

Time off for pregnancy appointments

By law, you have the right to reasonable time off with full pay for pregnancy-related ('antenatal') appointments and care before you have your baby.

You have this right:

- from your first day of employment if you're an employee
- whether you work full time or part time

The antenatal appointments need to be on the advice of a doctor, nurse or midwife and can include:

- scans
- pregnancy health checks
- relaxation classes, for example pregnancy yoga
- parent craft classes

5. If you work through an agency

You can get paid time off for antenatal appointments if you've worked through the same agency for at least 12 weeks.

What counts as reasonable time for an antenatal appointment

'Reasonable' time off for an antenatal appointment includes:

- the length of the appointment or class
- travel to and from it

If you have an appointment in the middle of a working day or shift, it's a good idea to talk with your employer about how long it'll take.

They might agree to flexible working, for example they might allow you to:

- work from home for the rest of the day if it'll take too long to get back to work
- change your start and finish times

Your employer cannot make you change an antenatal appointment to a different time if you do not want to.

If you do not want to tell your employer you're pregnant

If you're not ready to tell your employer you're pregnant yet, you can choose to take the antenatal appointment time as you would another medical appointment, for example to go to the doctor or dentist.

If your employer does not know it's a pregnancy-related appointment, they'll treat that time off as they would any other medical appointment. This means you might not get paid for it or you have to make up the time later, depending on your contract.

When your employer can ask for proof

After your first antenatal appointment, your employer can ask you for proof, for example an appointment card or an email confirming a class booking.

When your partner can get time off to come with you

Your partner has the right to time off work to come with you to 2 antenatal appointments. This time off is usually unpaid and is for a maximum of 6.5 hours for each appointment.