



How to Guide Managing Family Leave

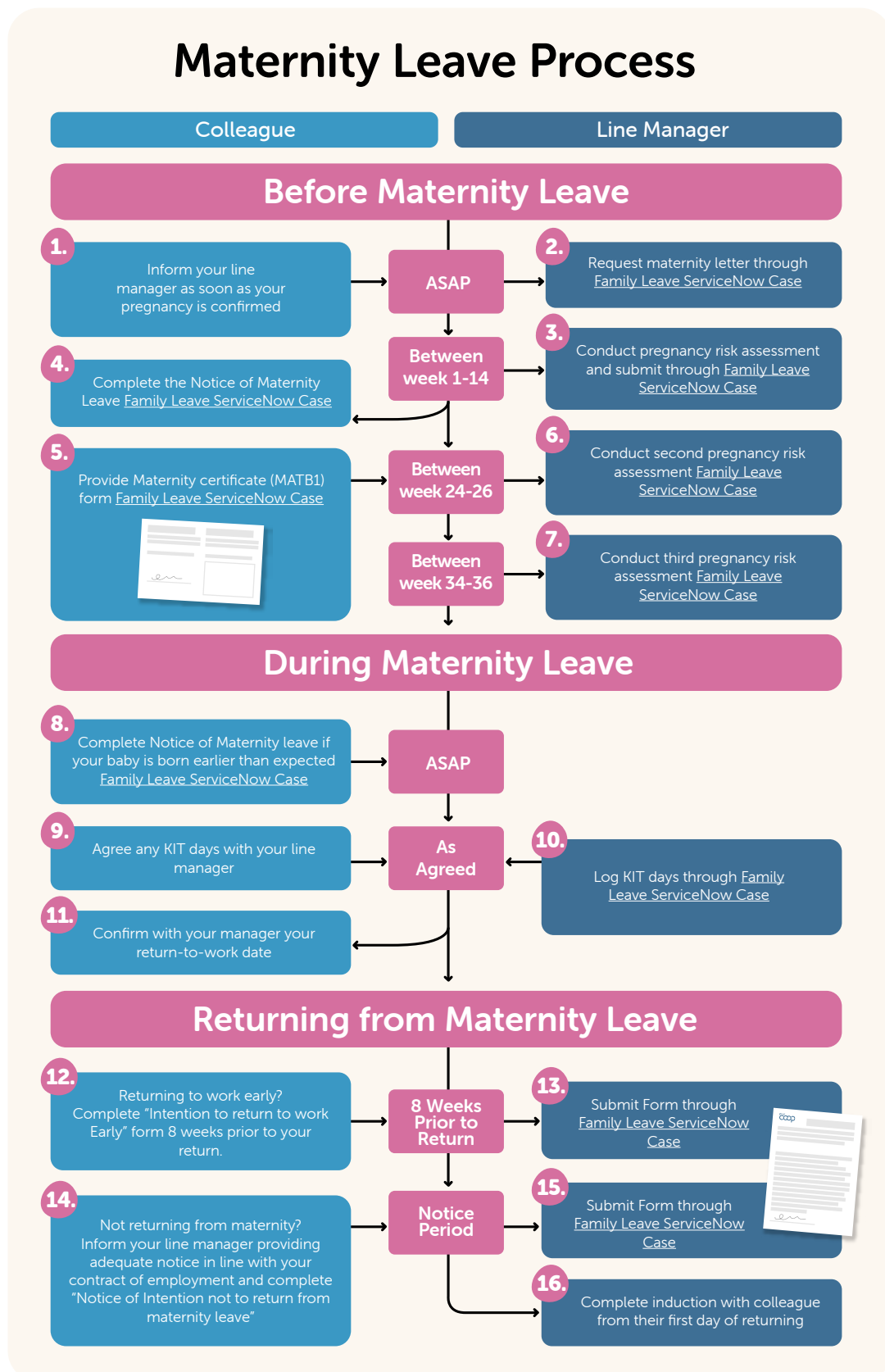
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The purpose of this how to guide

