



## Supporting Members on maternity leave

# FACT SHEET

## Your rights about returning to your job after accessing maternity leave

### KEY ISSUES

- *Rights and responsibilities regarding returning to work may depend on the clauses in your collective agreement.*
- *You should confirm your intention to return to work with your employer in writing.*
- *Being a member of QIEU while on maternity leave ensure you have access to support and advice when returning to work.*

### ACTION

*Check your specific agreement or contact a Member Services Officer to ensure that you are aware of your specific rights and responsibilities regarding returning to work after maternity leave*

### CONTACTS

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Your collective agreements may contain specific requirements regarding returning to work after a period of maternity leave. In most cases, agreements will draw on the clauses contained in the *Family Leave Award 2003*, the *Industrial Relations Act 1999* or the *Workplace Relations Act 1996*.

The following information provides a basic overview of your rights and responsibilities regarding returning to work, but it is essential that you check your collective agreements for your specific rights and responsibilities regarding this issue. As a QIEU member, you can also contact a Member Services Officer who will be able to provide you with specific advice.

You should confirm your intention to return to work by notice in writing to your employer not less than four weeks prior to the expiration of leave.

On your return you are entitled to:

- the position that you held immediately before starting maternity leave or,
- where such a position no longer exists, a position nearly comparable in status and pay to that of your former position;
- if you transferred to a safe job because of the pregnancy, you are entitled to return to the position you held before the transfer; and
- if you are a long term casual who had your hours reduced because of the pregnancy, you are entitled to the hours you worked prior to the reduction.

Ensuring that your rights regarding returning to work are upheld is one reason why you should remain a QIEU member whilst on maternity leave. Some other reasons why membership is important include assistance to ensure:

- proportion of salary/annual leave entitlements are correct upon starting maternity leave;
- your rights if you need to extend your maternity leave;
- you are kept up to date with professional and legal issues in the profession;
- access to QIEU's signature journal *The Independent Voice* and other relevant publications;
- assistance in negotiation part time or job share arrangements; and
- access to a wide range of member benefits including Union Shopper.