



w o r k i n g

your way through

p r e g n a n c y



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Disclaimer

This booklet is provided to assist you, but it is a guide only. No two cases are the same. The facts of each situation will help to establish whether discrimination has occurred. The information is current at the time of printing and mainly refers to federal laws – State and Territory laws may differ. The agencies listed at the back of this booklet can advise you on your particular circumstances, and can advise you if any laws have changed.

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In addition to information for employees, this booklet also includes employer tips. These are included throughout the booklet in pale green boxes.

Australia has laws to protect women from discrimination in employment on the grounds of pregnancy, potential pregnancy, or because they are breastfeeding.

The *Workplace Relations Act (Cth) 1996*, the *Sex Discrimination Act (Cth) 1984* and State workplace relations, equal opportunity and anti-discrimination laws make such discrimination in employment unlawful. They combine with other laws, awards and agreements to protect you and to help ensure you are able to work in an environment that is free from discrimination and harassment.

They also mean you have the right to work or continue to work during and following your pregnancy and that you should be treated the same as other employees. In most cases, you can be treated differently only if you request changes to be made to your working environment, particularly for reasons of health and safety.

Depending on the circumstances, employers may be obliged to make changes to accommodate your pregnancy in consultation with you. It is important that employers respond to your needs by carefully considering and discussing with you the type of work you perform before, during and after your pregnancy.

About awards, agreements and AWAs

Awards

An award is a legally binding document that sets out the minimum entitlements of employees. Awards deal with conditions of employment such as hours worked, pay rates and leave entitlements. There are both federal and State awards.

Under the federal system, awards act as a safety net of fair and minimum wages and conditions. Many federal awards contain anti-discrimination clauses, and no federal award can contain provisions that discriminate on grounds such as pregnancy.

Collective agreements

Collective agreements, such as a certified agreement made under the Workplace Relations Act, are made between an employer and a group of employees, or a union acting as a representative of the employees. Agreements can be made under federal or State laws. Agreements normally set out rates of pay and conditions of employment, and can also contain arrangements, such as flexible working hours and home-based work options,

which help employees to balance work and family responsibilities.

The terms and conditions of employment under federal agreements must be at least as good as the overall terms and conditions that would apply under the relevant award (although the agreement may increase or decrease individual award entitlements). Federal agreements must not contain provisions that would discriminate on grounds such as pregnancy.

AWAs and other individual agreements

An Australian Workplace Agreement (AWA) is an individual agreement made between an employer and an employee about the employee's pay and conditions of employment. It is made in accordance with federal laws. Anti-discrimination provisions apply to all federal AWAs. Other forms of individual agreements can also be made in some States.

Potential pregnancy

Potential pregnancy includes instances when:

- a woman is, or may be, capable of bearing children;
- a woman has expressed a desire to become pregnant; or
- a woman is likely, or is perceived as being likely, to become pregnant.

Discrimination and pregnancy

Discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy or potential pregnancy can be direct or indirect.

Direct discrimination occurs when an employer treats you less favourably than other employees because you are pregnant or may potentially become pregnant.

Marti was directly discriminated against when, after she told her employer she was pregnant, her employer demoted her and stopped her contact with the public even though there was no problem with her job performance.

Indirect discrimination occurs when a requirement, condition or practice, which appears to treat everyone the same way, disadvantages women who are pregnant or may be pregnant in the future. Indirect discrimination does not occur if employers can show that their actions were reasonable in the circumstances.

Shaleeni was indirectly discriminated against when she was denied access to retrenchment benefits because she was on maternity leave at the time redundancy occurred.



No matter how well intentioned your employer's actions may be, they may still be considered discriminatory if you have not agreed to them. For example, if you are pregnant, potentially pregnant, on maternity leave or returning from maternity leave, this cannot be used as a reason against your wishes to:

- refuse to employ you;
- transfer or demote you;
- change your full-time position to part-time, or vice versa;
- make you a casual employee if you are a permanent employee;
- reduce or increase your hours of work;
- alter your days of work;
- give you less skilled or less demanding work;

- deny you access to education or training;
- deny you promotion or any other employment benefits or opportunities;
- dismiss you; or
- disadvantage you in any other way.

In certain circumstances, occupational health and safety considerations may mean that your employer will need to take action to take account of your pregnancy. See page 10 for further details.

