

A step towards family and maternity leave security

May 2023

The [Protection from Redundancy \(Pregnancy and Family Leave\) Bill 2022-23](#) is to be heard before the Lords on 19 May 2023.

New legislation regarding family and maternity leave, which aims to protect women and new parents, is to come a step closer as it has its third reading in the House of Lords on 19 May 2023.

The Bill addresses the discrimination women report during pregnancy and maternity leave. Three in four mothers have a negative experience or suffer potential discrimination during this time.

Some 11% of those [canvassed](#) reported being dismissed or feeling forced to leave their job, and 20% of mothers surveyed indicated experiencing harassment or negative comments about their pregnancy or flexible working from their employer or colleagues.

Subject to the Bill becoming law in its current form, pregnant women and those returning from family leave should find themselves in a stronger position, with employers required to offer alternative vacancies to anyone under threat of redundancy in those situations and for a more extended period upon returning from such leave.

Under current rules, employers must offer a suitable alternative vacancy where one exists before offering redundancy when an employee is on maternity leave, shared parental leave or adoption leave.

The Bill, introduced by Dan Jarvis MP and backed by the government, will extend this redundancy protection to pregnant women before they take maternity leave and to new parents during the six months after they return to work from a relevant form of leave.

Employment partner [Karen Cole](#) said:

"This Private Member's Bill introduces a significant level of additional security to parents taking time out of the workplace to raise a family, putting them at the top of the queue for an alternative role. It's an important step in overcoming reported discrimination."

Karen added:

"It is sensible for employers to be mindful of the draft legislation now, as there has been no opposition to the Bill so far. It makes sense to identify the new timeframes which are likely to apply in future redundancy consultations".

Whether you're an employer or an individual, speak to [Karen Cole](#) today for more information on family and maternity leave or redundancy.

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Note: This article is not legal advice; it provides information of general interest about current legal issues.

