

Employment Information - Health and Wellbeing

Periods in the Workplace

Guidance for Managers and Employees @ March 2026

Purpose

We promote an inclusive environment where employees can openly engage in conversation relating to health and wellbeing.

Employees should feel encouraged and supported to discuss anything that may have an impact on their health and wellbeing, when they feel the need to. Therefore, it is important that Managers and employees have an awareness of periods to support employees and work proactively to make reasonable adjustments as necessary.

It should be noted that people who identify as non-binary, transgender and intersex may also experience symptoms of menstruating.

Definitions

Periods

A period is part of the menstrual cycle where bleeding occurs. Periods can last between 3 and 8 days and most commonly happen every 28 days, however it is worth noting that for some individuals these may be more irregular and last longer than average.

Changes in body hormone levels before a period can cause physical and emotional changes, and this is known as PMS (premenstrual syndrome) or PMT (premenstrual tension).

There are many possible [symptoms of PMS](#), including:

- Abdominal and/or pelvic cramping
- Lower back pain
- Mood swings and irritability
- Headaches
- Fatigue/tiredness
- And in some cases, can lead to anaemia

Responsibilities

[Health and Wellbeing](#) is everyone's responsibility - we all have a role to play.

Coping with symptoms in the workplace can be hard, as many employees find it difficult to talk about periods at work. This short video about having a [Wellbeing Conversation](#) may help when having a sensitive conversation.

As an **employee**, you are expected to:

- Take reasonable care of your own health and wellbeing
- Raise any concerns you have with your line manager
- Openly and honestly discuss any reasonable adjustments needed
- Seek medical advice from your GP if symptoms begin to affect your ability to carry out your role

As a **line manager** of an employee experiencing periods at work or of a partner or colleague impacted by the experiences of another, you are expected to:

- Have open and honest discussions about health and wellbeing.
- Provide opportunities for discussions, such as one to one conversations
- Discuss reasonable adjustments
- Don't make assumptions about symptoms, as no one personal experience is the same
- Seek advice from HR or Occupational Health, as required

As a **colleague** of an employee experiencing period symptoms at work, you are expected to:

- Support colleagues
- Understand any reasonable adjustments that may be put in place to support an employee as a result of period-related symptoms

Reasonable Adjustments

Simple changes to an employee's role or working environment can help ensure that period symptoms do not become a barrier to performance or attendance at work.

Several practical solutions can be implemented to ensure the working environment is more comfortable:

- Check if windows can be opened for more ventilation
- A temporary change to the seating plan
- Desk fans
- A short walk outside when necessary
- Reduce work pressure by recognising challenging situations and discussing how these can be avoided or managed differently to minimise pressure.
- Discuss temporary [flexible working](#) – such as changes to start/finish times, working pattern or occasional/regular homeworking (if available)
- Access to change/shower facilities where available

This list is not exhaustive, nor does it provide a 'one-size' solution, everyone's experience including their symptoms, will be different.

As a line manager, it is important to listen to those experiencing period symptoms and respond sympathetically to any requests for adjustments at work.

Other Sources of Information and Support

For further support and advice, please contact Human Resources on HR@pkc.gov.uk

Or check out the following sources of support:

- [NHS](#) – Periods; PMS (premenstrual syndrome); Period problems
- [Reusable Menstrual Products](#)
- [Women's Wellbeing Club – Perth](#) – Is a peer to peer community support group run for women by volunteers. #TogetherStronger