Tips for employers

Simple measures and open communication with employees can prevent discrimination. Depending on the workplace, an employer may be able to introduce ways to accommodate pregnancy. Some examples include:

- the employer talking to the employee about her needs and discussing the ability of the business to accommodate her wishes;
- allowing employees to take adequate toilet breaks;
- providing uniforms appropriate for pregnancy or not requiring pregnant women to wear uniforms; and
- providing seating.



At an interview

It is often hard to determine whether discrimination occurs during a job interview. Questions about your personal and family life are generally inappropriate and should not be used to determine whether you are suitable for the job. However, there are some

limited exceptions in which safety is an issue, and an employer may need to ask some personal questions.

Also, it is unlawful for an employer to refuse to employ you or place terms and conditions on your employment just because at the time of the interview you are pregnant or there is the potential that you may become pregnant in the future.



Tips for employers

What questions can and can't be asked?

- It is appropriate for employers to ask questions that relate to the applicant's ability to fulfil the requirements of the job. For example, it is okay to ask all applicants if they are available to do interstate air travel in the next six months if this is a requirement of the job.
- It is inappropriate for employers to ask the applicant if she is pregnant, if she is planning on having children or if she has children.

Useful hint for employers!

Employers should ask all applicants standard questions related to the duties and skills required for the job to indicate that they are assessing each applicant on their ability to perform the requirements of the position.

During an interview, Gabrielle was told that the person she was replacing had been with the company for two years until she became pregnant, took maternity leave and then decided not to return to work. The interviewer told Gabrielle this had caused the company some disruption and expressed concern about this occurring again. Gabrielle was asked about her

intentions to have children. She later discovered that an older woman and a man who were also interviewed were not asked questions about their family situation.

Asking Gabrielle about her intentions to have children constitutes less favourable treatment and unlawful discrimination because the others being interviewed were not asked similar questions. The question was unrelated to her ability to fulfil the requirements of the position.

Layla was being interviewed by a busy store for a 5-month, fixed-term contract position to set up a computer-based system before the Christmas rush. At the time of the interview, Layla was three months pregnant. She was asked during the interview if she would have any difficulties meeting the deadlines set. Layla told the interviewer that she was pregnant but hoped that she would be able to implement the system before the baby was born.

Asking Layla if she could complete the project within the given timeframe does not constitute less favourable treatment or unlawful discrimination. Others being interviewed were asked the same questions. The interviewer was merely trying to find out if Layla was able to meet the deadline.

At work

By law, your employer is responsible for making your work environment safe and free from harassment. Sometimes it is necessary for employers to take extra steps to protect the health and safety of pregnant employees.

Workplace safety during pregnancy

Changes made to protect the health and safety of pregnant employees are often beneficial to all employees. If something is hazardous to pregnant women, it is usually hazardous to everyone and should be fixed. For example, a slippery floor should be made safe for everyone.

In some cases, pregnant employees have needs that mean general requirements and normal work practices may need to be changed slightly. For example, if you normally stand for long periods at work, perhaps you could be allowed to sit; or if you have to lift heavy objects, perhaps you could receive assistance. Your employer's response will depend not only on your type of work and its hazards, but also on your state of pregnancy and whether any medical complications are present.

You may be able to talk to your employer about changes to your workplace that may assist you at work, and find solutions that suit both of you.

Eleena, an office assistant, asked her employer if she could swap some tasks, such as the daily mail and banking tasks that required considerable walking, with someone else in the office.

Lucy, a supermarket employee, asked her employer to supply her with a chair at the checkout.

Eleena's and Lucy's employers agreed to these suggestions.

While there is no general legal obligation for your employer to provide you with special facilities during your pregnancy, their failure to meet reasonable requests may be considered discriminatory.



Tips for employers

Dealing with serious health and safety concerns

An employer may need to take broader action if a pregnant employee's job involves serious health and safety concerns, and it should be done in consultation with the employee wherever possible. If the employee must be in contact with hazardous substances such as chemicals, metals or gases, she should give the employer a medical certificate from her doctor. This means that the employer must assess the risks to the employee and to her baby, and this may require the employer to seek occupational health and safety advice from a professional.

Suggested action for employers

In consultation with the pregnant employee, the employer could take the following steps:

- transfer her to a 'safer' job or work area. The transfer should not be permanent unless she wants it to be. There should be no loss of pay, status or career opportunities; or
- vary her hours of work, for example, working part-time until full-time work is again feasible. However, an employee cannot be forced to work part-time.

