



Department for the
Economy
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An Roinn
Geilleagair

Equality Screening Template – Section 75 of Northern Ireland Act 1998

Please complete the coversheet details below:

Policy title: Protection from Redundancy (Pregnancy and Family Leave)

Decision (delete as appropriate)

Policy screened out **without** mitigation or an alternative policy adopted

Contact: Joseph Ward

Date of completion: 17/06/24 Protection from Redundancy (Pregnancy and Family Related Leave)

Content

Part 1. Policy scoping – asks public authorities to provide details about the policy, procedure, practice and/or decision being screened and what available evidence you have gathered to help make an assessment of the likely impact on equality of opportunity and good relations.

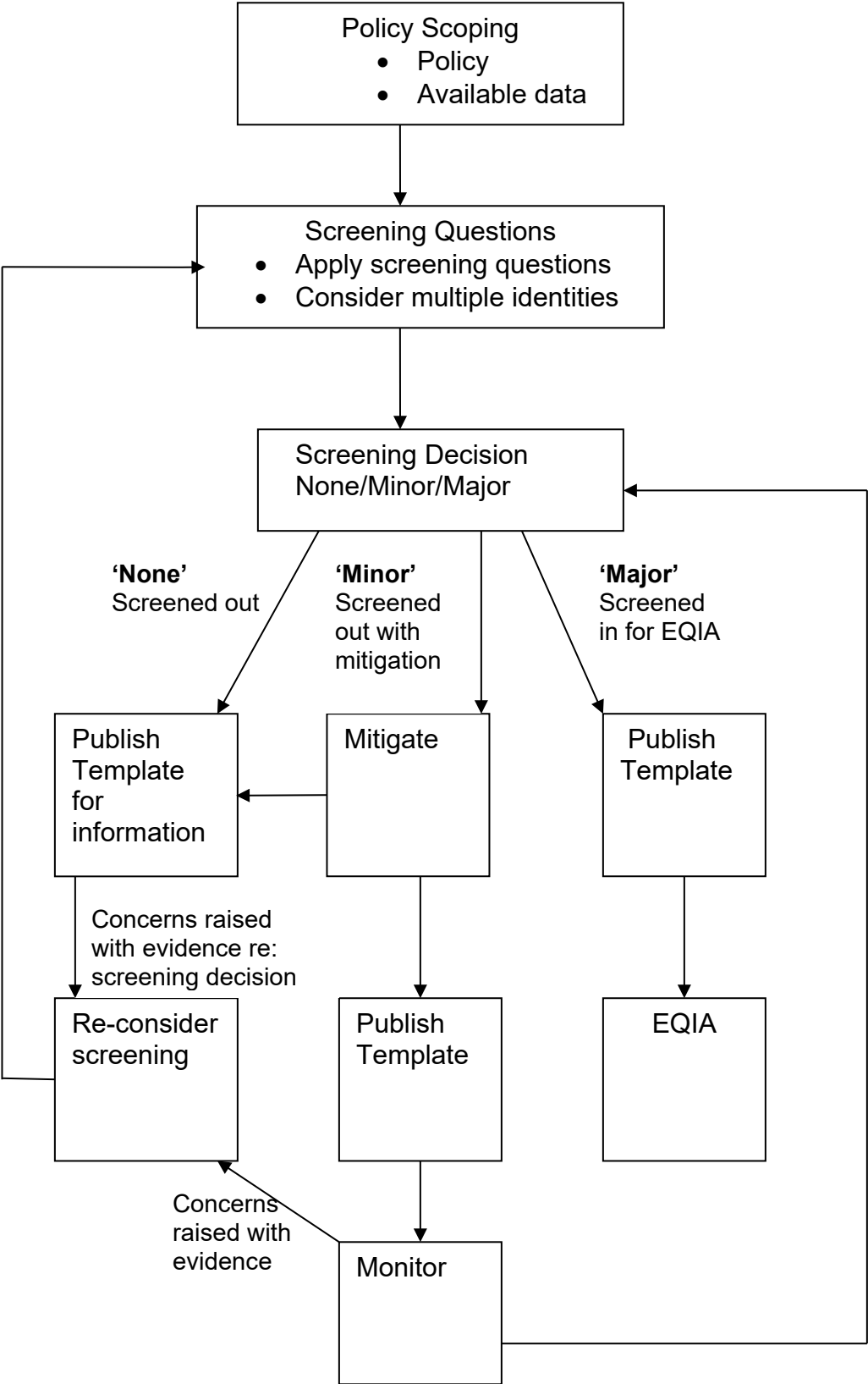
Part 2. Screening questions – asks about the extent of the likely impact of the policy on groups of people within each of the Section 75 categories. Details of the groups consulted and the level of assessment of the likely impact. This includes consideration of multiple identity and good relations issues.

Part 3. Screening decision – guides the public authority to reach a screening decision as to whether or not there is a need to carry out an equality impact assessment (EQIA), or to introduce measures to mitigate the likely impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

Part 4. Monitoring – provides guidance to public authorities on monitoring for adverse impact and broader monitoring.

Part 5. Approval and authorisation – verifies the public authority's approval of a screening decision by a senior manager responsible for the policy.

Flowchart for the equality screening process and decision.



Part 1. Policy scoping

The first stage of the screening process involves scoping the policy under consideration. The purpose of policy scoping is to help prepare the background and context and set out the aims and objectives for the policy being screened. At this stage, scoping the policy will help identify potential constraints as well as opportunities and will help the policy maker work through the screening process on a step-by-step basis.

Public authorities should remember that the Section 75 statutory duties apply to internal policies (relating to people who work for the authority), as well as external policies (relating to those who are, or could be, served by the authority).

Information about the policy

Name of the policy

Protection from Redundancy (Pregnancy and Family Related Leave)

Is this an existing, revised or a new policy?

This is a new policy that will require primary and subordinate legislation.

What is it trying to achieve? (intended aims/outcomes)

The UK Parliament, legislating for Great Britain only, has recognised that there is a body of evidence (from various sources including an internal review, research, focus groups, surveys etc) which suggests that expectant mothers and mothers who have given birth, continue to face discrimination in the workplace during their pregnancy and also after their return to work post maternity leave. There was also recognition of those employees that were on comparable family leave (Adoption leave, and 6 weeks or more of Shared Parental leave) would also face similar discrimination/treatment.

To address this situation, the Protection from Redundancy (Pregnancy and Family Leave) Act was introduced and became law on 24 May 2023 in GB. This Act extended existing powers and provided other necessary powers to allow the Department for Business and Trade to make regulations regarding redundancy protection so that such protections can apply after the individual has taken the relevant leave (Maternity, Shared Parental & Adoption); and introduced a new power so that equivalent legislative provision for enhanced redundancy protections that can apply during pregnancy could be created.

The Department recognises that some expectant mothers may face discrimination during pregnancy & maternity leave and that mothers may also face discrimination after returning from maternity leave. The Department also recognises that employees here are employed in a similar environment to their peers in Britain in respect of having the same or similar rights and the business practices and policies which can be considered consistent across the two jurisdictions. The policy intention is to ensure that there are sufficient protections, in respect of redundancy, in place for those who are pregnant or returning from maternity leave. The Department also acknowledges that those returning from other forms of leave comparable to maternity leave may have also been away from work for long periods and therefore might similarly face discrimination or be prone to less favourable treatment – the policy will therefore provide the same enhanced protections to those returning from Adoption Leave and an applicable amount of Shared Parental Leave.

Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy?

If so, explain how.

