



HUMBERSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

# People & Development

## Fertility Treatment Policy

Owner	Executive Director of People & Development
Responsible Person	Head of Human Resources
Date Written	April 2023
Date of Last Review	N/A
Date of next review	April 2026
EIA Completed	April 2023



What we must  
do well



How we support our  
communities



We value and support  
the people we employ



We efficiently manage  
the Service

## CONTENTS

1. Introduction
  - Core Code of Ethics
  - National Guidance
2. Equality and Inclusion
3. Aim and Objectives
4. Associated Documents
  - Equality Impact Analysis
  - Legal References
  - National Guidance
5. Scope
6. Our Commitment To You
7. Requesting Support
8. Time Off if You Are Receiving Fertility Treatment
9. Time Off to Accompany a Person Receiving Fertility Treatment
10. Working Flexibly on a Temporary Basis
11. Quiet Place to Work
12. Access to a Fridge
13. Sickness
14. Implantation
15. Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

This policy sets out the time off that Humberside Fire and Rescue Service (HFRS) grants to employees who are undergoing fertility treatment and explains the support available to them.

Under this policy, fertility treatment includes:

- any form of assisted reproduction carried out by a registered medical practitioner or registered nurse (for example in vitro fertilisation (IVF), intrauterine insemination (IUI) and intracytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI)).
- any treatment carried out by a registered medical practitioner or registered nurse for the purpose of preserving fertility (for example freezing eggs, sperm, embryos or reproductive tissue).
- any medical examination or treatment in connection with the treatment mentioned above (for example blood tests, ultrasound scans, egg collection, sperm collection, embryo transfer).

### **Core Code of Ethics**

HFRS has adopted the Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services. The Service is committed to the ethical principles of the Code and strives to apply them in all we do, therefore, those principles are reflected in this Policy.

### **National Guidance**

Any National Guidance which has been adopted by HFRS, will be reflected in this Policy.

## **2. EQUALITY & INCLUSION**

HFRS has a legal responsibility under the Equality Act 2010 and a commitment to ensure it does not discriminate either directly or indirectly in any of its functions and services, nor in its treatment of staff in relation to race, sex, disability, sexual orientation, age, pregnancy and maternity, religion and belief, gender reassignment or marriage and civil partnership. It also has a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled applicants, employees and service users.

## **3. AIM AND OBJECTIVES**

This policy aims to provide guidance to managers and employees on how to support those employees who are undergoing IVF treatment and the assistance available to them. The Service is committed to providing an environment where staff feel supported. We recognise the physical and emotional stress that having fertility

treatment can have on employees and are genuinely committed to providing help where we can.

The policy does not form part of your contract of employment and we reserve the right to amend it at any time.

#### **4. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS**

- [Equality Impact Analysis](#)
- Legal References  
There are no specific legislative requirements relevant to this policy
- National Guidance  
There is no specific National Guidance relevant to this policy.
- [Absence Management Policy](#)
- [Maternity Policy](#)

#### **5. SCOPE**

This policy applies to employees of HFRS. It does not apply to workers, contractors, consultants or any self-employed individuals working for the organisation.

#### **6. OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU**

HFRS are committed to ensuring that all line managers are provided with adequate training so they are able to support individuals receiving fertility treatment.

#### **7. REQUESTING SUPPORT**

HFRS understand that working whilst undergoing fertility treatment can be incredibly challenging. If you are finding it difficult to cope at work when you are undergoing fertility treatment, you are encouraged to speak to your line manager. If for any reason you are unable to approach your line manager, you can speak to Occupational Health & Wellbeing (OH&W) or the Human Resources (HR) Team.

We urge you to be as open as possible about any particular issues that you are experiencing or adjustments that you need to ensure that you are provided with the right level of support whilst you are receiving treatment.

Any health-related information disclosed by you during discussions with your line manager or the HR department will be treated sensitively and in strict confidence.

## **8. TIME OFF IF YOU ARE RECEIVING FERTILITY TREATMENT**

If you are receiving fertility treatment, we will grant you paid leave to attend up to six appointments in any 12-month period.

You will qualify for time off under this policy if you have been continuously employed for at least 26 weeks.

