

WORKFORCE CHANGE EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Policy/Procedure/Restructure	Neonatal Policy (Birth and Adoption)
Service	Human Resources
Date	August 2025
HR Support	Karen Warner

Overall purpose and aim of the project/restructure/policy	<p>Neonatal Policy for use at New Forest District Council. The policy has been created as a result of the legislative changes which came into force on 6 April 2025, requiring all UK employers to offer Neonatal Care Leave of up to 12 weeks with statutory pay where eligibility is met.</p> <p>The legislation outlining this includes Neonatal Care (Leave and Pay) Act 2023, Neonatal Care Leave and Miscellaneous Amendments Regulations 2025, and the Statutory Neonatal Care Pay (General) Regulations 2025.</p> <p>The policy clearly defines what is meant by neonatal care leave and pay, who is eligible for this, how the leave can be taken, its interaction with other forms of family leave and employee rights</p>
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Workforce profile affected by the change	- All staff who fulfil the eligibility criteria.
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<p>Information/evidence used in assessment</p> <p>Engagement and consultation where relevant (include dates)</p>	<p>Research from Bliss (charity for babies born premature or sick) – every year 90,000 babies are cared for in neonatal units in the UK because they have either been born prematurely (before 37 weeks or pregnancy) or full term (after 37 weeks) but sick. This means that around 1 in 7 babies born in the UK each year are admitted onto neonatal units.</p> <p>Research from National Maternity and Perinatal Audit (NMPA) (based on births between 1 April 2015 – 31 March 2018) - found that cases of babies being born small or early – are therefore more likely to require neonatal care, were significantly more likely if the birthing parent is Black or South Asian, or if they are born in the most deprived areas may need admission to a neonatal unit or to be stillborn.</p> <p>To produce this policy, the Brightmine draft policy was used as a foundation document. In May 25 the draft policy was shared with employee side, members of the employee forum, LGBT+ and the EDI staff group in .</p>
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	Communication of the policy is scheduled, together with agenda discussions to promote awareness at forthcoming LGBTQ+ and EDI group meetings.
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Change impact:

Equality Group	Positive Impact	Neutral Impact	Negative Impact	Rationale
Age				Age as a protected characteristic considered, and no impact found
Disability				No impact found
Sex				No impact found
Marriage and Civil Partnership				No impact found
Pregnancy and Maternity				<p>The legislation provides for two tiers of leave:</p> <p>Tier 1 is likely to be taken by an employee who are also taking paternity leave whereas Tier 2 is likely to be taken by those employees who are also taking maternity/adoption leave. This is because maternity/adoption leave starts when the child is born/placed with the adopter whereas paternity leave can be started at any time within the first 52 weeks of the birth/placement – there is more flexibility. As maternity/adoption leave cannot be put on hold the neonatal care leave (as taken in tier 2) is added to the end of the maternity/adoption leave.</p>
Race				No impact found
Religion and Belief				No impact found
Sexual orientation				No impact found
Gender reassignment				No impact found

On the evidence, if there is a negative impact, what steps will be taken to remove/minimise it

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Risk identified – link to legislation	Action to mitigate
None currently identified.	