Gender - one element of the policy, namely the enhanced protections against redundancy during pregnancy, will provide for a direct benefit to pregnant women employees. As a result of the policy, pregnant women employees will have an enhanced protection in comparison to their peers that are not pregnant or on a form of relevant statutory leave. This policy provides a recognition of the

impact of pregnancy on women, their relationship and potential “detachment” from the workplace. The policy will extend similar protections to persons of any gender availing of adoption or shared parental leave. The policy is designed to mitigate against that treatment as a result of the detachment. The policy is complementary to existing policies and legislation that protect against discrimination during pregnancy.

Dependants - one other element of the policy, namely the enhanced protections against redundancy for 18 months after the birth, placing for adoption, still birth, or expected date of birth, will provide a direct benefit for qualifying parents who are employees. Those parents by the nature of the qualifying criteria will, in the majority of cases, have dependants. This policy would provide a recognition of the reality of the impact on new parents in relation to the long periods of absence that they may have in respect of them exercising their rights to Maternity, Adoption and Shared Parental Leave, and the detachment from the workplace that follows from the period of leave. The policy is designed to mitigate against that, the policy is also complimentary to existing policies and legislation that protect against redundancy during those periods of relevant leave.

Who initiated or wrote the policy?

Given the analogous employment and anti-discrimination law framework between the north of Ireland and Britain, this policy was initiated by the Department for the Economy to ensure that employees have similar employment rights and protections in relation to Protections from Redundancy for Pregnancy and Family related Leave as their peers in Britain. In Britain, the Protection from Redundancy (Pregnancy and Family Leave) Act 2023 received Royal Assent on 24th May 2023.

Who owns and who implements the policy?

The Department for the Economy owns this policy.

Implementation factors

Are there any factors which could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the policy/decision?

YES

Legislative

Main stakeholders affected

Who are the internal and external stakeholders (actual or potential) that the policy will impact upon? (please delete as appropriate)

other, please specify:

- all employees and employers in Northern Ireland.
- LRA
- OITFET

Other policies with a bearing on this policy

The Protection from Redundancy (Pregnancy and Family) leave policy in Britain
The Department for Business and Trade is responsible for this policy in Britain.

- **Available evidence**

Evidence to help inform the screening process may take many forms. Public authorities should ensure that their screening decision is informed by relevant data. The Commission has produced this guide to [signpost to S75 data](#).

What evidence/information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories.

The policy has been informed by a review of impact assessments and various reports which examined the position pre-changes and the requirements for the policy to be developed in Britain. The Department also analysed reports from the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland which, although not analogous to the surveys, consultations and reports from Britain, provided a localised context to the position and perceptions that women and new parents find themselves in within the workplace during pregnancy or after having taken family leave. A key position which drove the analysis of the British policies and related reports was that the Department recognised that the employment environment between Britain and the north of Ireland is broadly similar, with equivalent rights, protections and working conditions – therefore any need for change in Britain which had been identified would lead to a similar position requiring consideration in respect of Northern Ireland. The Department has also utilised publicly available NISRA stats on births and adoptions to inform various positions and assumptions.

Religious belief evidence / information:

The proposal is designed to provide further protections and have a positive impact on employed expectant mothers during pregnancy and their maternity leave. The proposal is equally designed to provide further protections and have a positive impact on as well as those employees who have taken Adoption Leave and a period of qualifying Shared Parental Leave.

We have not identified any evidence to suggest that people within this category would be adversely affected by this, or the number of people who would potentially benefit.

Political Opinion evidence / information:

The proposal is designed to provide further protections and have a positive impact on employed expectant mothers during pregnancy and their maternity leave. The proposal is equally designed to provide further protections and have a positive impact on as those employees who have taken Adoption Leave and a period of qualifying Shared Parental Leave.

We have not identified any evidence to suggest that people within this category would be adversely affected by this, or the number of people who would potentially benefit.

Racial Group evidence / information:

The proposal is designed to provide further protections and have a positive impact on employed expectant mothers during pregnancy and their maternity leave. The proposal is equally designed to provide further protections and have a positive impact on as those employees who have taken Adoption Leave and a period of qualifying Shared Parental Leave.

