



# Bereavement and pregnancy loss policy

IN MEMORY OF

**FREDERICK DAVID KINSELLA DERVEY**

Freddie was stillborn on 31st December 2020, four weeks before his due date. He weighed 6lbs 10oz. This policy has been created in his memory, in consultation with his family, to provide enhanced bereavement support for our employees.



# Group human resources

## Bereavement and pregnancy loss policy

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## Bereavement and pregnancy loss policy

### 1. Policy scope

This policy does not form part of the terms and conditions of employment and does not impact upon an employee's statutory rights. The Company reserves the right to amend, withdraw or replace this policy at any time.

This policy supersedes any previous bereavement and/or pregnancy loss policies with effect of 9 October 2021.

This policy applies to James Fisher and Sons plc ("Company") and all subsidiary companies of the James Fisher Group (the "Group") and is global. The policy applies to all employees of the Group, defined as any employee of the Company or its subsidiaries.

For clarity, the term 'employees' refers to both employees and workers of the Group at all levels.

### 2. Policy statement

The Group acknowledges the personal nature of a bereavement, and we make no assumptions as to how employees may feel or want to be treated. We are however committed to supporting all employees with a bereavement where we can, and this policy sets out the support that is available to employees should it be needed.

This policy outlines our approach to:

- bereavement;
- compassionate leave (including pay entitlement);
- pregnancy loss;
- procedure for reporting a bereavement;
- returning to work;
- cultural aspects of bereavement;
- resources to support those experiencing a bereavement

### 3. Bereavement

For the purpose of this policy, the Group considers a bereavement as being the death of a 'family member'.

The Group recognises that creating a definitive list of what it considers to be a 'family member' would not be sensitive to or inclusive of all personal circumstances. On that basis the term 'family member' for the purposes of this policy means any individual that is close to the employee. It also includes the loss of a baby at any stage of pregnancy. Please refer to the pregnancy loss section below. When considering if this policy applies to a specific bereavement situation we ask the employee and the line manager supporting to exercise sensible discretion, with sensitivity and compassion.



## 4. Compassionate leave

Compassionate leave is leave given to an employee to allow them approved time off work to grieve their loss, focus on supporting themselves, and to manage any arrangements associated with their loss.

Compassionate leave can be paid and unpaid.

Employees are entitled to a minimum period of paid leave that the company has set. These are detailed below.

Employees may wish to take additional time away from work and in those circumstances a mixture of paid and unpaid compassionate leave may be possible.

We acknowledge that each situation is unique and the Group's preferred approach is to be flexible and supportive to all employees, whatever their bereavement experience.

### **Paid compassionate leave**

- Initial leave

In the event of the death of a family member, all employees will be entitled to an initial period of up to 10 working days' paid leave at the time of the bereavement.

In the event of the death of an employee's child (including stepchildren, foster children, adopted children, any person under the age of 18 years old in their care, a stillbirth<sup>1</sup> or neonatal death<sup>2</sup>, employees will instead be entitled to an initial period of up to 20 working days' paid leave at the time of the bereavement.

If a pregnant employee suffers a stillbirth or neonatal death, the employee is entitled to take their full maternity leave (during which they will receive maternity pay as agreed) and in those circumstances the maternity leave will likely provide a greater period of paid leave for the employee. If the employee does not take maternity leave, then they shall be entitled to paid compassionate leave for the death of a child, as set out above.

- Supplementary leave

We also understand that grief is not linear. Therefore, all employees will also be given an additional 5 working days' paid leave to be taken at any point after the bereavement. This also applies to employees who took maternity leave following a stillbirth or neonatal death.

These additional days do not have to be taken in succession, nor do they need to be taken in the same year as the bereavement. This additional leave can be taken at any time during your employment with the Group, for example, around anniversaries, memorial days or other significant dates.

We understand that not all employees will want to take the full allowance of paid leave. It is entirely at the employee's discretion as to how much compassionate leave they take, but the Group encourages at least some leave to be taken following a bereavement.

1. A stillbirth is the death of a baby after 24 weeks of pregnancy but before birth or during birth

2. Neonatal death is the death of a baby within the first 28 days after birth



## Extended compassionate leave

If further leave is required in addition to the paid leave set out above, discretion may be exercised to allow the employee to take the additional time as authorised unpaid compassionate leave or some other arrangement. Line managers should use their discretion and consult with HR to establish a fair but feasible solution to supporting the employee.

Line managers must seek consent from HR before approving any extended compassionate leave, be that paid or unpaid.

