



Trust Headquarters
Nexus House
4 Gatwick Road
Crawley
West Sussex
RH10 9BG

Date

Email:

Dear,

Tel: 0300 123 0999
www.secamb.nhs.uk

I am writing in response to your enquiry under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) reference FOI 240149.

You requested the following information, please see our response below:

Under the Freedom of Information Act, I would like to request the following information:

Could you please provide the total number of frontline employees who have taken maternity or adoption leave within the last 5 years. Please also provide the number of these employees who have not returned to work after their maternity leave finished, and also the number who have left your trust within 6 months and 12 months after returning to work.

We have had **342 episodes of maternity and adoption leave** taken by frontline staff (including HART and Ops Management) in the last 5 years - this number includes those who have taken multiple periods of leave in this time and those who were still on leave as at 31/12/2023.

For the above figure, there were **271 members of frontline staff** took maternity/adoption leave.

7 of these members of staff did not return to work after their most recent period of maternity leave (this figure may be higher if leaving after taking accrued annual leave is accounted for, but we do not have access to this information).

A further **20** members of staff left within **6 months** after their most recent maternity leave ended.

A further **11** members of staff left within **12 months** after their most recent maternity leave ended.

Could you also please provide the average length of maternity leave taken by frontline employees.

The average length for all maternity leave episodes (**342**), is **277 days** (this does not include those who were still on maternity leave on the 31/12/23).

If your organisation offers the opportunity for maternity pay to be averaged over the maternity period, please provide the equation that is used to calculate the amount that is paid monthly to those who choose to take advantage of this option.

The Trust doesn't currently offer the averaged maternity pay option. However when maternity pay is averaged over the maternity pay period it is only the occupational part that is averaged. The statutory maternity pay is paid in the normal way based on the number of days within the month.

For those employees who are on 'section 2' and therefore paid for the unsocial hours that they work (as opposed to the generic 25% as per Agenda for Change), please could you confirm whether they are paid any unsocial payments whilst on annual leave, and if so, how this amount is calculated. If a software system is used to calculate the figure, please provide the formulae it uses.

The GRS system currently pays Unsocial hours whilst on leave based on the underlying rota pattern, if there isn't a rota pattern then the system calculates the rolling 365 day average of Unsocial hours worked and then this is applied to relief shifts with a value. This process is currently being reviewed as it is not applying a representative amount of unsocial on unplanned weeks.

For those employees on section 2, how are unsocial payments calculated and paid whilst an employee is pregnant and on therefore on alternate duties?

Protected section 2 unsocial hours are calculated on an average of hours unsocial hours worked/paid over the last 3 months and/or 12 months using the most advantageous for the employee. These hours are then paid for the duration of the protected period.

How are unsocial payments included in maternity pay?

Maternity pay is calculated by averaging your total pay (gross earnings) over the two months which precede the 15th week before your EWC. This includes your basic pay, unsocial payments and all taxable payments paid within those two months. If you are due an increment or pay award within your maternity leave payment period, this will be taken into account and your average earnings adjusted from the effective date of the uplift.

I hope you find this information of some assistance.

If for any reason you are dissatisfied with our response, kindly in the first instance contact Caroline Smart, Head of Information Governance via the following email address:

FOI@secamb.nhs.uk

Yours sincerely

**Freedom of Information Coordinator
South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust**