Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) Template

Section 1: Details of the policy/practice/project

| **Information required** | **Enter information below** |
| --- | --- |
| Department/Team responsible | People Team: HR Policy Team |
| Name of Policy, Practice or Project being assessed | Special Leave Policy |
| Purpose and anticipated outcomes | To incorporate new statutory entitlements to parental bereavement leave, but offer a more generous occupational provision in this area than the statutory minimum; and  include other best practice provisions, such as time off for fertility treatment, etc. |
| Is this a new or existing Policy, Practice or Project? | Special Leave provisions exist, however these are outdated, a new policy will be created. |
| List of participants in Equality Impact Assessment process | Nichola Corrigan, HR Policy Manager |
| Date Assessment started | 6 October 2022 |
| Completion date | 5 April 2023 |
| Who is likely to be affected?  *E.g. employees, visitors, contractors, women, men, young people, older people, people with disabilities etc.* | **All employees** except for: Senior Civil Servants; (agency workers / contractors aren’t employees) Through employee using this policy some of these groups will be indirectly affected as a result of the policy provisions, e.g. Foster Carer’s leave, compassionate leave for caring responsibilities, dependent’s leave, civic duty – volunteering with different groups. |

Section 2: Collecting information

What evidence is available about the needs of relevant groups? Please consider demographic data, including census information, research, consultation and survey reports, feedback and complaints, case law, others knowledge and experience. Please refer to the list of evidence on the EqIA page of the intranet.

| **Details** | **Source of evidence** |
| --- | --- |
| The Special Leave data for FLS 2021 calendar year indicates: -  52 employees took an average of 4 days’ special leave (reason not specified), 1 employee took special leave for Jury Service and 6 employees took special leave for volunteering purposes, 5 due to COVID, and 5 employees took unpaid leave | Payroll Report |
| The Special Leave Data for SF 2021 calendar year indicates that eleven employees took an average of 3 days’ special leave (reason not specified), 1 day for Jury Service, 2 days for volunteering purposes, 2 days due to COVID, and two employees took 30 days’ unpaid leave. | Payroll Report |
| FLS  number of staff - 1080  female 35%  male 65%  aged 39 years and under 35%  aged 40 and over         65%  declared disability        5%  minority ethnicity \*%  gender reassignment   \*%  LGBT+   \*% | FLS workforce Data - iTrent |
| SF  number of staff - 205  female 53%  male 47%  aged 39 years and under 30%  aged 40 and over 70%  declared disability  6%  minority ethnicity 3%  gender reassignment   \*%  LGBT+   4%  Data less than 2% has been replaced with \* to prevent disclosure of personal data | SF workforce Data |

| **From your research above, if you have you identified any gaps in evidence, enter the details of the gaps below** |
| --- |
| We don’t currently record special leave reasons on iTrent, but intend to start doing so, in line with the policy re-launch to enable more specific reporting. |

| **As appropriate, please describe below, the consultation/engagement undertaken, including details of the groups involved and the methods used** |
| --- |
| A Policy Brief was drafted, setting out the principles of a new approach, legal considerations and detailing the benchmarking undertaken. This was reviewed and signed off by the Head of People & OD and Deputy Head of HR. These principles were then presented to the Management Board and the Executive Teams for consideration and approval.  We also sought feedback on the new approach and draft policy. Members of the People Team (HRBPs, payroll, E&D Manager, Wellbeing) were also invited to provide feedback on the draft policy. A draft of the policy was shared with FTUS. |

| **Detail below if there are any other groups to be consulted** |
| --- |
|  |

Section 3: Impacts

Has the research and consultation identified any potential for impacts on those with the following protected characteristics:

