**Name of organisation**

**Menopause Policy**

**Approved on:**

**Next Review Date:**

**Introduction**

1. [name of organisation] is committed to the health, safety and wellbeing of its staff and aims to deal fairly and sympathetically with those who are experiencing menopausal symptoms. xxxx recognises that for someone experiencing symptoms, it can be a difficult and stressful time and that it is a very sensitive and personal matter which can greatly impact an individual’s work and home life.

**Scope**

1. This policy applies to all employees of xxxx.

**Principles**

1. The main aims of this policy are to:

* Define the terms ‘menopause’ and ‘perimenopause’, and describe common symptoms;
* Set out the rights of employees experiencing menopausal symptoms;
* Explain the support which is available to affected staff members, both the support offered by the organisation, and external support; and
* Explain the applicable procedure if symptoms lead to sickness absence.

**Definitions**

1. The menopause is a natural event for most people who menstruate during which they stop having periods and experience hormonal changes such as a decrease in oestrogen levels. It usually occurs between the ages of 45 and 55 and typically lasts between four and eight years. However, each person's experience will differ and menopausal symptoms can occasionally begin before the age of 40. Perimenopause, or menopause transition, begins several years before menopause. People who menstruate may start to experience menopausal symptoms during the final two years of perimenopause.
2. While symptoms vary greatly, they commonly include:

* hot flushes;
* night sweats;
* anxiety;
* dizziness;
* fatigue;
* memory loss;
* depression;
* headaches;
* recurrent urinary tract infections;
* joint stiffness, aches and pains;
* reduced concentration; and
* heavy periods.

1. Each of these symptoms can affect an employee's comfort and performance at work. The organisation has a duty to provide a safe working environment for all employees and therefore commits to ensuring that adjustments and additional support are available to those experiencing menopausal symptoms.

**Available support**

1. The organisation aims to facilitate an open, understanding working environment, providing menopause awareness training for line managers and Menopause Champions. **– examples, if applicable**
2. Employees who are finding it difficult at work because of menopausal symptoms, are encouraged at an early stage to inform [usually their line manager]. If for any reason an employee is unable to approach their Line Manager, then they can speak to xxxx. In making xxxx aware that they are experiencing menopausal symptoms, this will ensure that symptoms are treated as an ongoing health issue rather than as individual instances of ill health. Early notification will also help xxxx to determine the most appropriate course of action to support an employee's individual needs. All discussions on this subject will be kept confidential.

***Available adjustments***

***List all available adjustments – examples below***

1. *Temperature control*: The organisation strives to achieve a comfortable working temperature for employees.
2. [workplace] is equipped with an air conditioning system which can be adjusted, and cold water is available in each of the kitchen areas.
3. The organisation will allow flexibility within its dress code where reasonable.
4. *Flexible working:* The organisation recognises that difficulty sleeping is a common symptom of the menopause. To reflect this, as well as the impact of other common symptoms, we aim to facilitate flexible working wherever possible (it is important to remember that we do also offer a flexitime system for ad hoc changes to working hours). Requests for flexible working could include asking for:

* a change to the pattern of hours worked;
* permission to perform work from home;
* a reduction in working hours; or
* more frequent breaks.

1. Employees should discuss such requests with their line manager and the People Team. Depending on the circumstances, requests may be approved on a permanent or temporary basis. A formal flexible working request should be made under the Flexible Working policy.
2. *Quiet space*: There may be times when an employee experiencing menopausal symptoms may need a moment to themselves in a quiet space. [outline where quiet space is] This is a space for occasional use for any employee either experiencing menopausal symptoms, or who needs the space for any other reason.

***Employee health***

1. Where relevant, an employee experiencing severe symptoms may be referred to Occupational Health (OH).

**Other support**

1. There are a number of external sources of help and support including:

* [Menopause matters](https://www.menopausematters.co.uk/), which provides information about the menopause, menopausal symptoms and treatment options;
* The [Daisy Network](https://www.daisynetwork.org/) charity, which provides support for those experiencing premature menopause or premature ovarian insufficiency; and
* The [Menopause Café](https://www.menopausecafe.net/), which provides information about events where strangers gather to eat cake, drink tea and discuss the menopause.

**Sickness absence**

1. Severe menopausal symptoms may lead to sickness absence. In this case, the Sickness Absence Policy and Procedure will apply.

*Reporting the absence*

1. If an employee feels unwell and cannot come into work, they must telephone to notify [usually their line manager] or xxx in their absence as early as possible on the first day of absence and no later than 9.15am. It is reasonable for the organisation to ask to be kept updated on the employee’s situation, therefore, they must keep in contact with [usually their line manager] (during the first week of absence or as otherwise agreed) and as agreed on a regular basis thereafter.
2. If an employee is absent for more than seven calendar days, they must provide a medical certificate from a medical practitioner. Any medical certificates provided must cover all relevant absence dates. It may affect sick pay if certificates are not received on time or do not cover relevant absence dates.

*Recording the absence*

1. For an absence of 1-7 calendar days inclusive, a self-certification absence form must be completed on the employee’s return. It should be noted that seven calendar days includes those days on which the employee may not normally work e.g. weekends and public holidays.
2. A return to work interview will be conducted to allow the employee to discuss their absence with [usually their line manager]. During this meeting, their line manager will complete a Return to Work Form.