

COVID-19 – Guidance for Pregnant Staff -24 February 2022

Guidance taken from [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): advice for pregnant employees - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-pregnant-employees)

Updated 14 February 2022

1. Risk Assessment

All pregnant Federation staff must undertake workplace risk assessments with their Lead and Practice (s). The risk assessments must be undertaken as soon as an employee has notified her manager of her pregnancy.

There are 2 Federation risk assessments to be completed, one standard assessment and one COVID-19 specific, please see copies attached to accompanying email.

Once completed or updated, please return both to HR by email to be stored on the employee's HR record.

Where a significant health and safety risk is identified for pregnant workers, employers should adjust the working conditions or hours to remove the risk, where reasonably practicable to do so, or offer alternative work on the same terms and conditions.

If all practicable adjustments have been fully explored and this cannot be done, employers should suspend pregnant workers on full pay. This is in line with normal health and safety requirements in relation to pregnancy.

Where there is any doubt or divergence of opinion between the Federation/Practice/Lead and employee on the risk assessment and their safety within the workplace, please contact HR to arrange an occupational health assessment.

2. The following recommendations apply for pregnant women who are 26 weeks pregnant and beyond

Given the clinical data that suggest that risk of complications from COVID-19 increase from around 26 weeks' gestation, further considerations should be made from this stage. However, general advice on reducing risk of COVID-19 infection applies throughout the pregnancy.

Pregnant workers should be supported by their employer with appropriate risk mitigations in line with recommendations provided by the workplace risk assessment.

Employers should make sure the controls identified by a risk assessment for example adequate ventilation, good hygiene, and cleaning, are applied strictly.

Pregnant workers who continue to come into work should also consider taking lateral flow tests regularly.

However, Pregnant workers should continue working **only if the risk assessment advises it is safe to do so after suitable control measures have been put in place**. Pregnant workers should be involved in the risk assessment process and be satisfied that their continued working in the area does not put them or their baby at risk.

Where a significant health and safety risk is identified for pregnant workers, employers should adjust the working conditions or hours to remove the risk, where reasonably practicable to do so, or offer alternative work on the same terms and conditions. If this cannot be done, employers should suspend pregnant workers on full pay. This is in line with normal requirements.

Employers should also offer support by having individual discussions around pregnant workers concerns.

Some higher risk occupations such those with greater public contact to COVID-19 (including those in some health and care settings) may carry a higher risk of exposure to the virus. In health and care settings this may include working in specific higher risk areas or higher risk procedures as summarised in the guidance on infection prevention and control.

See

[Infection prevention and control for seasonal respiratory infections in health and care settings \(including SARS-CoV-2\) for winter 2021 to 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/infection-prevention-and-control-for-seasonal-respiratory-infections-in-health-and-care-settings-including-sars-cov-2-for-winter-2021-to-2022)

3. Do employees have to work from home at 26 weeks pregnant and beyond?

The above guidance would suggest it is no longer required for a Federation employee at 26 weeks pregnant and beyond to work from home as the default position.

As above whether the employee remains working in practice beyond 26 weeks is dependent on the outcomes of the risk assessment process. Pregnant workers should be involved in the risk assessment process and be satisfied that their continued working in the area does not put them or their baby at risk.

As at point 1, where there is any doubt or divergence of opinion between the Federation/Practice/Lead and employee on the risk assessment and their safety within the workplace, please contact HR to arrange an occupational health assessment.