We have not identified any evidence to suggest that people within this category would be adversely affected by this, or the number of people who would potentially benefit.

Age evidence / information:

The proposal is designed to provide further protections and have a positive impact on employed expectant mothers during pregnancy and their maternity leave. The proposal is equally designed to provide further protections and have

a positive impact on as those employees who have taken Adoption Leave and a period of qualifying Shared Parental Leave.

Though not the targeted group, the rights that the policy creates will most likely be utilised by certain age groups, i.e. the age groups in which women generally give birth– over 96% of births in 2021 were to mothers aged from 18 to 40¹, whilst there were only 77² adoptions in the same year. Although this number is likely to be across multiple age groups, it is surpassed by the number of women giving birth.

From anecdotal evidence, the Department notes that, given the reality of the diversity and varied family structures, i.e. new parents that are not within the same age brackets, the extended rights will be available to all people who are employed and that also meet the eligibility criteria of the respective leave rights. In a wider sense of the impact on age groups, we have not identified any evidence to suggest that people within this category would be adversely affected by this, or the number of people who would potentially benefit.

Marital Status evidence / information:

The proposal is designed to provide further protections and have a positive impact on employed expectant mothers during pregnancy and their maternity leave. The proposal is equally designed to provide further protections and have a positive impact on as those employees who have taken Adoption Leave and a period of qualifying Shared Parental Leave.

We have not identified any evidence to suggest that people within this category would be adversely affected by this, or the number of people who would potentially benefit.

Sexual Orientation evidence / information:

¹ https://www.nisra.gov.uk/sites/nisra.gov.uk/files/publications/live_births_age_mother_1974_2021%20-%20COMPLETE.xlsx

² https://www.nisra.gov.uk/system/files/statistics/Section%2011%20-%20Adoptions_Tables_2022_Revised_Final.xlsx

The proposal is designed to provide further protections and have a positive impact on employed expectant mothers during pregnancy and their maternity leave. The proposal is equally designed to provide further protections and have a positive impact on as those employees who have taken Adoption Leave and a period of qualifying Shared Parental Leave. This will include those same sex couples who adopt, or those same sex couples where a parent takes the required qualifying period of shared parental leave.

We have not identified any evidence to suggest that people within this category would be adversely affected by this, or the number of people who would potentially benefit.

Men & Women generally evidence / information:

The proposal is designed to provide further protections and rights by complementing existing protections under Sex Discrimination legislation and have a positive impact on employed expectant mothers during pregnancy and their maternity leave. The proposal is equally designed to provide further protections and have a positive impact on as well as those employees who have taken Adoption Leave and a period of qualifying Shared Parental Leave.

One aspect of the policy is to mitigate against potential discrimination against women while they are pregnant or whilst they are on maternity leave. This policy is based upon anecdotal evidence and extrapolation from research and studies carried out in Britain. As employees in the north of Ireland work in a similar employment environment with analogous laws and protections, it is believed that it is appropriate to replicate this mitigation as the same circumstances that would allow for discrimination in Britain are also present in the north of Ireland. This policy provides a recognition of the impact of pregnancy on women, their relationship and potential “detachment” from the workplace; therefore the policy is designed to mitigate against that.

The policy would also extend to all eligible employees, regardless of their gender. These employees would be entitled to these additional protections after

having taken Adoption Leave: for example, this would apply equally to same sex couples where both parents are male or female, or in cases of mixed sex parents where the primary adopter is a male. The proposed protections would also apply in cases where a male employee is entitled through taking the required qualifying period of Shared Parental Leave.

Disability evidence / information:

The proposal is designed to provide further protections and have a positive impact on employed expectant mothers during pregnancy and their maternity leave. The proposal is equally designed to provide further protections and have a positive impact on as well as those employees who have taken Adoption Leave and a period of qualifying Shared Parental Leave.

We have not identified any evidence to suggest that people within this category would be adversely affected by this, or the number of people who would potentially benefit.

