

Model letter for employers to acknowledge notification of maternity leave

The letter overleaf can be used as a template by an employer when he receives notification from an employee of her intention to take maternity leave. The letter relates only to the statutory levels of leave and pay.

The employer must respond to the employee **within 28 days of receipt** of her notification.

[Date]

Dear [name of employee],

Congratulations and thank you for telling me about your pregnancy and the date that your baby is due. I am writing to you about your maternity leave and pay.

As we have discussed, you are eligible to take up to 52 weeks' maternity leave (consisting of 26 weeks' Ordinary Maternity Leave and 26 weeks' Additional Maternity Leave). Given your chosen start date of [insert date], your maternity leave will end on [insert date].

If you want to change the date your leave starts you must, if at all possible, tell me at least 28 days before your proposed new start date or 28 days before [insert date leave starts] (your original start date), whichever is sooner.

If you decide to return to work before [insert date leave ends], you must give me at least 8 weeks' notice.

As we also discussed, you are eligible for 39 weeks' Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP). Your maternity pay will be £[insert amount] from [insert date] to [insert date] and £[insert amount] from [insert date] to [insert date].

OR

As we also discussed, you are not eligible for Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP). The form SMP1 (enclosed) explains why you do not qualify for Statutory Maternity Pay. You may, however, be entitled to Maternity Allowance. If you take this form to the Social Security office, Jobs and Benefits office, JobCentre or Incapacity Benefits Branch at [insert local details], they will be able to tell you more.

[delete either paragraph as appropriate].

As your employer, I want to make sure that your health and safety as a pregnant woman are protected while you are working, and that you are not exposed to risk. I have already carried out an assessment to identify hazards in our workplace that could be a risk to any new, expectant, or breastfeeding mothers. Now you have told me you are pregnant I will arrange for a specific risk assessment of your job and we will discuss what actions to take if any problems are identified. If you have any further concerns following this assessment and specifically in relation to your pregnancy, please let me know immediately.

If you decide not to return to work you must still give me proper notice. Your decision will not affect your entitlement to SMP.

If you have any questions about any aspect of your maternity entitlement, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me. I wish you well.

Yours sincerely