



## **The General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University**

### **MATERNITY AND PATERNITY THAT SUPPORT WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION**

#### **Introduction:**

The General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University is committed to fostering an inclusive and supportive academic environment that promotes gender equality. The Maternity and Paternity Support Policy aims to facilitate the active participation of both women and men in the university community by providing comprehensive support during maternity and paternity periods by providing an environment where employees could balance their work and family responsibilities, thereby enhance the overall well-being.

#### **Policy Statements:**

##### 1. Empowerment and Inclusion of Women:

KDU commits to actively promote and ensure equal opportunities for women's participation across all sectors, fostering an environment where women can contribute and excel.

KDU is committed to eliminate all forms of discrimination, bias, and barriers that hinder women's involvement, and seeks to create platforms for their leadership, skill development, and meaningful engagement, thus advancing gender equality and enriching the collective progress of our institution and society.

##### 2. Maternity Leave:

Female employees are entitled to maternity leave as mandated by the prevailing labour laws and regulations.

The university will fully adhere to legal requirements for maternity leave duration, benefits, and provisions.

Maternity leave requests will be processed promptly and discreetly, ensuring privacy and dignity for the expecting mother.

##### 3. Flexible Work Arrangements:

The university will grant a maternity grace period for women who have completed 05 months of pregnancy. Female employees will be allowed to either report to work one hour late or leave early commencing from their 6<sup>th</sup> month of the pregnancy.

Female employees returning from maternity leave will have the option to request flexible or hybrid work arrangements, including reduced hours, remote work, or part-time schedules,

where feasible, compatible with job responsibilities and conforms with the internal guidelines of the university.

The university will strive to accommodate these requests without compromising job responsibilities and performance expectations.

#### 4. Lactation Support:

Nursing intervals will be granted where the employee would be allowed to report to work one hour late and leave a hour before designated period of time, and supervisors will be trained to be supportive and understanding of this need.

#### 5. Paternity Leave:

Married male employees will be entitled to paternity leave as mandated by the prevailing law to support their partners during childbirth and the immediate postpartum period.

Paternity leave requests will be processed promptly, encouraging male employees to actively participate in their family responsibilities.

#### 6. Gender Sensitivity Training and Orientation Program

All employees, including supervisors and managers, will undergo gender sensitivity training to foster an environment that respects and values diversity and gender equality (GAD) especially on women's rights to health, decent work, and overall wellness.

All employees will be oriented on maternity and paternity leave benefits including the laws, regulations, and processes as well as handling and addressing maternity and paternity-related matters with sensitivity and respect.

Training will include discussions on unconscious bias, fair treatment, and recognizing and addressing gender-related challenges.

#### 7. Workload Adjustment:

Female employees returning from maternity leave will have the option to discuss potential workload adjustments with their Head of the Departments, ensuring a balanced distribution of tasks to support a smoother transition back to work.

#### 8. Career Advancement and Development:

Maternity and paternity leave will not be considered as hindrances to career advancement.

Performance evaluations and opportunities for professional development will be based on skills, competencies, and contributions.

### **Implementation:**

This policy will be communicated widely within the university community through official channels, including the university website, and other relevant publications. The Academic

Establishment Division will oversee the implementation of this policy and ensure that it is communicated to all employees.

Training programs on maternity and paternity support will be provided to staff, and faculty in handling maternity and paternity-related requests with sensitivity and respect.

**Review:**

This policy will be periodically reviewed and updated to ensure its alignment with legal requirements and best practices and its effectiveness with the university's commitment to fostering an inclusive and supportive environment for both women and men's participation in academic and professional activities.

At The General Sir John Kotelawala University, we believe that a supportive maternity and paternity policy is crucial to fostering a culture of gender equality and promoting the holistic well-being of our employees. This policy demonstrates our commitment to providing a work environment that empowers all individuals to balance their professional and family responsibilities effectively.

**Related policies:** Policy for Gender Equity & Equality

<b>Effective Date</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> November 2022
<b>Last revised</b>	-