

## Planning maternity leave

Before maternity leave starts, you should agree with your employee the best way to keep in touch about important changes or news at work.

This includes arranging how you'll keep in touch. Try and agree a way of keeping in touch that's comfortable for your employee, for example you can ask them if they prefer email to phone calls.

By law you must tell them about:

- promotion or other job opportunities
- redundancies
- any reorganisation that could affect their job

You could also tell them about:

- social events
- colleagues who are leaving or joining
- arrangements for their return to work

It's a good idea to:

- let the employee decide how much contact they want, unless the contact is about things you must tell them about
- remind them they do not have to do any work during maternity leave

## 8. Keeping in touch days

You and the employee could have up to 10 optional keeping in touch days (KIT days) during the maternity leave, if both sides agree.

KIT days help employees stay in contact with their workplace, for example by joining training sessions or team meetings.

Both sides should agree the following before deciding KIT days:

- the work the employee will do on these days
- the pay (this cannot be below the [National Minimum Wage](#))

If an employee works part of a KIT day, it still counts as a full day.

If they work more than 10 KIT days, their maternity leave and pay automatically end.

### If they're taking Shared Parental Leave

As well as taking up to 10 KIT days, an employee taking Shared Parental Leave (SPL) might be able to take 20 extra days for keeping in touch.

These extra days are known as 'Shared Parental Leave in touch days' (SPLIT days).

[Find out more about Shared Parental Leave.](#)

## If they become pregnant on maternity leave

If the employee becomes pregnant while on maternity leave, they're entitled to another 52 weeks' maternity leave.

By law, the employee cannot start their next maternity leave until the 11th week before their baby is due. So if their first maternity leave ends before that point, they'll need to either:

- return to work until at least the 11th week before the baby is due
- see if they can stay off work by taking another type of leave (such as holiday leave) – it's up to you to decide if they can do this and they must give you the correct notice

## Employing someone else to do the work

You can choose to employ someone else to do the work ('maternity cover') while the employee is on maternity leave.

The maternity cover can be an existing or new employee.

Usually these roles are temporary with a fixed end date.

You must tell the person doing maternity cover what happens when their role ends. For example:

- if they're an existing employee, whether they'll go back to their previous role or to a different one
- if they're a new employee, whether their job will come to an end – if so you must end their contract fairly