If neither option is workable, the employer can consider allowing pregnant employees to access their accrued leave entitlement such as annual leave or a period of unpaid special maternity leave (see page 13) for the period stated on the doctor's certificate. Some laws, awards and agreements require this.

What is harassment?

Harassment can be physical, such as a workmate touching your stomach or buttocks. It can also be verbal, such as workmates commenting on your size, asking if you are 'really' going to return to work, suggesting you should be at home or commenting on your emotional or intellectual state.

None of this is considered harassment if you are comfortable with the comments and actions of your workmates.

Tips for employers

Dealing with harassment

An employer is obliged to take appropriate action to prevent harassment, and to act if they become aware that harassment is occurring in the workplace. An employer could be held liable for the harassment if they do not act or have not ensured that appropriate preventative mechanisms are in place at the workplace, for example, by providing readily accessible harassment contact officers or procedures to deal with harassment.

Nadine is a plumbing apprentice. During her pregnancy, her co-workers commented on the size of her breasts and attempted to touch her stomach. Nadine repeatedly told them that their comments and behaviour were unwelcome. She also raised the matter with her supervisors.

The actions of Nadine's co-workers were harassment. The employer may also be held responsible for the actions of Nadine's co-workers.

Women in rural and remote Australia may feel isolated when working in male-dominated environments such as mining operations or if they lack readily accessible services. They may be more vulnerable to workplace harassment. Free telephone support and advice is available for these women through the contacts listed on pages 21-23.

Parental leave

Rights and responsibilities

Parental leave is available to mothers and fathers to enable them to care for a newborn or adopted child. Parental leave covers maternity, paternity and adoption leave.

- Maternity leave is available to women employees during or after pregnancy.
- Another form of leave, special maternity leave, may also be available to recover from a miscarriage or to cover illness due to pregnancy.
- Paternity leave is leave taken by a male employee in connection with the birth of his child.

Entitlements to such leave are usually contained in laws, awards and agreements. At a minimum, the entitlements apply to full-time and part-time employees who have had 12 months of continuous service with the same employer.

Minimum entitlements

The federal Workplace Relations Act provides a minimum entitlement to 52 weeks of unpaid parental leave following the birth or adoption of a child.

Generally, except for one week following the birth, or three weeks in the case of adoption, parents cannot take parental leave at the same time.

The entitlements provided under the Act cannot be negotiated away or bargained to a lesser entitlement in any form of workplace agreement. You should be aware that the entitlements underpin but do not override more beneficial entitlements that may be available under State laws or in your award or agreement, your contract of employment or your organisation's workplace policy.

Adopting parents

Adopting parents are entitled to take three weeks unpaid leave at the same time when a child is placed with them. Either parent may take up to 52 weeks of unpaid leave when adopting a child under the age of five years.

Casual employees

Some casual and seasonal employees are entitled to parental leave. If you have worked on a regular and systematic basis for at least 12 months with the same employer, you may be entitled to parental leave under some State laws or particular awards or workplace agreements.

Employee rights

The following points cover some of your rights in relation to parental leave.

- You don't need to be married to be entitled to parental leave. You can be single or living in a de facto relationship.
- There is no age qualification for taking parental leave.
- You don't need to be working full-time to be entitled to parental leave.
- Generally, your employer cannot force you to take maternity leave and, if you choose and are medically able to, you may be able to return to work a few days after the baby's birth.
- You cannot be dismissed or transferred to a different position just because you have taken parental leave.
- You are generally not entitled to parental leave if you have worked for your employer for fewer than 12 months. However, you can take accrued leave, such as annual leave. You can discuss other options with your employer, such as taking a period of unpaid leave.
- You could arrange with your employer to take annual leave or long service leave, but your period of parental leave will be reduced by this amount.
- If your workplace is restructured and colleagues are offered other jobs or redundancy packages, you should not be treated any differently because you are on parental leave. You should be included in any consultations that occur while you are on parental leave.
- You can resign while on parental leave by giving the normal period of notice.
- If you have already taken parental leave, you don't have to work for another 12 months before taking parental leave again.
- Leave arrangements can be changed in agreement with your employer. You also have the right to extend your leave once, up to the maximum period of 52 weeks.