Dependants evidence / information:

The proposal is designed to provide further protections and have a positive impact on employed expectant mothers during pregnancy and their maternity leave. The proposal is equally designed to provide further protections and have a positive impact on as those employees who have taken Adoption Leave and a period of qualifying Shared Parental Leave, and by the very nature of those various forms of leave, most recipients will have dependants.

This is one of the targeted groups that will see a benefit of the change in policy to extend rights for protections against redundancy in relation those returning from maternity, adoption or qualifying shared parental leave. However, realising this 'benefit' for the targeted group will not impose a negative impact on those that do not have dependants as the targeting is related to mitigating against

potential detachment from the workplace after having taken leave.

Needs, experiences and priorities

Taking into account the information referred to above, what are the different needs, experiences and priorities of each of the following categories, in relation to the particular policy/decision?

Specify details of the needs, experiences and priorities for each of the Section 75 categories below:

Religious belief

There are no anticipated different needs, experiences and priorities as a result of this policy with regards to this category.

Political Opinion

There are no anticipated different needs, experiences and priorities as a result of this policy with regards to this category.

Racial Group

There are no anticipated different needs, experiences and priorities as a result of this policy with regards to this category.

Age

This policy is targeted at pregnant employees and those who have taken maternity or adoption leave, or the required qualifying period of shared parental leave, regardless of age.

The policy benefits only those employees who fit within those categories, though given the nature of age brackets of mothers that give birth and subsequently avail of their rights to maternity leave, it will likely benefit more women aged 18 to 40.

However, addressing the different needs for certain categories from within this section 75 group will not impose a negative impact on those that are not pregnant, or those who have not taken maternity, adoption or the qualifying shared parental leave.

Marital status

There are no anticipated different needs, experiences and priorities as a result of this policy with regards to this category.

Sexual orientation

There are no anticipated different needs, experiences and priorities as a result of this policy with regards to this category.

Men and Women Generally

One element of this policy provides a recognition of the impact of pregnancy on women, their relationship to and potential “detachment” from the workplace; therefore the policy is designed to mitigate against that. The policy is complementary to existing policies and legislation that protect against discrimination during pregnancy.

However, addressing the different needs for certain categories from within this section 75 group will not impose a negative impact on those who are not in the targeted group. As the policy also provides for the same enhanced protections for those that have taken adoption leave or the required qualifying period of shared parental leave, these enhancements will be available to men and women equally so long as they meet the eligibility criteria.

Disability

There are no anticipated different needs, experiences and priorities as a result of this policy with regards to this category.

Dependants

The element of the proposal that provides further protections against redundancy after a period of the relevant leave has been taken will, for the most part, be taken by those with dependants, given the nature of why they have taken leave. The further protections will also remain available to those who have had a still birth through their entitlement to either the proposed time frame of protections or after having taken maternity leave (*which they are entitled to still avail of*).

Part 2. Screening questions

Introduction

In making a decision as to whether or not there is a need to carry out an equality impact assessment, the public authority should consider its answers to the Screening Questions 1-4, which follow.

If the public authority's conclusion is **none** in respect of all of the Section 75 equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, then the public authority may decide to screen the policy out. If a policy is 'screened out' as having no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations, a public authority should give details of the reasons for the decision taken.

If the public authority's conclusion is **major** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, then consideration should be given to subjecting the policy to the equality impact assessment procedure.

If the public authority's conclusion is **minor** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality categories and/or good relations categories, then consideration should still be given to proceeding with an equality impact assessment, or to:

- measures to mitigate the adverse impact; or
- the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

In favour of a 'major' impact

- a) The policy is significant in terms of its strategic importance;
- b) Potential equality impacts are unknown, because, for example, there is insufficient data upon which to make an assessment or because they are complex, and it would be appropriate to conduct an equality impact assessment in order to better assess them;

- c) Potential equality and/or good relations impacts are likely to be adverse or are likely to be experienced disproportionately by groups of people including those who are marginalised or disadvantaged;
- d) Further assessment offers a valuable way to examine the evidence and develop recommendations in respect of a policy about which there are concerns amongst affected individuals and representative groups, for example in respect of multiple identities;
- e) The policy is likely to be challenged by way of judicial review;
- f) The policy is significant in terms of expenditure.

