### Policy on leave for fertility treatment (including IVF)

**Introduction**

The Company appreciates that it may be necessary for employees to take time off from work to undergo fertility treatment. We understand that this can be a difficult time for employees, both emotionally and physically, therefore we wish to make the process to request time off as smooth as possible. This policy sets out this process and the support the Company will offer employees in this situation.

This policy applies to employees of the Company including part-time and fixed-term employees. It does not apply to self-employed/ independent contractors or freelancers.

**Organisation’s responsibilities**

Managers will maintain an open door policy so that employees experiencing fertility problems feel comfortable approaching them if they need support or time off. They will support you to talk about your current situation and will not make presumptions about how it is affecting you.

If you need additional support at any stage of the process, we would encourage you to speak to [*signpost points of contact within the Company, i.e. occupational health or mental health first aiders*].

[*Optional:*] We have adopted the following measures to support employees in these circumstances [*insert measures such as introducing discounts for fertility treatments, free consultations with fertility experts and/or a fertility education programme*].

We maintain a zero-tolerance approach to bullying and harassment and will treat any and all complaints seriously. If you feel that you have been mistreated in any way by a colleague because of matters related to your fertility treatment, please make your concerns known to [*insert name or job title*].

**Your responsibilities**

So that your manager can fully consider your request, you should inform your manager of your request to take leave as soon as possible. All leave requests should be agreed in advance with your manager.

**Time off**

[*EITHER*]

We treat fertility related appointments in the same way as other medical appointments. This means [*insert normal rules here e.g. you are to inform your manager of the need to take time off, giving as much notice as possible. Where possible you should make your appointments as close to the start or end of your working day as possible in order to minimise the impact of your absence*.]

[*Insert payment arrangements for medical appointments e.g. Time off for medical appointments is unpaid*]

[*Optional:*] Employees whose partner has an appointment for a fertility discussion/procedure and wishes to accompany them [*may also take time off in accordance with our time off for medical appointment process OR may book annual leave which will be considered in accordance with our usual annual leave procedures*].

[OR]

You may take up to [*insert number*] hours’ paid leave for fertility appointments/treatment per cycle of treatment, subject to a maximum of [*insert number*] cycles during the length of your employment. Any time off required in excess of this amount, per cycle, is unpaid. Alternatively, you may decide to request annual leave.

In order to take this time off for fertility appointments, you should give your manager as much notice as possible of each appointment and produce evidence of the appointment.

This entitlement [*delete as appropriate – also applies to/does not apply to*] employees whose partners are undergoing fertility treatment and who wish to accompany them to appointments. [*Where it does not apply: Employees whose partner has a fertility appointment and wishes to accompany them (may also take time off in accordance with our time off for medical appointment process OR may book annual leave which will be considered in accordance with our usual annual leave procedures*].

[*Optional:*] The right to take this time off applies to employees with [*insert amount*] continuous service.

**Further support measures**

We may also consider flexible working arrangements such as temporary changes to your hours, home working or hybrid working (where you work some hours from your workplace and some hours from home or another location) for employees underdoing fertility treatment. Please speak to your manager if this is something you would like us to consider.

**Sickness Absence**

If you take sickness absence as a result of the impact of treatment, this will be treated under our usual sickness absence procedures, except where this absence occurs after embryo implantation. From this point, employees are legally classed as pregnant and as such, absence is classed as pregnancy related in which case it will be treated separately.

**If you become pregnant**

Should you fall pregnant following fertility treatment, you should refer to the Organisations Maternity policy for information regarding your rights. Once your manager is aware of the pregnancy, a risk assessment will be arranged taking into account your specific circumstances.

**[Optional:] Employee Assistance Programme**

We would like to remind you that, if you have any worries or concerns about any aspect of your situation, you have access to a confidential 24-hour telephone counselling service on [*insert details of Employee Assistance Programme*].