Diat worked full-time for a graphic design firm for several years. She decided to take 12 months of unpaid maternity leave. A year later, when she contacted her employer to arrange her return to work, she was told that the person who replaced her had filled her position permanently.



Diat was discriminated against. In most cases, she would be entitled to return to the position she held prior to taking maternity leave. This action was also a breach of parental leave provisions (see page 18 for further information about returning to work after parental leave).

Employee responsibilities

You must tell your employer about your intention to take parental leave. Procedures for doing this differ slightly under various laws, awards and agreements, but early notice will help you and your employer to plan for your leave.

About 10 weeks prior to the expected birth, you need to tell your employer, in writing, of your intention to take maternity or paternity leave. You also need to say how long you plan to be on leave (up to 52 weeks).

Four weeks prior to the time you plan to commence leave, you must formally apply for the leave, and give your employer other documents such as medical certificates or statutory declarations.

Other leave

In most cases the leave entitlements that applied prior to your pregnancy, such as sick leave, annual leave and long service leave, continue to apply during your pregnancy.

Sick leave

You can use sick leave during your pregnancy whether or not your sickness is related to your pregnancy (subject to the usual conditions that apply to your sick leave). You can also use sick leave to attend regular medical appointments associated with your pregnancy. For women in rural and remote areas this may involve long distance travel to access services.

If you use all your sick leave and are still sick and need to take time off, you are able to take unpaid leave. You cannot be dismissed because you are sick and wish to take leave during your pregnancy.

Leave for your partner

Generally, a father can take one week of unpaid paternity leave around the birth of his child. As stated earlier, couples may take three weeks of leave together when a child is being placed with them for adoption.

Many awards and agreements provide for family or carer's leave. You should check your relevant award or agreement to work out your entitlements.

Your partner's employer may allow your partner to take time off to attend prenatal appointments. Your partner could also seek to use accumulated annual leave, personal leave or long service leave. If your partner's employer dismisses your partner for taking time off, it could be unlawful discrimination on the ground of family responsibilities.

Employees and employers— working together

Some women have few complications during pregnancy and breeze through it with little disruption to their normal routines. Others find illness, excessive tiredness or pregnancy complications affect their work. Some employees may have a sickness unrelated to their pregnancy.

If you are taking a lot of time off work and are worried about the effect this may have on your job, you should discuss these concerns with your employer and try to make arrangements that are suitable to both of you.



Greta worked for a vet in a remote country town. She had to travel a considerable distance to attend doctor's appointments, which meant long absences from work. Her employer relied on Greta's attendance when surgery was scheduled. Greta was able to make her doctor's appointments at times that meant she was available to work at critical times.

Aneta did not expect to feel so sick during her pregnancy. A prolonged period of severe morning sickness meant she used all her sick leave in the first four months. At the later stages of her pregnancy, Aneta had complications that required more time

off. Aneta's role was crucial in the organisation and required her regular attendance. She and her employer were able to arrange for someone to take over some of her workload. Aneta also arranged with her employer that she could take her annual leave and, if necessary, some time in lieu or leave without pay.

Tips for rural employers

A rural employer may want to consider the possibility of a pregnant employee using phone services or internet facilities instead of undertaking long distance travel. This may reduce the amount of long distance travel and therefore time away from work that the pregnant employee may need to take, benefiting the employer's business and the employee!

Returning to work

After maternity leave

A key entitlement in the federal Workplace Relations Act is your right to return to the job you held before going on maternity leave. If that job no longer exists, you are entitled to a job similar in pay and position.

If your pregnancy required a temporary adjustment to your normal role, you are entitled to return to the job you held prior to that adjustment.

Breastfeeding and work

You should not be discriminated against if you choose to continue breastfeeding when you return to work. You and your employer could discuss whether practical arrangements can be made so when you return to work you can continue to breastfeed.

Tips for employers

If it is practical, employers can support breastfeeding and work by:

- Considering flexible work practices such as access to flexitime and home-based work.
- Allowing mothers to negotiate lactation breaks to express breastmilk or breastfeed their baby.
- Providing a clean, private room for expressing and/or breastfeeding, with access to a fridge and sink.

Part-time work

You and your employer may agree to change your working arrangements in the period before or after your maternity leave. Some awards and agreements provide for regular part-time employment.

Depending on your circumstances, it may be unlawful for an employer to refuse your request to work part-time.

