

Pregnancy loss support at Bonnier Books UK

This guidance covers pregnancy loss and some employees may find this difficult or upsetting. You may be a manager with your own personal experience of loss or, an expectant parent managing a member of your team who has experienced a loss and we would encourage you to speak to your own line manager, a member of the HR team or any of the channels of support provided below.

In this guidance, we use the term 'pregnancy loss' to refer to all types of loss including miscarriage, termination (whether for medical reasons or personal choice), stillbirth and neonatal death. Our Maternity Policy has a separate provision for stillbirth and neonatal death.

Pregnancy loss affects women and their partners. Bonnier Books UK recognises that how an employer and colleagues respond to pregnancy loss can affect how well women and their partners cope with the loss and how soon each will feel able to return to work. The charity Tommy's (www.tommys.org) estimates that 1 in 4 pregnancies ends in loss, with many happening before a woman is even aware that she has become pregnant. This could mean that pregnancy loss happens before a woman has announced she is pregnant, and which may be one of the reasons why employees find it particularly difficult to ask for support from their employer.

At Bonnier Books UK, we are committed to sensitively support all employees who have been affected by pregnancy loss: we will maintain complete confidentiality; we will provide fully paid leave when this is needed, and we will offer flexible working arrangements to support employees back to work following their loss.

Pregnancy loss whilst at work

If you experience pregnancy loss whilst at work, please contact your line manager or a member of the HR team as soon as possible who will fully support you and help make arrangements for you to go home or for you to receive medical treatment.

Time off and returning to work

Grief and experiences and the time off needed to recover will be different for everyone. You have a right to keep your loss private if you choose. You can complete a self-certification form to cover your absence for the first seven days. For more than seven days of absence, you will need to obtain a medical certificate from your doctor; this can be sent on a confidential basis to a member of the HR team.

If you think it would help you to talk to us, we will offer you a confidential meeting before you return to help support you back to work. This meeting could be with your line manager or with a member of the HR team, or both.

During the meeting, we will ask you how much time you need before you return to work. We will also ask you what, if anything, you would like your colleagues to know and how you would like this communicated. We can help you with what to say to colleagues about what has

happened. Again, if you would like to keep your loss private, we will maintain complete confidentiality and we can help you decide how to respond to colleagues if you are asked.

Going back to work can feel daunting and you may be concerned about how you will cope, both mentally and physically. We hope that by offering you the opportunity to discuss your concerns with us before your return, you will feel better supported. We will ask you if there is a particular issue you are concerned about and whether your normal working pattern could be adjusted in the short-term to help you manage your return to work.

Further support

Tommy's support all forms of loss www.tommys.org and have specialist midwives who can be contacted on midwife@tommys.org or on 0800 0147 800

Further information about miscarriage and help with returning to working life following miscarriage can be found at www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk. There is also information for colleagues, which aims to help everyone understand how we can offer support to colleagues, following pregnancy loss.

The Ectopic Pregnancy Trust support people who have experienced an ectopic pregnancy (a specific type of early pregnancy complication) <https://ectopic.org.uk>

ARC is a national charity who help people through ante natal screening and its consequences <https://www.arc-uk.org/>

Bonnier Books UK provides a free, 24-hour counselling service through our employee assistance programme (available to all of us and members of our immediate family aged over 16 and living with us at our home address). To contact this confidential service, please call 0800 328 1437 (www.employeeassistance.org.uk).

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