In favour of 'minor' impact

- a) The policy is not unlawfully discriminatory and any residual potential impacts on people are judged to be negligible;
- b) The policy, or certain proposals within it, are potentially unlawfully discriminatory, but this possibility can readily and easily be eliminated by making appropriate changes to the policy or by adopting appropriate mitigating measures;
- c) Any asymmetrical equality impacts caused by the policy are intentional because they are specifically designed to promote equality of opportunity for particular groups of disadvantaged people;
- d) By amending the policy there are better opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

In favour of none

- a) The policy has no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations.
- b) The policy is purely technical in nature and will have no bearing in terms of its likely impact on equality of opportunity or good relations for people within the equality and good relations categories.

Taking into account the evidence presented above, consider and comment on the likely impact on equality of opportunity and good relations for those affected

by this policy, in any way, for each of the equality and good relations categories, by applying the screening questions given overleaf and indicate the level of impact on the group i.e. minor, major or none.

Screening questions

1. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories?

Please provide details of the likely policy impacts and determine the level of impact for each S75 categories below i.e. either minor, major or none.

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Religious belief**:

The proposal is designed to have a positive impact on employees if they are pregnant or have availed of their rights to Maternity, Adoption or a period qualifying shared parent leave.

We haven't identified any evidence to suggest that people within this category would be adversely affected by this, or the number of people who would potentially benefit.

What is the level of impact? None

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Political Opinion**:

The proposal is designed to have a positive impact on employees if they are pregnant or have availed of their rights to Maternity, Adoption or a period of qualifying shared parental leave.

We haven't identified any evidence to suggest that people within this category would be adversely affected by this, or the number of people who would potentially benefit.

What is the level of impact? None

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Racial Group**:

The proposal is designed to have a positive impact on employees if they are pregnant or have availed of their rights to Maternity, Adoption or a period of qualifying shared parental leave.

We haven't identified any evidence to suggest that people within this category would be adversely affected by this, or the number of people who would potentially benefit.

What is the level of impact? None

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Age**:

The proposal is designed to have a positive impact on employees if they are pregnant or have availed of their rights to Maternity, Adoption or a period of qualifying shared parental leave.

We haven't identified any evidence to suggest that people within this category would be adversely affected by this, or the number of people who would potentially benefit.

What is the level of impact? None

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Marital Status**:

The proposal is designed to have a positive impact on employees if they are pregnant or have availed of their rights to Maternity, Adoption or a period of qualifying shared parental leave.

We haven't identified any evidence to suggest that people within this category would be adversely affected by this, or the number of people who would potentially benefit.

What is the level of impact? None

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Sexual Orientation**:

The proposal is designed to have a positive impact on employees if they are pregnant or have availed of their rights to Maternity, Adoption or a period of qualifying shared parental leave.

We haven't identified any evidence to suggest that people within this category would be adversely affected by this, or the number of people who would potentially benefit.

What is the level of impact? None

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Men and Women**:

One element of this policy, the enhanced protections during pregnancy, is directly targeted at women. This will have a positive impact as it seeks to mitigate against a set of circumstances where women may find themselves treated differently in respect of redundancy considerations if they are pregnant or have been recently pregnant (the protection would continue for 2 weeks after pregnancy loss).

The other element of the policy to protect employees who have taken Statutory Maternity, Adoption or the required period of Shared Parental Leave will be available to all employees when they meet the conditions, irrespective of gender. However, given the nature of maternity leave and the number of cases compared to adoption and shared parental leave, in most circumstances the employees that utilise the right will be women. It is important to note, though, that where a man is a primary adopter or has taken their right to shared parental leave (subject to the minimum amount of leave), they will have access to the same rights and protections. This is a positive impact as it seeks to redress an unfairness where new parents are potentially, and perceived to be, treated differently to their peers who have not taken a recent period of relevant family leave.