| **Protected Characteristic** | **Potential Impact (yes or no)** | **Explain** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Age**  *E.g. older people, children including looked after children, young people including care leavers* | Yes – positive impact | The new policy includes provisions for taking Leave for Dependent’s, Foster Carer’s Leave, Compassionate Leave. |
| **Disability**  *E.g. long term mental health conditions, neurodiversity, physical impairments* | No | It is not considered that the policy will directly impact on individuals / groups due to disability. |
| **Gender reassignment**  *Where a person is living as a different gender to that at birth* | No | This does not come under the scope of this policy, leave for gender reassignment surgery and support would be considered under the sickness absence policy / procedure. |
| **Pregnancy and maternity**  *Including breastfeeding* | Yes – positive impact | Parental Bereavement Leave - parents who suffer a stillbirth after 24 weeks of pregnancy. You'll also still be entitled to Maternity leave if you're the mother, or paternity leave if you're the father.  Bereavement Leave - it also includes time off and pay for parents who suffer a miscarriage up to 23 weeks of pregnancy.  Time off for fertility treatment - will also positively impact women hoping to conceive. |
| **Race, ethnicity, colour, nationality or national origins**  *Including gypsies or travellers, refugees or asylum seekers* | No |  |
| **Race, ethnicity, colour, nationality or national origins**  *Including gypsies or travellers, refugees or asylum seekers* | No | The original definition / category for entitlement has been broadened. This is no longer confined to close relatives and is a ‘significant person’ and this includes a ‘religious leader’ – provisions under - Bereavement Leave, compassionate leave – leave to observe religious mourning. |
| **Religion or belief**  *Including non-belief* | Yes | Fertility Treatment, Safe Leave (for employees experiencing domestic abuse) More likely to be taken up by women. |
| **Sex/Gender** | Yes – but an assumption |  |
| **Marriage and civil partnership** | No |  |
| **Sexual Orientation** |  |  |

Is there any evidence that the policy may result in any less favourable treatment, discrimination, harassment or victimization as detailed below:

| **Potential outcome of the policy** | **Delete as appropriate** | **If yes, give details of the potential outcome and any project modifications to mitigate the risk** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Result in less favourable treatment for particular groups | No | Some of these leave categories are more likely to apply to females, they may receive more special leave. This is not favourable treatment but reflects the type of leave needed. E.g. Fertility treatment, safe leave. |
| Give rise to direct or indirect discrimination | No evidence |  |
| Give rise to unlawful harassment or victimisation | No evidence |  |

Section 4: Meeting our General Equality Duty

| **Enter below which aspects of the Policy, Practice or Project seek to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation** |
| --- |
| The addition of safe leave seeks to support employees experiencing domestic abuse. Compassionate leave applies in the case of religious mourning, fertility treatment applies to partners and spouses as well as staff members going through treatment themselves. Our wider guidance supports these messages and signposts employees and managers to sources of additional help or support either internally, from their manager, HR Contact or Mental Health first aider, Occupational Health or from outside agencies such as the Employee Assistance Programme. |

| **Enter below which aspects of the Policy, Practice or Project seek to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not** |
| --- |
| n/a |

| **Enter below which aspects of the Policy, Practice or Project seek to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not** |
| --- |
| n/a |

Section 5: Outcome of the assessment

| **Outcome of the assessment on the Policy, Practice or Project** | **Enter detail below** |
| --- | --- |
| No major change | x |
| Adjust the Policy, Practice or Project |  |
| Continue to Policy, Practice or Project | x |
| Stop and remove the Policy, Practice or Project |  |

| **Detail below recommendations, including action required, to address any negative impacts identified** |
| --- |
|  |

Section 6: Monitoring

| **Describe below how you will monitor the impact of this Policy, Practice or Project**  *E.g. performance indicators used, other monitoring arrangements, who will monitor progress, criteria used to measure achievement of outcomes etc.* |
| --- |
| The new categories of Special Leave will be added to iTrent. Reports can be run from iTrent to review the uptake of different types of Special Leave and monitor use. |

| **When and how is the Policy, Practice or Project due to be reviewed?** |
| --- |
| It will be reviewed when employment legislation changes and as part of the HR plan. |

Section 7: Sign off

| **Required information** | **Enter information below** |
| --- | --- |
| Date sent to Equality and Diversity Manager | 7/10/2022 |
| Comments from Equality and Diversity Manager | 7/10/22 |
| Date signed off by Equality and Diversity Manager | 17/10/22 |

| **Details of Senior Manager who has signed off this Equality Impact Assessment** | **Enter information below** |
| --- | --- |
| Name | Julie Fitzpatrick |
| Title | Head of People & OD |
| Date approved | 05/04/2023 |

Please send this completed and approved Equality Impact Assessment to:

[Ella Hashemi](mailto:ella.hashemi@forestryandland.gov.scot), Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager, Forestry and Land Scotland