To make a request for time off to attend a fertility treatment appointment, you should contact your line manager. You should give your line manager as much notice as possible of when you need the time off and, wherever possible, arrange your appointments outside your core hours/as near to the start or end of the working day as possible.

However, we understand that you may need to take time off at short notice to attend your appointments. We also understand that the amount of time you may need off for each appointment will depend on the nature of the appointment and the type of treatment that you are receiving and therefore we need to remain flexible.

We may ask you to provide proof of the date and time of your appointment.

If you need additional time off to attend any further appointments, this will be treated in the same way as other medical appointments. You may take the time off as annual leave, unpaid leave or, in some cases, we may agree a flexible working arrangement so that you can make up lost time by working additional hours at another time.

## **9. TIME OFF TO ACCOMPANY A PERSON RECEIVING FERTILITY TREATMENT**

If you have a qualifying relationship as set out below, with a person receiving fertility treatment, we will grant you paid time off to accompany that person at up to four appointments.

This could be you, if you are the spouse or civil partner of the person receiving fertility treatment, or you could be living with the person receiving fertility treatment in an enduring family relationship (as long as they are not your parent, grandparent, sister, brother, aunt or uncle). In addition, you will be eligible for the time off if you are the parent of any child born as a result of the treatment, or you expect to become the legal parent of any child which may be born as a result of the treatment under a surrogacy arrangement.

The fertility treatment appointment must have been made on the advice of a registered medical practitioner or registered nurse.

To make a request for time off to accompany someone to a fertility treatment appointment, you should contact your line manager. You may be asked for proof of

the date and time of the appointment and to complete a declaration to confirm that you are eligible for time off under this policy.

You should give your line manager as much notice as possible of when you need the time off and, wherever possible, ensure that any appointments are arranged outside your core hours/as near to the start or end of the working day.

However, we understand that you may need to take time off at short notice. We also understand that the amount of time that you may need off for each appointment will depend on the nature of the appointment and the type of treatment that the person that you are accompanying is receiving and therefore we need to remain flexible.

## **10. WORKING FLEXIBLY ON A TEMPORARY BASIS**

We recognise that for individuals receiving fertility treatment, the option to work flexibly on a temporary (rather than permanent) basis may be appropriate. For example, this could include working from home, hybrid working or changing your start and finish times. This is not a definitive list.

If you feel that you would benefit from a temporary change to your working arrangement on an ad hoc basis because you are undergoing fertility treatment, you should discuss and agree these with your line manager and HR Service Partner.

We will try to facilitate temporary flexible working arrangements wherever this is possible and will continue to review these to ensure they meet your needs.

## **11. QUIET PLACE TO WORK**

If you need a quiet space to take private calls or a place to take medication during working hours, you should speak to your line manager/the HR department who will try their best to accommodate this.

## **12. ACCESS TO A FRIDGE**

If you require access to a fridge during working hours to store medication, you should speak to your line manager who will arrange this.

## **13. SICKNESS**

We understand that there may be times in the course of undergoing fertility treatment when you may be unwell. There is no expectation on you to work if you are unwell because of side effects related to your fertility treatment.

Unless otherwise set out in your contract, if you are sick and unable to work, you should follow the procedure set out in the [Absence Management Policy](#).

You do not have to disclose that your absence is connected with fertility treatment if you wish to keep this private, however, we want you to feel that you can be open about the reason for your leave.

#### **14. IMPLANTATION**

HFRS will allow one day's paid leave for employees to undergo implantation, with any further time off taken as annual leave or unpaid leave. From the point of implantation of a fertilised ova, an employee is considered pregnant and has a statutory right to paid time off for antenatal appointments. For further information, please refer to our [Maternity Policy](#).

#### **15. EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME**

There are various organisations that provide help and support to those who are undergoing fertility treatment, including:

- Fertility Network UK, which provides a wide range of resources for those affected by infertility.
- British Infertility Counselling Association, which provides information about specialist fertility counsellors.
- Fertility Friends Support Forum, which is a forum community dedicated to infertility and fertility support.

Help and support is also available through our employee assistance programme (EAP). You can use our EAP to speak to an independent adviser on a confidential basis for emotional support or any issue that is troubling you. Access the EAP website [here](#).

**If you require any further guidance in relation to this policy,  
please contact the Human Resources team**