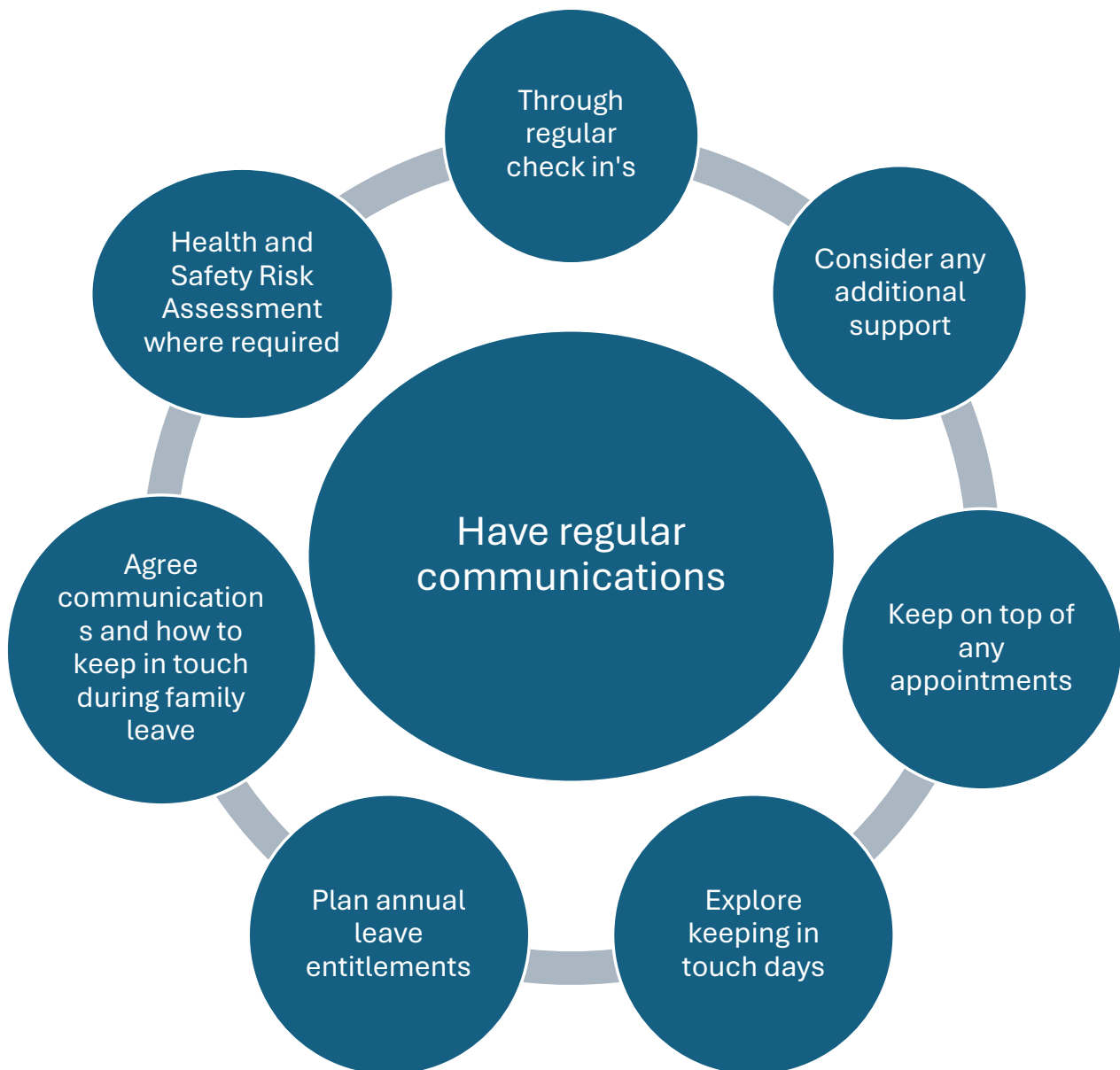
The purpose of this how to guide is to provide you with guidance to help you manage and support colleagues in the lead up, during and when a colleague returns from family leave, ensuring the best experience for you and your colleague.

This how to guide is best used alongside the Family Leave Policy [Family Leave Policy](#).



Preparing for Family Leave

Family leave can be quite an isolating feeling, new systems, new colleagues, and a new dynamic can make them feel quite out of the loop. Whilst it's important to give new parents space and time, it's equally important to make them feel included in changes and updated on what's going on at work.