## 5. Pregnancy loss

The Group recognises that pregnancy loss is also a bereavement.

The law currently does not grant any entitlement to paid leave in the event of a loss in the first 24 weeks of pregnancy (often referred to as a 'miscarriage'). The Group however is committed to supporting all employees who suffer the loss of a child, at any stage.

All employees who have been affected by pregnancy loss are entitled to up to 10 working days' paid leave, with an additional 5 working days' paid leave to be taken at any time after the loss.

The full allowance of leave does not have to be taken, but the Group encourages at least some leave to be taken after a pregnancy loss to give employees space to grieve the loss of their baby.

The Group acknowledges that pregnancy loss does not only affect women or heterosexual couples; Partners and those losing a baby with a surrogate mother are also entitled to the same period of paid compassionate leave.

This period of paid compassionate leave is available regardless of the circumstances of the loss; including, but not limited to, miscarriages, molar pregnancies, ectopic pregnancies, unsuccessful IVF and terminations.

## 6. Reporting a bereavement

Employees should report a bereavement through their line manager and/or HR. Employees should notify as soon as possible and within a reasonable time period. We understand that bereavement can be very difficult to talk about, so employees may report their bereavement by email or by telephone call.

When reporting the bereavement, employees should include who has died, how much compassionate leave they initially wish to take and any support they need. The Group is aware that the amount or type or support needed may change over time.

The Group understands the need for confidentiality during a bereavement. The details of the bereavement will not be shared unless the employee expressly confirms they are happy for it to be shared.



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**Pregnancy loss:** If you have suffered a pregnancy loss, we understand you may find it difficult to share this, particularly if you had not shared the news of the pregnancy. We encourage all employees to share their loss where possible so that they may receive support. Employees should not feel discriminated against or that they are being treated differently in the workplace after reporting a pregnancy loss.

The Group does not routinely require evidence of a bereavement; however, it does reserve the right to ask for a death certificate in exceptional circumstances or where there have been multiple bereavements occurring in a short period of time.

There is no maximum number of bereavements that can be taken within a year and compassionate leave will not alert absence triggers however we will discuss with you if we are concerned about multiple absences due to compassionate leave.

## 7. Returning to work

The Group encourages all line managers to support phased return to work arrangements for employees that feel they would benefit from such an arrangement.

Employees may be able to work on a part-time or reduced hours basis where feasible and phase back to their normal contractual hours and work pattern over a period of time, arranged and agreed by their line manager with support from HR. Alternative duties may also be considered.

Any arrangements of this nature would need to be agreed in advance by a line manager with support from HR.

## 8. Cultural aspects of bereavement

The Group recognises that different cultures respond to death in different ways.

If an employee's religion or culture requires them to observe any particular practices or make special arrangements which would necessitate them being off work at a particular time, this will be supported by the Group.

The Group encourages employees to share any cultural aspects of their bereavement with their line manager so support can be provided.

## 9. Resources to support bereavement

Please speak to HR if you feel you would benefit from bereavement counselling.

You may find the following resources useful:

- Bereavement gift pack suggestions - [Sharepoint](#)
- AXA Health Be Supported – [www.axabesupported.co.uk](http://www.axabesupported.co.uk)
- Cruse Bereavement Care – [www.cruse.org.uk](http://www.cruse.org.uk)
- Marie Curie – [www.mariecurie.org.uk](http://www.mariecurie.org.uk)



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**Pregnancy loss:** The loss of a baby is devastating, and you may find it difficult to locate resources to support you. The following websites provide advice and support to those who have suffered a loss and those wishing to support bereaved parents:

- SANDS – [www.sands.org.uk](http://www.sands.org.uk)
- Tommy's – [www.tommys.org](http://www.tommys.org)
- Petals – [www.petalscharity.org](http://www.petalscharity.org)
- Antenatal Results and Choices (ARC) – [www.arc-uk.org](http://www.arc-uk.org)
- The Miscarriage Association – [www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk](http://www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk)
- Saying Goodbye Charity – [www.sayinggoodbye.org](http://www.sayinggoodbye.org)
- The Mariposa Trust – [www.mariposatrust.org](http://www.mariposatrust.org)

## 10. Document revision history

Policy name	Version number	Function	Owner	Date last updated	Precis of change	Updated by	Approved by
Bereavement & pregnancy loss policy	V.1	Group HR	HR Director	October 2021	Initial issue	L.Chick N.Kinsella H.Harris	Group HR