What is the level of impact? Minor

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Disability**:

The proposal is designed to have a positive impact on employees if they are pregnant or have availed of their rights to Maternity, Adoption or a period of qualifying shared parental leave.

We haven't identified any evidence to suggest that people within this category would be adversely affected by this, or the number of people who would potentially benefit.

What is the level of impact? None

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Dependants**:

This policy is designed to have positive impact on those who have dependants - one element of the policy is explicitly designed to create enhanced rights to protections from redundancy in a defined period after an employee has returned from having taken either Maternity, Adoption or the required amount of Shared Parental Leave. Given the nature of those rights, the beneficiaries of the policy will be those that have dependants. This policy is designed to mitigate against any unfavourable treatment of those employees in comparison to their peers who have not taken any relevant leave. It should be noted that the rights will also extend to those that have suffered a still birth. This is in line with existing policies which ensure that Maternity & Shared Parental Leave and pay rights continue to be available in those circumstances.

What is the level of impact? Minor

2. Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equalities categories? Yes/No

Detail opportunities of how this policy could promote equality of opportunity for people within each of the Section 75 Categories below:

Religious Belief –

If Yes, provide details:

If No, provide reasons: Not relevant to this policy proposal

Political Opinion –

If Yes, provide details:

If No, provide reasons: Not relevant to this policy proposal

Racial Group –

If Yes, provide details:

If No, provide reasons: Not relevant to this policy proposal

Age –

If Yes, provide details:

If No, provide reasons: Not relevant to this policy proposal

Marital Status –

If Yes, provide details:

If No, provide reasons: Not relevant to this policy proposal

Sexual Orientation –

If Yes, provide details:

If No, provide reasons: Not relevant to this policy proposal

Men and Women generally –

If Yes, provide details: This policy would seek to mitigate against perceptions and possible discrimination in circumstances where an employee is pregnant. This policy is designed to promote equality of opportunity for pregnant women in these circumstances. The policy also seeks to ensure that men and women are treated the same in respect of the period after they

have taken the relevant family leave. This will promote equality opportunity within those groups, but also promote equality of opportunity between those employees and their peers who have not taken any relevant family leave.

Disability –

If Yes, provide details:

If No, provide reasons: Not relevant to this policy proposal

Dependants –

If Yes, provide details: This policy would seek to mitigate against perceptions and possible discrimination in circumstances where an employee has taken the family leave that they are entitled to after the birth, adoption or still birth of their child. This policy is designed to promote equality of opportunity for employees with dependants in these circumstances. The policy also seeks to promote equality of opportunity between those employees and their peers who have not taken any relevant family leave.

3. To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?

Please provide details of the likely policy impact and determine the level of impact for each of the categories below i.e. either minor, major or none.

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Religious belief**:

(insert text here)

What is the level of impact? None

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Political Opinion**:

(insert text here)

What is the level of impact? None

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Racial Group**:

(insert text here)

What is the level of impact? None

4. Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?

Detail opportunities of how this policy could better promote good relations for people within each of the Section 75 Categories below:

Religious Belief –

If Yes, provide details:

If No, provide reasons: Not applicable to this policy proposal

Political Opinion –

If Yes, provide details:

If No, provide reasons: Not applicable to this policy proposal

Racial Group –

If Yes, provide details:

If No, provide reasons: Not applicable to this policy proposal

Additional considerations

Multiple identity

Generally speaking, people can fall into more than one Section 75 category. Taking this into consideration, are there any potential impacts of the policy/decision on people with multiple identities?

(For example; disabled minority ethnic people; disabled women; young Protestant men; and young lesbians, gay and bisexual people).