Possible annual leave arrangements to explore:

- Take leave before family leave.
- Take a block of leave at the end of family leave.
- Use annual leave to create a phased return to work.
- Take separate blocks of leave after a period upon return.
- Arrange to carry over any unused annual leave to the next leave year.

Examples of types of appointments

- GP, midwife and hospital appointments
- Antenatal or parenting classes if they've been recommended by a doctor or midwife.
- Adoption appointments arranged by the adoption agency.

During Family Leave

Keep in touch as you agreed prior to the family leave period, this may change during the leave period depending on the individual circumstances.

Inform your colleagues about any:

- promotion or other job opportunities,
- redundancies, or
- reorganisations that could affect their job.

Keeping in touch days

- Schedule these carefully to ensure it benefits the colleague and the Society and be clear on the arrangements of the day.
- KIT day work related activities could include:
 - training, conferences, meetings and 'any activity undertaken for the purposes of keeping in touch with the workplace'.
- Use the opportunity to update colleagues about workplace and Society wide developments.
- Explore any family friendly Society benefits.
- Provide a warm welcome and arrange time for colleagues to reengage with their team members.

Did you know?

Colleagues can work up to 10 keeping in touch days during maternity or adoption leave without ending their leave or losing their statutory maternity pay.

Colleagues on Shared Parental Leave can work up to 20 Shared parental leave in touch dates, which are in addition to the 10 keeping in touch days.

Returning from Family Leave

Be ready to welcome your colleague back to work and plan a smooth return.

Please note if a colleague would like to return to work at a different date than previously specified, they need to notify the Society!

Here is an example induction schedule for your returning colleague

Day	Task	Activity	Owner	Completion date
Before return	Plan return date and first week with colleague	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree return date • Agree return circumstances • Confirm arrangements for first day • Identify any specific induction requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Society policy review - Health and Safety - Society online learning - Refresher training - Reconnect with the team - Role handover • Practical support – i.e. breastfeeding • Wellbeing support • Plan any system or technological access required • Schedule reintroductions and introductions for any new team members 	Manager	Before the colleague is due to return
Day 1	Welcome	1st day Catch up – Welcome – refresh on any specific workplace logistics, and relevant changes Check on wellbeing and support available Equipment/access set up Conduct Health and Safety risk assessment	Manager colleague team members	
Day 2	Handover	Begin handover of work and review role responsibilities and objectives		
Day 2 - 10	Introductions	Scheduled catch ups with each team member and appropriate colleagues		
Day 5	Check in	Check in on first week	Manager	
Day 10	Check in	Check in on second week		
End of first month	Check in	Check in on first month	Manager	

Handling sensitive conversations – Neonatal Care and Baby Loss

It can be difficult to know what to do or say when a colleague has experienced pregnancy or baby loss, often finding the right words of support is difficult.

Support colleagues with compassion and sensitivity!

Grief is unique and everyone will experience it differently so it's important not to assume how a person may think, feel or what they might need at work. Some people worry that showing emotions at work is not "professional", however we are all human and sometimes this will happen. If a colleague is tearful or upset, allow them space to feel what they feel without judgement, and listen supportively.



**Free and Confidential Support**
Call the 24/7 Helpline
08088 021122
or visit [groceryaid.org.uk](https://www.groceryaid.org.uk)


Grocery are here to offer you support, guidance, and a compassionate ear as you navigate this difficult time. You're not alone – our completely free and confidential services are here to help you.

Types of assistance include:

- Legal Advice
- Telephone Information Specialists
- Counselling Support
- Financial Grants
- Online Financial Hub

Call the Helpline any time of the day or night or click here to learn more about our services.

Additional Resources

Reminder– this document should be used in conjunction with the Society family leave policy

Additional Society policies that may be relevant include, but are not limited to:

- Flexible working policy
- Agile working policy
- Annual leave policy
- Special leave policy
- Career break policy
- Mental health and wellbeing policy
- Health and safety policies
- Emergency leave policy

Guidance documents

- [People managers guides](#)
- Checkin toolkits and guides for [colleagues](#) and [managers](#)
- [Family Leave and additional policy forms](#)

Advice and Family Leave Management channels

- Please submit a payroll service now case for any payroll queries
- Please submit a HR service now to log and manage any new and existing family leave cases

[Service Now](#)

- **For any additional guidance please contact** HR.Advice@midcounties.coop.