



Dr. Qaisar Ali Associates (SMC-Private) Limited Structural Design Specialists

CONSULT/1665

Parental Support & Caregiving Policy

Introduction

At Dr. Qaisar Ali Associates, we recognize that our employees are our most valuable asset. In line with our core values of Equity, Fairness, and Respect and Dignity as outlined in our Diversity and Inclusion Policy, we are committed to supporting our employees through all stages of their lives. This policy is designed not only to comply with but to exceed the standards set by the Pakistan Maternity and Paternity Leave Act, 2023. We provide a supportive framework for employees who are parents or caregivers, and we specifically address the health, safety, and hygiene needs of our female employees, thereby fostering an inclusive, legally compliant, and productive work environment.

Scope

This policy applies to all permanent, full-time employees of Dr. Qaisar Ali Associates. Provisions for part-time or contract employees will be considered on a case-by-case basis in accordance with applicable laws and our commitment to equitable treatment.

Policy Provisions

Maternity Leave

In compliance with and exceeding the spirit of the Pakistan Maternity and Paternity Leave Act, 2023, DQA provides the following enhanced benefits.

- **Eligibility:** All permanent female employees.
- **Leave Entitlement:**
 - **First Birth:** 180 days (approximately 6 months) of fully paid maternity leave.
 - **Second Birth:** 120 days (approximately 4 months) of fully paid maternity leave.
 - **Third Birth:** 90 days (approximately 3 months) of fully paid maternity leave.

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This benefit is applicable for the first three births during an employee's service with DQA.

- **Application:** Employees must notify their manager and HR at least three months before the expected date of delivery, supported by a medical certificate.
- **Job Security & Non-Discrimination:** In accordance with recent high court rulings and our Zero-Tolerance Policy against discrimination, it is strictly prohibited to terminate or issue a termination notice to an employee on maternity leave. The employee is guaranteed the right to return to the same position or a comparable position with the same terms, conditions, and seniority. Maternity leave will not affect annual increments, promotion eligibility, or other employment benefits.
- **Nursing Breaks:** For a period of six months after returning to work, a nursing mother is entitled to two additional paid breaks of 30 minutes each day to nurse her child.

Paternal Leave

To support new fathers in our workforce and promote shared family responsibilities, DQA provides the following statutory benefit:

- **Eligibility:** All permanent male employees.
- **Leave Entitlement:** 10 days of fully paid paternity leave for each of the first three instances of childbirth during their service.
- **Application:** Employees should notify their manager and HR at least one month in advance, where possible, and provide a copy of the child's birth certificate.

Support for Parents & Caregivers

We understand that employees have responsibilities beyond the workplace. To support this:

- **Flexible Work Arrangements:** Upon request, employees returning from parental leave may be eligible for flexible work arrangements, such as adjusted start/end times or remote work, subject to operational requirements and managerial approval.
- **Caregiver Leave:** Employees are entitled to use a portion of their annual sick leave or casual leave to care for an immediate family member (spouse, child, parent) who is ill. HR will handle such requests with sensitivity and confidentiality.

Paid Time Off for Healthcare Appointments

DQA encourages all employees to prioritize their health and well-being.

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Employees are entitled to take a reasonable amount of paid time off for scheduled medical, dental, or other essential healthcare appointments, including pre-natal and post-natal check-ups.

Employees are expected to provide their manager with as much advance notice as possible. A medical certificate may be requested for appointments exceeding half a day.

Health, Safety & Hygiene Needs of Women

In our commitment to providing a "Safe and Healthy Workplace" as per our Labor Standards, we undertake specific measures to support our female employees:

- **Rest Facilities:** A clean, private, and secure rest area will be available for female employees who may need to rest during the workday, particularly during pregnancy.
- **Separate washrooms:** The company will provide a separate washroom for its female employees.
- **Safe Environment:** We are committed to ensuring a safe work environment for all, especially for women. This includes ensuring well-lit premises, secure transportation arrangements for employees working late hours, or a taxi reimbursement policy.
- **Sensitization:** To foster a respectful and supportive culture, management and staff will be provided with sensitization training on health and hygiene matters affecting women, reinforcing our policy of a workplace "free from discrimination, harassment, and bullying."

Roles, Responsibilities & Compliance

- **Employees:** Are responsible for familiarizing themselves with this policy and communicating their needs to their manager and HR in a timely and transparent manner.
- **Managers:** Are responsible for being aware of this policy, handling requests sensitively, approving reasonable arrangements, and maintaining confidentiality.
- **HR Department:** Is responsible for implementing the policy, maintaining records, providing guidance to employees and managers, and ensuring full compliance with the Maternity and Paternity Leave Act, 2023.

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- **Company Commitment:** DQA strictly adheres to this policy. We acknowledge that violations can result in penalties including fines and imprisonment, and we are fully committed to upholding these legal standards for our employees.

Confidentiality and Non-Retaliation

All information related to an employee's health, pregnancy, or caregiving situation will be treated with strict confidentiality, shared only with those who have a legitimate need to know.

As stated in our Code of Conduct and Equal Opportunity policy, retaliation against any employee for exercising their rights under this policy in good faith is strictly prohibited and will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Policy Governance

This policy will be reviewed annually by the HR Department and the Leadership Team to ensure it remains competitive, fully compliant with evolving laws, and aligns with the company's strategic D&I objectives.