This right is available to all employees that meet the requirements of eligibility, including any person or persons which may cross multiple identities within the Section 75 categories. The particular rights under the policy will be available to all pregnant employees and those employed parents who have taken the relevant family leave [Maternity, Adoption or the required amount of Shared Parental Leave] where they meet the requirements, no matter their age, sexual orientation, political identity, race, disability or religious background.

Part 3. Screening decision

If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment, please provide details of the reasons.

The policy has no discernible adverse impacts on any of the Section 75 categories as detailed above. The proposal is designed to have a positive impact on employees if they are pregnant or have taken Maternity, Adoption or the required period of qualifying shared parental leave. It benefits only those within a working age demographic. The policy intention is to have a positive impact upon eligible employees and is not envisaged to have any adverse impact on others.

The Department intends to hold a public consultation which will help to determine if the policy proposal is appropriate and how it should be implemented. In reaching a final policy decision, further equality impact insight gained through the consultation process will be taken into account. Any unanticipated equality impacts which may arise following the introduction of legislation resulting from this policy proposal will be assessed as they arise, and further addressed as the need arises.

All public authorities' equality schemes must state the authority's arrangements for assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted by the authority on the promotion of equality of opportunity. The Commission recommends screening and equality impact assessment as the tools to be utilised for such assessments. Further advice on equality impact assessment may be found in a separate Commission publication: Practical Guidance on Equality Impact Assessment.

Mitigation

When the public authority concludes that the likely impact is 'minor' and an equality impact assessment is not to be conducted, the public authority may consider mitigation to lessen the severity of any equality impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity or good relations.

Can the policy/decision be amended or changed or an alternative policy introduced to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations?

If so, **give the reasons** to support your decision, together with the proposed changes/amendments or alternative policy.

N/A

Timetabling and prioritising

N/A

Factors to be considered in timetabling and prioritising policies for equality impact assessment.

If the policy has been '**screened in**' for equality impact assessment, then please answer the following questions to determine its priority for timetabling the equality impact assessment.

On a scale of 1-3, with 1 being the lowest priority and 3 being the highest, assess the policy in terms of its priority for equality impact assessment.

Priority criterion – Rating (1-3)

Effect on equality of opportunity and good relations -

Social need -

Effect on people's daily lives -

Relevance to a public authority's functions –

Note: The Total Rating Score should be used to prioritise the policy in rank order with other policies screened in for equality impact assessment. This list of priorities will assist the public authority in timetabling. Details of the Public Authority's Equality Impact Assessment Timetable should be included in the quarterly Screening Report.

Is the policy affected by timetables established by other relevant public authorities?

If yes, please provide details.

Part 4. Monitoring

Public authorities should consider the guidance contained in the Commission's Monitoring Guidance for Use by Public Authorities (July 2007).

The Commission recommends that where the policy has been amended or an alternative policy introduced, the public authority should monitor more broadly than for adverse impact (See Benefits, P.9-10, paras 2.13 – 2.20 of the Monitoring Guidance).

Effective monitoring will help the public authority identify any future adverse impact arising from the policy which may lead the public authority to conduct an equality impact assessment, as well as help with future planning and policy development.

The Department intends to hold a public consultation which will help to determine if the policy proposal is appropriate and how it should be implemented. In reaching a final policy decision, further equality impact insight gained through the consultation process will be taken into account. Any unanticipated equality impacts which may arise following the introduction of legislation resulting from this policy proposal will be assessed as they arise, and further addressed as the need arises.

Part 5 - Approval and authorisation

Screened by: Joseph Ward

Position/Job Title: Deputy Principal - Employment Relations and Work life Balance Branch

Business Area/ Branch: Employment Relations Policy & Legislation: Work-Life

Date: 6/6/24

Approved by: Colin Jack

Position/Job Title: Director

Business Area/Branch: Business and Employment Regulation Division

Date: 20 June 2024

Note: A copy of the Screening Template, for each policy screened should be 'signed off' and approved by a senior manager responsible for the policy, made easily accessible on the public authority's website as soon as possible following completion and made available on request.