Miko felt it would be difficult for her to return to full-time work when her maternity leave ended. She asked her employer if she could work on a permanent part-time basis. Initially, her employer agreed. After three months, the employer told Miko she didn't think the new arrangement was working efficiently because a number of projects were not completed on time. The



employer said Miko should return on a full-time basis if she wanted to do this job. The employer also told Miko there were other part-time opportunities elsewhere in the organisation.

It is unlikely that Miko was discriminated against because her employer gave the part-time arrangement a reasonable trial. The arrangement was ended because there was evidence that it did not fit within the reasonable needs of the business.

Donna worked for a medium-sized computer company. In agreement with her employer she returned from maternity leave, working four days a week. Donna soon felt that she was being given less demanding and more demeaning tasks instead of just the amount of work being

decreased to suit her reduced hours. She also believed her status in the company had greatly diminished and that she was no longer invited to attend regular meetings. She felt this was because there was an assumption (openly stated by her employer) that she would become pregnant again.

Donna may have been discriminated against on two grounds. Firstly, on the grounds of her past pregnancy because her responsibilities were reduced after she returned from maternity leave. Secondly, on the basis of potential pregnancy because her employer assumed she would become pregnant again.

Dismissal

It is unlawful for you to be dismissed from your job because you are or may be pregnant or are absent from work on parental leave. It is also unlawful for your fixed-term contract not to be renewed just because you are pregnant. However, it is lawful for you to be dismissed due to poor work performance or redundancy while you are pregnant if these are the true reasons for your dismissal or termination.

Mai had been cautioned about her unsatisfactory work performance on a number of occasions. She was told if her work did not improve, she would be dismissed. Mai was pregnant and applied for maternity leave, but around the same time she received a notice of dismissal. When Mai and her boss discussed her dismissal, she was told that her poor work performance and not the fact she wanted to take maternity leave was the reason for her dismissal.

Mai's employer's actions were likely to have been lawful because her employment was terminated due to poor performance and not because of Mai's pregnancy.

Amber had just started a new job as a receptionist when she found out she was pregnant. She told her employer that she planned on working right up until when the



baby was born and then take one month's unpaid leave. Her employer told her that she could not afford to have her take leave so soon after starting in the job. She told Amber that when Amber left work to have the baby, Amber's employment would be terminated.

Amber's employer would be acting unlawfully if she terminated Amber's employment for these reasons. This is because the reasons are clearly linked to the fact that Amber is pregnant.

Tips for employers

An employer is entitled to dismiss an employee because of poor or inadequate performance, subject to unfair dismissal laws. However, an employer is not entitled to dismiss an employee if her pregnancy or potential pregnancy is a reason for the dismissal (even if it is not the only or main reason).

Where to go for information and advice

Discrimination/harassment/dismissal

- Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission
- State and Territory anti-discrimination boards/agencies
- Working Women's Centres
- Unions
- Community Legal Centres
- Australian Industrial Relations Commission

Workplace relations issues (including advice in relation to awards, agreements and Australian Workplace Agreements)

- Federal Department of Employment and Workplace Relations—Wageline and the Work and Family Unit
- Unions
- Employer organisations
- Office of the Employment Advocate
- State and Territory industrial relations departments
- Working Women's Centres
- Community Legal Centres
- Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency

Leave provisions (including advice on maternity/paternity leave, sick leave and carers leave)

- Your workplace procedures and policies
- Federal Department of Employment and Workplace Relations—Wageline and the Work and Family Unit
- State and Territory industrial relations departments

- Working Women's Centres
- Unions
- Employer organisations

Workplace safety issues

- National Occupational Health and Safety Commission
- WorkCover and WorkSafe agencies
- Unions
- Employer organisations
- Working Women's Centres

Contact details

Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission

Complaints Infoline: 1300 656 419 (local call)

Web site: <http://www.humanrights.gov.au>

State and Territory anti-discrimination agencies

New South Wales

Phone: 1800 670 812

Web site: <http://www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/adb>

Queensland

Phone: 1300 130 670

Web site: <http://www.adcq.qld.gov.au>

South Australia

Phone: 1800 188 163

Web site: <http://www.eoc.sa.gov.au>

Victoria

Phone: 1800 134 142

Web site: <http://www.eoc.vic.gov.au>

Western Australia

Phone: 1800 198 149

Web site: <http://www.equalopportunity.wa.gov.au>

Tasmania

Phone: 1800 632 716

Web site: <http://www.justice.tas.gov.au>**Australian Capital Territory**

Phone: 02 6207 0576

Web site: <http://www.hro.act.gov.au>**Northern Territory**

Phone: 1800 813 846

Web site: <http://adc.nt.gov.au>**Working Women's Centres
(in most States and Territories)****New South Wales and Australian
Capital Territory**

