

## PERIOD AND MENOPAUSE POLICY

Date policy adopted: 01/06/2021

Review period: Ad hoc when a change to legislation or ESC process requires it and at least every four years

Date of last review: 02/10/2024

Date of next review: 31/10/2028

### 1. Purpose and Scope

The Commissioner (ESC) is committed to providing a safe and healthy working environment and aims to support all employees as far as reasonably practicable throughout all stages of their working lives. This includes a culture where employees experiencing problematic periods or menopausal symptoms get the support they need to manage their symptoms at work.

This policy applies to all employees regardless of working pattern or nature of employment contract. It will not apply to others carrying out work on behalf of ESC (agency staff, contractors etc) who will be governed by the contract under which they have been employed or contracted.

### 2. Implementation, monitoring and review of the policy

Overall responsibility for policy implementation, monitoring and review lies with ESC. Everyone covered by the scope of the policy is obliged to adhere to, and facilitate implementation of the policy. Appropriate action will be taken to inform all new and existing employees and others covered by the scope of the existence of the policy and their role in adhering to it. The policy will be reviewed at such times as legislation or a change to the ESC policy position requires it. The policy will be made available to the general public.

It is important that all employees have an understanding of the menstrual cycle and the menopause. This is not just an issue for those who experience them: everyone who works for ESC should be aware. There is often an impact on partners, families and colleagues too.

Showing commitment to employees who are affected can help remove the stigma and address the lack of awareness and knowledge about periods, the menopause and chronic conditions that cause painful or heavy periods, such as Endometriosis.

### **3. Senior Management Team Commitment**

The senior management team are committed to promoting a safe and healthy work environment and will provide support to anyone who is affected by problematic period or menopausal symptoms.

The senior management team will:

- take menstrual and menopausal wellbeing into account as part of its' consideration of overall wellbeing of employees;
- Create an environment in which colleagues can openly and honestly initiate conversations or engage in discussions about periods and the menopause, whether they, or someone they know, is experiencing difficult symptoms;
- Empower and enable those experiencing period-related or menopausal symptoms to discuss and ask for support and reasonable adjustments to continue to be successful in their role;
- Provide support where possible, including in conjunction with other policies such as absence, hours of work and annual leave, flexible working, remote working and equality and diversity.

### **4. Expectations**

Periods and the menopause can have a negative impact on someone's personal and working life. Although not everyone will suffer symptoms, supporting those who do will improve their experience at work. Creating an inclusive culture will encourage employees to ask for what they need, without fear of being judged.

It is expected that all employees:

- If experiencing problematic periods or menopausal symptoms, will give serious consideration to confiding in a member of the senior management team so that help and support can be provided. If no immediate practical help is required at that particular time, the member of the senior management can be aware and ready to provide support if and when it does become needed;
- Will give due respect to the subject and refrain from making jokes or comments that someone suffering in this way may find insensitive.

### **5. Breaches of the Policy**

The Equality Act 2010 states that it's illegal to discriminate against someone based on protected characteristics. These include age, gender reassignment, disability and sex, which can all be related to the menopause and its associated symptoms. Failing to provide support to someone experiencing the menopause can amount to discrimination under the 2010 Act.

Anyone making inappropriate comments about periods or the menopause will be investigated and may be subject to disciplinary proceedings under the disciplinary policy.

### Equality Impact Assessment

Does this policy comply with the general Public Sector Equality Duty (s149 Equality Act 2010)?

This policy applies to employees of ESC. Its impact was considered when drafting and it identifies the particular protected characteristic grouping who may positively benefit from it. We consulted with all employees prior to publication to identify and address any issues.

### Data Protection Impact Assessment

Have we considered any effect the policy may have on the collecting, processing and storing of personal data?

The records generated by this policy will contain personal data and may contain sensitive and special category personal data. Suitable retention and destruction policies are in place to manage this material.

### Information Security Impact Assessment

Have we considered the impact any policy may have on our cyber-resilience?

This policy should have no impact on our cyber-resilience.

### Records Management Impact

Have we considered the impact any policy may have on our ability to manage our records?

This policy should have no impact on our ability to manage our records.

Version	Description	Date	Author
1.0	First draft	01/06/21	Public Appointments Officer
1.1	Update to phone number	16/05/2023	Corporate Services Officer
1.2	Update to policy accessibility features and addition of a review period	02/10/2024	Human Resources and Facilities Officer