

Reference No: E109/294/73; **Date:** 26/06/81

Circular 27/1981:- Maternity Leave

A Dhuine Uasail

I am directed by the Minister for Public Service to say that he has accepted a recommendation made by the General Council that the following arrangements should apply to women civil servants going on maternity leave after 5 April 1981. Circular 4/75 is hereby revoked.

2. (a) Maternity leave will consist of 14 consecutive weeks.
- (b) During maternity a woman will be entitled to full pay less any social welfare allowance payable on foot of her social insurance.
- (c) A woman who is (or was) fully insured under the Social Welfare Acts and who fulfils certain contribution conditions is entitled to maternity allowance from the Department of Social Welfare. As indicated at (b) any such allowance paid to her will be deducted from pay. Information about this allowance is available from Personnel Units in Departments/Offices.
- (d) Maternity leave will be available to all women civil servants except those employed
 - on a permanent basis for less than 18 hours in each week, or
 - under a contract of employment, or otherwise, for a fixed term of either less than 26 weeks or of which there are less than 26 weeks to run.
- (e) A woman who intends to go on maternity leave should produce a medical certificate confirming pregnancy and stating the expected week of confinement. The certificate must be submitted at least 4 weeks before the date on which she intends to go on maternity leave. If a woman who intends to claim maternity allowance under the Social Welfare Acts fails to submit a medical certificate in time she may lose entitlement to maternity allowance from the Department of Social Welfare.
- (f) Paid maternity will count as service in all respects.
- (g) Maternity leave will be granted irrespective of an officer's sick leave record and will not reckon as sick leave.
- (h) A minimum period of maternity leave must be taken, beginning not later than 4 weeks before the end of the expected week of confinement and ending not earlier than 4 weeks after the end of the expected week of confinement.
- (i) Subject to the normal regulations sick leave may be allowed during pregnancy.
- (j) At the end of maternity leave a woman may, on application, be allowed up to 4 weeks special leave without pay and/or any annual leave to which she is entitled at the time. Sick leave following maternity leave may be allowed within her normal entitlement where she is certified unfit for work due to illness, whether or not the illness is connected with the confinement. In line with normal sick leave regulations such sick leave should be

allowed only where the Head of the
intends to return to her civil service

Department is fully satisfied that the officer
position when fit to do so.

(k) Time off from duty may be allowed for attendance at ante-natal and post-natal
clinics. Evidence of appointment or attendance at the clinic will be required.

3. Departments are asked to ensure that all matters relating to maternity leave are treated in strict
confidence and that, as far as possible, routine aspects of these matters are handled by only one officer.

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K Murphy