



Fertility Treatment Policy

Who & Why

Channel 4 wants to be a supportive workplace that respects different family planning choices and makes it easier for employees to access reproductive healthcare. We also want to create an understanding and empathic culture. This policy explains what support is available to employees who are managing their fertility journey while balancing their work commitments.

This policy applies to all Channel 4 employees. It is not part of any employee's contract of employment and we may amend it at any time.



Fertility Policy

The important bits

Channel 4's commitment

Channel 4 is committed to supporting employees through fertility treatment. We want to raise the awareness of all employees, so they can better understand the experiences of colleagues, even when they haven't disclosed their situation.

We have a zero-tolerance policy for negative comments or jokes about fertility, infertility or fertility treatments, to make sure our work environment is a welcoming and respectful place for everyone.

What is fertility treatment?

Fertility treatment means medical interventions or procedures designed to help individuals or couples who are having difficulty conceiving a child naturally. Fertility treatments can help with a variety of issues that can affect either partner, or the cause can be unknown. Fertility treatments range from simple options, like medication, to more complex procedures, like assisted reproductive technologies (ART).

In this policy, fertility treatment includes:

- any form of ART carried out by a registered medical practitioner or registered nurse (for example, in vitro fertilisation (IVF), intrauterine insemination (IUI) and intracytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI))
- any treatment carried out by a registered medical practitioner or registered nurse for the purpose of preserving fertility (for example, freezing eggs, sperm, embryos or reproductive tissue)
- any medical examination or treatment in connection with any treatment mentioned above (for example, blood tests, ultrasound scans, egg collection, sperm collection, embryo transfer)

Leave for fertility treatment

We know that asking to take time off during fertility treatment can be difficult. While we encourage you to speak openly with your manager, we know it might not always be easy.

Channel 4 offers up to 10 days of paid leave for fertility treatment-related appointments or personal matters. You can use this time flexibly, such as taking half days or spreading it over several days. You don't need to explain why you need to take time off – just tell your manager it's for a personal or medical appointment. But like with all leave, please give as much notice as you can. If you need more than the 10 days leave, please speak to your



manager or to the [People Partnering Team](#) who will support you and discuss any adjustments that might help.

The really important bits

Temporary adjustments

Fertility treatment can be stressful, so it's important to talk to us about any issues you're having or any adjustments you need. This helps you get the support you need, like flexibility in your working arrangements or temporary adjustments to your role and responsibilities.

We know that temporary flexible working, such as working from home or adjusting your hours, may be helpful during fertility treatment. Any arrangements should be reviewed regularly, and if you need to make the changes permanent, you should speak with your manager and consider submitting a formal request. Any health-related information you share during discussions with your manager or a member of the [People Partnering Team](#) will be treated sensitively and in strict confidence.

Support and related policies

Internal information and support

Channel 4 wants to create an understanding working environment where all employees feel safe to be open. We encourage you to talk to your manager about your fertility treatment so that they can arrange support. If you don't feel comfortable discussing it with your manager, you may find it helpful to have a confidential conversation with:

- their [People Partner](#)
- [4Womxn](#) (Speak them about Fertility Champions and what support they can offer)
- a trusted colleague
- a [Mental Health First Aider](#)
- [4Mind co-chairs](#)
- [4Parents&Carers co-chairs](#)

The [Employee Assistance Programme \(EAP\)](#) provides free 24-hour access to a qualified advisor. They offer counselling, wellbeing support, financial support and support with relationships and family life. You can access the EAP through [Your4](#).

Channel 4 have also partnered with [Hertility](#), to provide all Channel 4 employees, their partners, children and loved ones, with a [hormone and fertility test](#). It includes a comprehensive online health assessment, an at-home blood sample kit and, after analysis, the blood test results and a report from a private gynaecologist.



If you experience pregnancy loss, please read the [Pregnancy Loss Policy](#) to find out about how you can be supported.

Other policies that might help are:

[Family Policies: Guidance Document](#)

[Adoption Policy](#)

[Exceptional Leave Policy](#)

[Flexible Working Policy](#)

[Holiday Policy](#)

[Maternity Policy](#)

[Neonatal Policy](#)

[Unpaid Parental Leave Policy](#)

[Family/Parental Policy](#)

[Sabbatical Policy](#)

[Shared Parental Leave Policy](#)

[Sickness Absence Policy](#)

[Work from Another Location Policy](#)

External information and support

[Fertility Network UK](#) has a wide range of resources, including information on funding for those affected by infertility.

[British Infertility Counselling Association](#) has information about specialist fertility counsellors.

[Fertility Friends Support Forum](#) is a community dedicated to infertility and fertility support.

Frequently asked questions (FAQs)

I need to take medication while I'm at work. What should I do?

We recommend administering medical treatments, like hormone injections, at home. If you need to take medication when you're at work, talk to your manager about changing your schedule. You can find information about [wellbeing rooms](#) for calls or to take medication on MOSS.

Can I take time off when my partner is getting fertility treatment?

If you have a qualifying relationship with a person receiving fertility treatment, you can take paid time off to accompany them to their



appointments. A qualifying relationship includes, a spouse or civil partner, being the chosen family member of the person receiving fertility treatment or if you live with the person receiving fertility treatment

What do I do if I've been suffering side effects from the treatment?

If you're unwell because of fertility treatment, follow your medical professional's guidance. You can either work with modifications or take time off. If you can't work, follow our [Sickness Absence Policy](#), including for medical appointments, treatments and recovery. There's no expectation for you to work if you're unwell because of treatment side effects. You don't need to give the reason for your absence if you prefer to keep it private. But we want you to feel that you can be open about the reason for your leave, so that we can discuss any adjustments that might help.

The fertility treatment has been successful. What happens next?

You can take time off if you're the parent of a child born as a result of the treatment, or if you expect to become the legal parent of a child that may be born as a result of the treatment under a surrogacy arrangement. From the point of implantation of a fertilised ova, an employee is considered pregnant and has a statutory right to paid time off for antenatal appointments. Please read our [Family Policies: Guidance Document](#) for more information.

I've just found out the fertility treatment has not been successful. Do I have to come straight back to work?

We understand the emotional impact that unsuccessful fertility treatment can have on individuals and their families. If your fertility treatment is not successful, you can take paid time off as compassionate leave so you can grieve and process your experience. You don't need a formal sick note for this leave.

Will you keep details of my fertility treatment on file?

When we handle any request under this policy, we process all personal data collected in line with our data protection policy and our policy on processing special categories of personal data. We only record the personal information we have to and keep it for only as long as we need to.

Policy owner	People Team
Approved by	[REDACTED]
Date of next review	Within 3 years