



Most women find that it takes a while to adjust on returning to work. The first few days can be a mix of emotions as your employee and her colleagues go through the handover and reintegration process and settle back into a routine. The first day back sets the tone for how valued and motivated your employee will feel on returning to work.

Checklist for returning to work

- ✓ Before the end of maternity leave, discuss with your employee whether she would like to do a phased return to work – perhaps using KIT days, accrued holiday or a period of reduced hours working
- ✓ Confirm access to get into place of work, IDs and access to systems, etc. and inform payroll and HR
- ✓ Be there to welcome her on the first day and brief her on any changes in the workplace. Some managers/teams give a welcome back card
- ✓ Review whether there are any health and safety considerations to be taken into account
- ✓ Go through her back-to-work plan so she can resume her responsibilities, with her maternity cover if appropriate
- ✓ Discuss any changes to working hours and patterns and set review dates to check in with her to ensure the working pattern is working for her and for the organisation
- ✓ Ensure arrangements are in place to support breastfeeding or expressing if required
- ✓ Set new objectives (taking into account any change in hours or working pattern) and agree a date for two or three months after your employee's return to work to review them
- ✓ A weekly review or update during the first month is useful to understand what is working well and where to make adjustment to improve performance and wellbeing
- ✓ Ensure she knows about any support the organisation gives to employees whether through buddy systems, parent/family network groups, coaching or workshops
- ✓ Also ensure that she is aware of any childcare assistance, employee assistance programmes or other benefits that are available to her
- ✓ Ensure she knows about leave provision e.g. parental leave and time off for dependants
- ✓ Some women suffer from postnatal depression which may not manifest itself until many months after the birth. Ensure your employee knows of any health and wellbeing support the organisation offers

Please also see **Managing pregnancy and maternity: A checklist for managers.**

For further guidance on maternity, paternity and shared parental leave, please refer to Working Families' additional guides, model policies and checklists for line managers at workingfamilies.org.uk/employers.

For more information on pregnant women's statutory rights, go to: workingfamilies.org.uk, gov.uk and/or acas.org.uk.

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