. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring employees availing of maternity leave are familiar with and comply with the terms of this policy.
- 4.3. The HR Coordinator is responsible for ensuring consistent application of this policy and providing advice and support to supervisors regarding the monitoring and management of this policy.

### 5. Entitlement

- 5.1. Employees are entitled to 26 consecutive weeks maternity leave, at least two of these weeks must be taken before the expected date of the birth and at least four weeks taken after the date of the birth of the child.
- 5.2. Employees are also entitled to take additional maternity leave of up to 16 weeks immediately after the end of their maternity leave if they so wish.
- 5.3. Maternity leave entitlement applies in the case of a miscarriage or stillbirth after 24 weeks of pregnancy.
- 5.4. Fathers are entitled to maternity leave in the event of the death of the mother. In these circumstances, the entitlement is dependant on the actual date of the mother's death.
- 5.5. Employees who are breastfeeding and are within 26 weeks after the birth of the child, are entitled to limited time off/breaks for breastfeeding purposes.

### 6. Notification Process

- 6.1. For health and safety reasons, Keltech encourages employees to inform their supervisor as soon as they are aware that they are pregnant, so that the company can ensure that the working environment is supportive to pregnancy requirements.
- 6.2. Employees must submit written notice of their intention to take maternity leave to their supervisor at least four weeks prior to their expected maternity leave commencement date. A medical certificate confirming the pregnancy and specifying the expected date of the birth of the child is also required.

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- 6.3. Where practicable, Keltech requests that employees give notice of their intention to take additional maternity leave, when giving notice of the 26 week normal maternity leave. This would greatly assist the company with regard to arranging cover for the role in the employee's absence. Where it is not possible to give the notification in advance, the employee must inform their supervisor in writing, of their intention to take additional maternity leave not later than four weeks before the end of the 26-week normal maternity leave period.
- 6.4. Employees must submit written notification of their intention to return to work following maternity leave to their supervisor at least four weeks prior to their expected return to work date.

### **7. Ante-natal/Post-natal Medical Care**

- 7.1. Employees are entitled to paid time off for medical appointments related to the pregnancy.
- 7.2. The employee must give written notification to their supervisor outlining the date and time of the appointment at least two weeks in advance.
- 7.3. Employees must also be able to produce a certificate/ record that the visit took place.
- 7.4. Keltech requests that, where possible, the appointment is at the beginning or at the end of the working day.
- 7.5. If the appointment finishes before the end of the working day employees are required to return to work.

### **8. Ante-natal Classes**

- 8.1. Pregnant employees are entitled to paid time off work to attend one set of ante-natal classes (except the last three classes in such a set). This is a once-off entitlement.
- 8.2. An expectant father is entitled, on a once-off basis, to paid time off to attend the last two classes before the birth. This is a once off entitlement for fathers in relation to one birth only.
- 8.3. Employees must submit evidence of such appointments to their supervisor not later than 2 weeks in advance of the appointment.
- 8.4. Keltech reserves the right to refuse payment for time off to employees where there is an abuse of this procedure, and any such abuses will be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure.

### **9. Conditions while on Maternity Leave**

- 9.1. During maternity leave and additional maternity leave, an employee will be deemed to be in employment and their employment rights will be protected with the exception of right to remuneration.
- 9.2. Annual leave and public holiday entitlements accrue while an employee is on maternity leave and additional maternity leave.
- 9.3. Employees on maternity leave do not receive any payment from the company. However those employees who have the necessary PRSI contributions are entitled to maternity benefit payment from the Department of Social Protection for the 26 week period of maternity leave. Employees should apply directly to the Department of Social Protection for this benefit.
- 9.4. During the 16-week period of additional maternity leave, no maternity benefit payment is available from the Department of Social Protection.

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### **10. Postponement of Leave in the Event of Hospitalisation of the Child**

- 10.1. Maternity leave and/or additional maternity leave may be postponed in the event of the hospitalisation of the child. Please note such postponement is subject to the agreement by Keltech and the company reserves the right to refuse such applications for postponement of maternity leave.
- 10.2. In order to request this postponement, the employee must already have taken at least 14 weeks maternity leave, with not less than four of those weeks being after the date of confinement.
- 10.3. Any requests to postpone maternity leave must be made in writing to the employee's supervisor as soon as possible. This request should also include a letter of confirmation from the hospital.
- 10.4. Keltech may agree to postpone the leave and if so, the employee must return to work on a date agreed mutually agreed by the employee and the company that is not later than the date on which the leave concerned is due to end.
- 10.5. The maximum period of postponement of leave is six months from the date of postponement. If an employee postpones their maternity leave and returns to work, then they may take their remaining leave in one block, not later than 7 days after the child has been discharged from hospital.
- 10.6. If the employee should fall ill during the period of postponement, and subsequently is absent from work, they will be deemed to have resumed maternity leave from the first day of absence. Alternatively, the employee may choose to forfeit their right to any remaining maternity leave entitlements, and have her leave treated as sick leave, by notifying their supervisor accordingly, as soon as possible.

### **11. Additional Maternity Leave and Illness**

- 11.1. Should an employee fall ill during additional maternity leave, or if the employee has indicated that they have the intention to avail of additional maternity leave and then falls ill, they may apply to their supervisor to commence sick leave instead of taking the remaining additional maternity leave.
- 11.2. Please note that where an employee chooses to transfer to sick leave, and it is granted, the employee will forfeit their right to the remaining additional maternity leave. In such circumstances, the sick leave will be treated in the same manner as any other absence on sick leave and normal sick leave arrangements will apply.
- 11.3. The discretion to offer this termination of additional maternity leave lies entirely at the discretion of Keltech

### **12. Return to Work**

- 12.1. At the end of maternity leave, employees are entitled to return to their original job or an alternative role with terms no less favourable than those held prior to maternity leave.
- 12.2. Employees who have given birth in the previous 26 weeks and who are breastfeeding are entitled to a reduction in working hours (without loss of pay) of one hour per day in order to facilitate breastfeeding or expressing breast milk. Part-time employees are entitled to breastfeeding breaks calculated on a pro rata basis. Employees must notify their supervisor that they wish to avail of such time off prior to their return to work. The one-hour break may be split into shorter periods of time totaling one hour.

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- 12.3. If an employee decides not to return to work following their maternity leave, they are required to give the company the adequate notice in writing which is outlined in their contract of employment.

### **13. Health and Safety Leave**

- 13.1. Keltech is obliged to assess any risk to an employee who is pregnant, has recently given birth, or who is breastfeeding. Such employees will not be placed in any job that is a risk to her health and safety or that of her child.
- 13.2. Where a risk is identified and cannot be removed from the work process, then Keltech will take the following steps to ensure that the relevant employee is no longer exposed to the risk:
  - 13.2.1. Temporarily adjust the employees working conditions or working hours; to the extend needed to avoid the relevant risk
  - 13.2.2. If the above is not feasible, the employee will be transferred to other suitable work where the risk does not exist.
  - 13.2.3. Where neither of the above steps are feasible the employee will be placed on health and safety leave.
- 13.3. Keltech will pay for the first 21 calendar days of health and safety leave, thereafter the employee may be entitled to benefit from the Department of Social Protection.
- 13.4. If the employee becomes aware that they are no longer vulnerable to the risk for which they have been granted health and safety leave, the employee is required to inform their supervisor in writing of the fact, as early as reasonably practicable.
- 13.5. Likewise Keltech will notify the employee in writing if the risk no longer exists or if suitable alternative work is available. In such instances the health and safety leave will expire seven days after receiving the notification to return to work.