

# Greater protection for pregnant women and new parents

February 2019

New proposals to give pregnant women and new mothers returning to work greater protection from being treated unfairly were published in January by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy ([BEIS](#)).

The [consultation](#) (ending on 5 April 2019) is in response to research carried out by BEIS in collaboration with the [Equality and Human Rights Commission](#) in 2016, which showed that one in nine women said they were either fired, made redundant or treated badly as a way of forcing them to leave their jobs when they returned to work after having a child. The same research estimated that 54,000 women a year may lose their jobs due to pregnancy or maternity.

The government is looking to extend the legal protection against redundancy so that it continues for up to six months after new parents and pregnant women return to work, thereby extending the current protection to those on maternity leave.

At present, [The Equality Act 2010](#) states that there is a 'protected period' protecting pregnant women and new mothers from being discriminated against when they return to work. This period commences from the start of a woman's pregnancy until she returns to work after maternity leave.

The views on affording the same legal protections for parents that are returning from adoption leave or shared parental leave will also be discussed during the consultation.

**For more information, why not contact [Christine Slevin](#), or [click here to make an appointment](#).**

**Christine Slevin**  
020 7299 6920  
[christine.slevin@riaabg.com](mailto:christine.slevin@riaabg.com)  
[www.riaabarkergillette.com](http://www.riaabarkergillette.com)



Note: This is not legal advice; it is intended to provide information of general interest about current legal issues.

