

Template letter for HR/your employer to encourage formal engagement with pregnancy loss

Introduction

Writing to Human Resources (HR) or your employer can be an effective way to advocate for change regarding the issue of pregnancy loss within your organisation. Communicating with HR/management is an appropriate course of action if you have encountered challenges related to existing company policy (or often in this case, the absence of policy), and/or believe that adjustments to practice is necessary.

HR and management may not always be aware of issues unless they are highlighted by employees. By directing attention to pregnancy loss, you are facilitating the opportunity for improvement. However, in doing so, it can feel exposing, and you may feel vulnerable. We advise that you request confidentiality and clarify the boundaries of your role. Some employees may be happy to attend meetings, establish a working group or advisory board, for example. Others may prefer to inform their employer about the issue and then take a step back. The level of involvement is entirely up to you and it's paramount that you feel comfortable. Below you can find a template letter which you can adapt as appropriate. Initiating conversation about pregnancy loss at work can be daunting, however, by providing this template, we hope it will assist you to navigate the discussion more easily.

In brief, communication with HR/management should:

- Be formal in tone.
- Introduce who you are, your role and department.
- Summarise the issue and implications should change not occur.
- Specify possible solutions.
- Provide resources.
- Include your preferred contact, involvement and plan of action.

Letter/email template:

Dear [HR Manager's Name] or To Whom it may concern,

I hope this email finds you well. My name is [your name]. I work in [your department] in the role of [job title]. I am writing to inform you about an important issue which I believe needs to be formally addressed and supported by our organisation/company [delete as appropriate].

Early pregnancy loss (pregnancies that end before 24 weeks' gestation), is sadly very common and affects many employees, including those who experience the physical loss and their partners. Statistics indicate that one in four pregnancies end in loss, with one in five ending specifically in miscarriage. The experience of miscarriage, in its various forms, often has profound emotional effects and is linked to increased risk of mental health illnesses. It is often experienced as a form of bereavement, and commonly involves significant physical implications.

The effects of pregnancy loss extend beyond the personal lives of affected employees; significantly influencing their professional lives too. In the absence of workplace support, many employees are left to navigate pregnancy loss alone and may even encounter discrimination, resulting in them leaving their organisations. Notably, research conducted by the CIPD in 2022 revealed that only 25% of employees experiencing miscarriage were granted paid leave, and similar numbers considered leaving their workplace. Research by Miscarriage UK found that 10% of employees left their organisation entirely due to a lack of support.

The issue also affects employers. Research suggests that in the absence of formal recognition of miscarriage, workplaces likely experience:

- Reduced engagement and productivity.
- Reduced employee well-being.
- Increased absenteeism and presenteeism.
- Increased turnover of staff.
- Increased legal action and costs.

In the UK, pregnancy loss is recognised as a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. As such, employers have a legal obligation to provide support to affected employees. Neglecting to offer appropriate support may lead to legal disputes and associated costs, as well as reputational damage, for the organisation. Providing robust workplace support is essential for employees and employers.

There are several strategies that our organisation can adopt and implement, and I would like to draw your attention to work by [Miscarriage UK](#), which helps workplaces to formally support early pregnancy loss. Firstly, they provide policy guidance along with a template. The benefits of policy implementation are numerous, including ensuring legal compliance, consistency and minimising stigma. A formal policy establishes clear guidelines for both managers and employees, informing both of rights and entitlements.

Nonetheless, a policy should be implemented as part of a wider company initiative. Therefore, Miscarriage UK has created the [Pregnancy Loss Pledge](#), which all employers are encouraged to sign to show their support for this important cause. By signing the pledge, our organisation can affirm its commitment to supporting the countless employees navigating this distressing and significant life event.

In brief, the Pledge calls for employers to implement a Pregnancy Loss Policy, and to provide training for staff on this vital topic. Miscarriage UK offers this specialist training (further details can be found [here](#)). This training equips managers with the necessary skills to respond sensitively to pregnancy loss. Additionally, Miscarriage UK has created a free [workplace hub](#) that contains a wealth of information for managers, HR professionals, and colleagues.

An increasing number of workplaces are officially acknowledging the impact of pregnancy loss on their employees. Miscarriage UK have collaborated with several organisations, including Channel 4 and Co-op, to address this important issue. By engaging with the topic of pregnancy loss, our organisation can:

- Showcase dedication to employee wellbeing.
- Encourage a culture of openness and transparency.
- Retain talent.
- Demonstrate their innovative stance.
- Foster a positive and engaged workforce.

I recommend that our organisation signs Miscarriage UK's Pledge, implements a Pregnancy Loss Policy and provides organisation-wide training on the topic. As noted, in doing so employees and the employer benefit. Should you require any additional information, or wish to discuss the details of this matter, I am happy to be contacted via [preferred contact method, e.g., email, telephone, or in-person].

Thank you in advance for your response and for taking the time to consider this crucial subject.

Best wishes/Your sincerely,

[Your name]