

Severn Group

Menopause Policy

MENOPAUSE

DECEMBER 2023

We value the sense of belonging and family spirit across our operations. Everyone at Severn Group contributes to our success – we are incentivised and empowered to positively impact business achievements, environmental sustainability and high performance in safety.

Introduction

We recognise that the menopause will have an adverse impact on the working life of many employees and we are committed to supporting those affected by the menopause.

Who does this Policy apply to?

This Policy applies to all employees.

Our Policy's Purpose?

- support employees experiencing the menopause to remain at work;
- raise awareness of the menopause and its impact in the workplace;
- encourage open conversations about the menopause between colleagues, including Line Managers; and
- ensure employees know where they can access relevant advice and assistance.

What is menopause?

Menopause is a natural event during which a person stops having periods and experiences hormonal changes such as a decrease in oestrogen levels. Trans and non-binary people who may not identify as female may also go through the menopause.

The majority of people who experience menopause will do so between the ages of 45 and 55. However, some people may start to experience symptoms of menopause at a younger age. Symptoms typically last between four and eight years, although they continue for longer for some people.

Some of the most common symptoms of menopause include:

- disturbed sleep
- hot flushes and night sweats
- heavy bleeding and period pains
- headaches
- fatigue
- muscle and joint pains
- heart palpitations
- recurrent urinary tract infections
- thinning hair and brittle nails

Awareness

- weight gain
- depression and anxiety
- tearfulness
- short temper
- memory loss
- poor concentration
- cloudy thinking (sometimes referred to as “brain fog”)

Menopause symptoms may also exacerbate existing impairments and ongoing medical conditions that those affected may already be struggling to cope with.

Most people who go through the menopause will experience some symptoms, although everyone is different and symptoms can fluctuate.

The period before menopause is known as peri-menopause. During this time, the body is preparing itself for menopause. Peri-menopause can also last several years and can involve similar symptoms to menopause itself.

The period after menopause is known as post-menopause. During post-menopause, some people may continue to experience symptoms similar to menopause itself. There can also be an increased risk of some health conditions post-menopause, such as cardiovascular (heart) disease, osteoporosis (weak bones) and urinary tract infections.

Any reference to menopause in this Policy includes peri-menopause and post-menopause.

Some people seek medical advice and treatment for the symptoms of menopause. A common form of treatment is known as hormone replacement therapy (HRT). Many people find this treatment helpful for alleviating symptoms, but HRT is not appropriate for everyone. Some people using HRT may experience side effects which may also require support in the workplace.

Awareness and open conversations

Menopause is not just an issue for those with symptoms. It is important that all employees have an awareness of menopause, so that they can support colleagues who are going through it or who are otherwise affected by it. For example, the menopause may have an impact on those supporting someone else going through the menopause, for example a relative, partner, colleague or carer.

Support

We are committed to creating an open and supportive culture and ensuring everyone is treated with dignity and respect. We aim to facilitate an understanding work environment in which employees can have open conversations with their colleagues and managers about menopause and how it may be affecting them at work.

We encourage anyone affected by menopause at work to talk to their Line Manager and/or the People Team at an early stage about their own symptoms, or how menopause is otherwise affecting them at work. Telling us about any issues you may be experiencing will enable us to offer support as appropriate.

Support and adjustments

Many people are able to carry on their working lives as normal during menopause. However, we recognise that some people may be more severely impacted by menopause symptoms and we may therefore, in appropriate cases, consider adjustments to working conditions to mitigate the impact of those symptoms on their work.

If you wish to ask for support or for any adjustments to your working conditions, please speak to your Line Manager in the first instance. If you do not feel comfortable speaking to your Line Manager, you can speak to the People Team as an alternative. However, your Line Manager will still need to be involved in agreeing any adjustments.

Depending on individual needs and business requirements and resources, the sorts of adjustments that may be provided could include:

- temperature control (such as the provision of fans or positioning a workstation closer to a window or other ventilation)
- more frequent breaks from the workstation
- changes to work allocation
- flexibility around uniform requirements
- home/hybrid working arrangements
- adjusted start and finish times

The above are examples only and not an exhaustive list.