Phone: 1800 062 166

Email: working_womens@fcl.fl.asn.au**Queensland**

Phone: 1800 621 588

Email: qwwc@eis.net.au**South Australia**

Phone: 1800 652 697

Email: wwcsa@camtech.net.au**Tasmania**

Phone: 1800 644 589

Email: wwctas@trump.net.au**Victoria**

Phone: 1800 331 617

Email: jobwatch@vicnet.net.au**Western Australia**

Phone: 1800 625 122

Email: wls@panorama.net.au**Northern Territory**

Phone: 1800 817 055

Email: workingwomennt@dingoblue.net.au**Community Legal Centres****National Association of Community
Legal Centres**

Phone: 02 9264 9595

Web site:

http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/other/clc/clc_toc.html**Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Women's Legal and Advocacy Service**

Phone: 07 3844 2450

Web site:

<http://www.crossland.com.au/aboriginal.html>**Australian Industrial Relations
Commission**

Phone: 03 8661 7777 (principal registry)

Web site: <http://www.airc.gov.au>**Wageline—Department of
Employment and Workplace
Relations**

Phone: 1300 363 264 (national office)

Web site: <http://www.wagenet.gov.au>Web site: <http://www.dewr.gov.au>**Work and Family Unit—
Department of Employment and
Workplace Relations**

Phone: 02 6121 7742

Web site:

<http://www.dewr.gov.au/workplacerelations/workandfamily/>

Office of the Employment Advocate

Phone: 1300 366 632 (local call)

Web site: www.oea.gov.au

State and Territory industrial relations agencies

New South Wales

Phone: 131 628

Web site: <http://www.dir.nsw.gov.au>

Queensland

Phone: 1300 369 945

Web site: <http://www.detir.qld.gov.au>

South Australia

Phone: 1300 365 255

Web site: <http://www.eric.sa.gov.au>

Victoria

Phone: 1300 363 264

Web site: <http://www.irv.vic.gov.au>

Western Australia

Phone: 1300 655 266

Web site: <http://www.doplar.wa.gov.au>

Tasmania

Phone: 1300 366 322

Web site: <http://www.wsa.tas.gov.au>

Australian Capital Territory

Phone: 02 6205 0200

Web site: <http://www.workcover.act.gov.au>

Northern Territory

Phone: 1300 363 264

Web site: <http://www.wagenet.gov.au>

Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency

Phone: 02 8255 6300

Web site:

<http://www.eowa.gov.au/aboutus/index.html>

National Occupational Health and Safety Commission

Phone: 1800 252 226

Web site: <http://www.nohsc.gov.au>

WorkCover/WorkSafe agencies

New South Wales

Phone: 131 050

Web site: <http://www.workcover.nsw.gov.au>

Queensland

Phone: 1300 369 915

Web site: <http://www.dtir.qld.gov.au>

South Australia

Phone: 1800 888 508

Web site: <http://www.workcover.com>

Victoria

Phone: 03 9641 1555

Web site: <http://www.workcover.vic.gov.au>

Western Australia

Phone: 08 9327 8777

Web site: <http://www.safetyline.wa.gov.au>

Tasmania

Phone: 1300 366 322

Web site: <http://www.wsa.tas.gov.au>

Australian Capital Territory

Phone: 02 6205 0200

Web site: <http://www.workcover.act.gov.au>

Northern Territory

Phone: 08 8999 5010

Web site: <http://www.nt.gov.au/wha>

Pregnancy guidelines provide the answers

Detailed pregnancy guidelines were produced in 2001 by the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, in consultation with employer organisations, unions, government and other stakeholders. These guidelines clarify many of the issues surrounding pregnancy and work.

While pregnancy is a normal, healthy physical condition that many women experience, at work there are anti-discrimination, workplace relations and occupational health and safety laws that cover pregnancy. The intersection of these laws can at times be complex and confusing. The guidelines address the overlap to help people better understand and adhere to the existing frameworks.

Contact the Commission or go to www.humanrights.gov.au for a copy of the guidelines.