

Tips for Creating a Menopause Policy



Women of menopausal age make up the fastest growing demographic of the US workforce. Traditionally, those going through menopause have faced a lack of support, awareness and inclusivity in the workplace, leading to 1 in 4 considering leaving their job due to menopause. 1 in 10 actually do.

But as gender-specific health and wellbeing needs are becoming a higher priority for employers, it has become increasingly important for organizations to ensure they are supporting everyone at every life-stage, including menopause.

By implementing a menopause policy at work, you can help to ensure that all employees feel supported by both the organization and their colleagues during this potentially challenging time - and that these individuals are treated fairly in the workplace.

Who are menopause policies for?

The aim of a menopause policy is to support all staff experiencing menopausal symptoms (including some trans men and non-binary people) and to help colleagues and line managers understand how they can support employees experiencing such symptoms.

Why are menopause policies important?

Menopause is experienced by those born with ovaries, usually between the ages of 45-55; some can experience it earlier than this, however, due to 'premature ovarian insufficiency', medical interventions or surgery. Symptoms can have a huge effect on an individual's experience and performance at work. Therefore, policies are essential to ensure companies provide an inclusive and supportive working environment for all people experiencing menopause.

These policies should be designed to empower people to ask for adjustments to help manage their symptoms (without any embarrassment) and to enable open conversations between all employees, line managers, HR teams and leaders, contributing to an inclusive work culture.





How to write a menopause policy

There is no standard format to a menopause policy, however, the following will provide a good baseline for developing an effective policy document:

- **Definitions** - Include a definition and brief explanation of what menopause is and how it can affect individuals differently. Include examples of the types of symptoms that can often be experienced.
- **Relevant law** - Outline the legislative provisions relating to health, safety, discrimination and equality in the context of employees going through menopause and how this can impact them at work.
- **Roles and responsibilities** - Any employee experiencing menopausal symptoms has a responsibility for their own health and wellbeing and should feel able to have open conversations with their line manager. Managers should also be open to discussions around menopause and putting in place appropriate adjustments for optimum support. HR should act as an intermediary, as well.
- **Available support** - Provide details of the different arrangements that you have in place for those going through menopause with examples of what workplace adjustments can be made to support them. Outline the pathway of support on your organization. For example, do you have menopause champions, peer group support or 'allies', and is it clear where to turn for support? In addition, you should set out a number of self-help options, such as diet, exercise or other healthy lifestyle choices, and signpost employees to external organizations for further information.
- **Flexible working measures** - Signpost colleagues to any flexible working measures in place, such as:
 - more breaks and time away from their computer
 - flexibility to work in other areas of the building when in the office
 - a request to reduce working hours on a temporary basis
- **Points of contact** - List out the people within your organization with whom employees can discuss their support options. Ideally, you should have options for people to approach, i.e. both a line manager and a member of HR. Menopause and wellbeing champions should be nominated in the workplace to help raise awareness and tell staff where they can find more information.
- **Link to further information** where employees can go for additional advice and support.

