

Menopause Policy

1. Introduction.

Menopause is the time in a menstruator's life when menstruation periods permanently stop. The purpose of this policy is to help you create an open and honest workplace where managers and employees can discuss any issues associated with the menopause, and to make sure the necessary support is known and offered to employees when they need it.

2. Effects of Menopause.

Physical symptoms of the menopause can include:

- hot flushes
- insomnia
- fatigue
- poor concentration
- headaches
- skin irritation
- urinary problems

As a result of the above, or as an extension of the hormone imbalance, individuals going through menopause can also experience psychological difficulties, including:

- depression
- anxiety
- panic attacks
- mood swings
- irritability
- problems with memory
- loss of confidence

It's also commonly acknowledged that Hormone Replacement Therapy, medication which is often prescribed for menopause, can have side effects which can cause problems at work. These include nausea, headaches and leg cramps.

3. Communication.

It is important that, as an employee, you prioritise your personal health and wellbeing. If you are struggling with any aspect of your role because of symptoms associated with the menopause, you should report any concerns you may have to your manager, who will treat the matter with complete confidence. To make sure we can give you the best support possible we encourage you to be open and honest in these conversations.

Alternatively, your manager may start a discussion with you if they notice a change in your behaviour or performance.

We understand that you may feel uncomfortable talking about personal information with your manager. If this is the case you're encouraged to discuss your situation with another Councillor, a representative of the HR Committee.

During any discussions, your manager will consider your individual situation and evaluate if any adjustments can be made. Your individual needs will be addressed sensitively, and everything will remain confidential.

Managers will also arrange follow up sessions to evaluate the effectiveness of any adjustments put in place.

4. Making adjustments to your role.

In order to assist you in your daily duties, your manager will explore making adjustments to your role or working environment with the aim of reducing the effect that the menopause is having on you. Risk assessments will be consulted to identify potential issues, but we acknowledge that menopause affects individuals in different ways, so no adjustment will be made without fully discussing it with you first.

Examples of adjustments include:

- changing your working location so you are closer to toilet facilities, away from hot and cold spots around the office or to ensure greater access to natural light.
- allowing changes to our normal rules on work wear.
- implementing further temperature control, such as access to a fan.
- assessing how work is allocated and whether you are affected at particular points of the day.
- allowing additional rest breaks.
- considering flexible working hours or allowing you to work from home.

Once the adjustments are agreed, they will be reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure they're having the required effect.

The Council is legally obliged by the Equality Act 2010 to make reasonable adjustments to an employee's role or working conditions if they have a disability that puts them at a disadvantage when performing their role, and we will ensure compliance with our obligations in this regard.

5. Training.

We ensure that all levels of management are trained on the effects of menopause, how to hold discussions with employees who are experiencing menopause, and adjustments that can be made to an employee's role in order to remove or lessen any effects the employee is experiencing.

This policy will be reviewed every two years.