# Miscarriage

### Islington's decorative green swirlGuidance

## 1. Introduction

* 1. This guidance is intended to help managers provide appropriate practical and emotional support to an employee affected by miscarriage, ectopic or molar pregnancy (loss of a pregnancy before 24 weeks). It is based on a policy template supplied by the Miscarriage Association. To support an employee experiencing a loss after 24 weeks please refer to our [Maternity Leave Guidelines](http://izzi/library/Pages/HR-A-to-Z.aspx?AdditionalPath=/Maternity%20Guide) section 14 Still Birth.
  2. The guidance covers topics and issues that some readers may find difficult or upsetting. You may be a manager with your own experience of loss or an expectant parent managing someone that has experienced a loss.
  3. Miscarriage can be a frightening, lonely and traumatic experience, and is often both physically and emotionally painful, with effects that can last for a very long time. Everyone’s needs will be different. Some people may feel that they can continue to work as normal, while others may require more support. You may have your own experiences or opinions about the impact of miscarriage. Everyone will experience their loss differently, and it’s important not to make any assumptions about how they feel or how they want to be treated. See 5.6 for link to useful phrases and questions.

## If the loss occurs at work

* 1. A pregnancy loss may happen at work. You may not be aware that an employee is pregnant, as there is no obligation to share their pregnancy until 15 weeks before the estimated due date, or as soon as is reasonably practicable after then (approximately 6 months pregnant).
  2. If an employee suspects that they have started to lose their baby, they may have bleeding, severe abdominal pain, and may be faint or collapse. They may be very distressed and panicked, embarrassed and frightened.
  3. You can help by ensuring that they have very quick access to a toilet, and you may need to help them by calling their preferred contact or colleague to assist them in getting home or to hospital. In severe cases, you may need to call an ambulance.
  4. Please consider if a partner or relative is told of a pregnancy loss while at work, they may need to leave at short notice to provide practical and emotional support. This can be taken as annual leave or they can apply for five days paid Special Leave within our [Special Leave provision.](http://izzi/library/Pages/HR-A-to-Z.aspx?AdditionalPath=/Special%20Leave)

## 3. Recording leave and absence

* 1. Time off during and after a miscarriage is protected as ‘pregnancy-related’ leave. This means that any period of pregnancy-related sick leave will not count towards sickness absence trigger points. If an employee has suffered an early or late miscarriage, sick leave should be recorded as sickness absence in the ‘pregnancy-related’ category.
  2. Employees can self-certify sickness for the first week using the [Return to work and self-certification form](http://izzi/library/Pages/HR-A-to-Z.aspx?AdditionalPath=/Sickness%20Absence). For periods of absence longer than seven days, the employee will need to obtain a Fitness for Work statement from their doctor or health professional at hospital.
  3. Please note that employees who have had a miscarriage, may need time off in the future to attend appointments related to their loss, as additional scans and monitoring may be required. This can be taken as annual leave or they can apply for five days paid [Special Leave.](http://izzi/library/Pages/HR-A-to-Z.aspx?AdditionalPath=/Special%20Leave)
  4. Partners experiencing pregnancy loss may also need time away from work. As well as initially providing emotional support, in the future partners may attend appointments related to their loss, as additional scans and monitoring may be required. This can be taken as annual leave or they can apply for five days paid [Special Leave.](http://izzi/library/Pages/HR-A-to-Z.aspx?AdditionalPath=/Special%20Leave) Everyone will experience their loss differently, and it’s important not to make any assumptions about how they feel or how they want to be treated.

## Returning to Work

* 1. When an employee is ready to return to work, their manager will have a return to work meeting where any specific needs can be discussed. This might include a temporary workplace adjustment, which is aimed at enabling a person to remain at work rather than taking sick leave, like a phased return to work or working from home. This can be particularly important if an employee has ongoing hospital appointments to attend.
  2. It might also be very difficult for someone who has suffered a miscarriage to work closely with or near to a colleague who is pregnant or has recently given birth. If this is the case, it may be worth exploring whether working from home or in a different location within the office would be possible and helpful.

## Additional Support

* 1. Employee Assistance Programme

See our [EAP page](http://izzi/library/Pages/HR-A-to-Z.aspx?AdditionalPath=/Employee%20Assistance%20Programme) for access to six free counselling sessions and other support available

Call: 0800 243 458 or Visit <http://www.workplaceoptions.co.uk/member-login-2/>​

Client ID : islington

Password: employee

* 1. Our Mental Health Ambassadors (MHAs) are there to listen and offer support in a non-judgemental and confidential capacity

<http://izzi/council/councilnews/freetime/wellbeing/Pages/Mental-Health-Ambassadors-.aspx>

* 1. Also see our Wellbeing page link <http://izzi/council/councilnews/freetime/wellbeing/Pages/Wellbeing.aspx>
  2. Here is further guidance on bereavement within our izzi pages

<http://izzi/me/my-employment/workplace/absence-leave/Pages/bereavement.aspx>

* 1. [Miscarriage Association](https://www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk/information/miscarriage-and-the-workplace/employees-information-and-support/) for miscarriage support and advice

<https://www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk/information/miscarriage-and-the-workplace/employees-information-and-support/>

* 1. Miscarriage Association advice on supporting conversations with useful phrases and questions

<https://www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk/information/miscarriage-and-the-workplace/employers-and-managers-information-and-support/talking-about-miscarriage-in-the-workplace-a-guide-for-employers-and-managers/>