In order to better understand your symptoms and any adjustments or other support we can provide to help alleviate their effect on you at work, we may refer you to Occupational Health and/or advice you to seek advice from your doctor.

Support

Symptoms of the menopause can fluctuate over time and your needs may change as a result. We will therefore follow up with you on a regular basis to check that any agreed adjustments are working effectively, whether they are still required and/or whether any further changes should be considered.

If you need additional support with your menopause symptoms, including if they are affecting your mental health, you can also contact our confidential Employee Assistance Programme.

If you work in ValvTechnologies you can access the Employee Assistance Programme at [Health Advocate](#) or by calling [888.293.6948](tel:888.293.6948).

If you work in any other division you can access the Employee Assistance Programme at [Spectrum.Life](#) by creating an account using the code: Severn.

If you experience any issues accessing the service, please speak to a member of the People Team.

We have a team of Mental Health First Aiders (MHFA) who you can speak to about your mental health. MHFA are not therapists, but they are trained to listen and signpost to the most appropriate support service. You can find details of the Mental Health First Aiders displayed on site noticeboards.

Sickness absence

In the same way as for other conditions, you are not expected to work on any day on which you are too unwell for work with menopause symptoms. This includes the sudden onset of symptoms during the working day. If you are unwell and unable to work, you should follow the procedure set out in our Absence Management Policy.

You do not have to disclose that your absence is related to menopause. However, we would encourage you to be open about the reason for your leave if possible, as this will better enable us to provide appropriate support.

Health and safety risk assessments

We recognise our duty to ensure the health and safety of all employees and our health and safety risk assessments will include consideration of any aspects of the working environment that may worsen menopause symptoms. This may include identifying specific risks to the health and wellbeing of those experiencing menopause and taking appropriate steps to address them.

Support

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

This Policy is part of our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. We are committed to eliminating discrimination amongst our workforce.

Employees should report any instances of harassment, discrimination or victimisation experienced because of issues related to the menopause to their Line Manager or the People Team.

If an employee is found to have harassed, discriminated against or victimised a colleague in relation to the menopause, this will be dealt with as a disciplinary matter in accordance with the Disciplinary Policy.

Data protection

We aim to deal with matters connected to menopause sensitively and with due respect for the privacy of the individuals involved.

For information about our processing of personal data under this Policy, including details of our legal grounds for doing so, how long we retain such personal data, who your personal data is shared with, your rights under data protection law and who you should contact if you have any concerns, please see our Employee Privacy Notice, which can be accessed via the Group Policy Hub, Cezanne, or a copy obtained from the People Team.

Additional information and support

The following organisations can provide additional information about the menopause and support for people experiencing menopause symptoms:

British Menopause Society
www.thebms.org.uk/

The Daisy Network
www.daisynetwork.org.uk

Indian Menopause Society
[Indian Menopause Society \(IMS\)](http://IndianMenopauseSociety.org.uk)

[International Menopause Society](https://www.imsociety.org/)
<https://www.imsociety.org/>

Support

The Menopause Charity

<https://www.themenopausecharity.org/>

Menopause Matters

www.menopausematters.co.uk

NHS information pages

www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Menopause/Pages/Introduction.aspx

Agreement to follow this Policy

This Menopause Policy is fully supported by The Executive Committee.

This Policy is non-contractual and may be amended at any time.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Absence Management Policy, Anti-Harassment Policy, Code of Conduct, Employee Privacy Notice, Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy. All Severn Group Policies can be accessed via the Group Policy Hub.



At Severn Group, our business success flows from expertise – from technical knowledge and experience that position us as a leader in our field. Not everything, however, can be engineered. The Values which underpin that success stem instinctively from the culture we seek to sustain. Everything we do is tested against our Values, and our people are encouraged to apply them every day: they are the stewards of our brand, our reputation, our heritage, our ambitions.



Customer



Integrity



Excellence



Accountability



SEVERN
Superior Valve Engineering