

Menopause at Work:

Your Rights

When symptoms can count as a disability, what your employer must do,
and where to get help.



Last reviewed: October 2026



Acas · EHRC · Equality Commission NI · LRA



England, Wales & Scotland, with a Northern Ireland slide

ukworkrights.co.uk

Is the menopause protected?

- The menopause is not itself listed as a protected characteristic.
- You are protected from discrimination because of sex, age and disability.
- Sex and age protection applies even if your symptoms are not a disability.
- Protection covers direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

When symptoms can be a disability

- Not automatically. It depends on the effect of your symptoms.
- Disability means an impairment with a "substantial" and "long-term" effect on normal day-to-day activities.
- "Substantial" means more than minor or trivial. "Long-term" means 12 months or more.
- Only a tribunal can finally decide.

⚡ THE KEY POINT

If your symptoms are a disability, your employer must make reasonable adjustments.

What your employer can do

- Reasonable adjustments can include doing things another way, changing equipment, or flexible hours or part-time working.
- Employers must assess workplace risks under health and safety law.
- Acas says a risk assessment could look at: temperature and ventilation, uniforms that are too hot, somewhere suitable to rest, easy access to toilets, and cold drinking water.
- Acas advises employers to record menopause-related sickness absence separately.

Time off and flexible working

- Employees can ask for flexible working from their first day. The employer must decide within 2 months and discuss the request before refusing it.
- There is no general legal right to time off for menopause-related appointments, but your contract may give you time off.
- If your symptoms are a disability, time off for appointments can be a reasonable adjustment.
- Employers with 250 or more workers can publish a menopause action plan now. It becomes mandatory in 2027 — this is not in force yet.

Treated badly?

- Raise it with your employer first. Acas, Citizens Advice or your trade union can advise.
- A discrimination claim needs no minimum length of service.
- Before most tribunal claims you must notify Acas for early conciliation. It is free.
- Time limit: 3 months less 1 day, or 6 months less 1 day where the act (or the last act in a series) happened on or after 1 October 2026.

▲ WATCH OUT

Notify Acas within your time limit, so the clock is paused.

Menopause at work in Northern Ireland

- The disability law is the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. The Equality Act 2010 does not apply.
- If your symptoms meet that test, your employer must make reasonable adjustments.
- A statutory flexible working request needs 26 weeks' continuous employment, and only one request in any 12-month period.
- Before most claims, tell the Labour Relations Agency (LRA). Most claims: 3 months less 1 day.
- The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland may be able to help with a discrimination complaint.

Frequently asked questions

Q Is the menopause a disability?

Not automatically. It can be if your symptoms have a substantial and long-term effect on your day-to-day activities.

Q Can my employer count menopause absence against my attendance record?

Acas advises employers to record it separately, because counting it could be unfair or discriminatory.

Q Do I need to have worked there 2 years to complain?

No. A discrimination claim needs no minimum length of service.

FREE RIGHTS GUIDANCE

Check your *menopause rights*

Get plain-English guidance on your rights and your employer's legal duties.

ACAS

0300 123 1100

Mon–Fri 8am–6pm · [acas.org.uk](https://www.acas.org.uk)

LRA (NORTHERN IRELAND)

03300 555 300

Labour Relations Agency

EQUALITY COMMISSION NI

028 9050 0600

Northern Ireland

CITIZENS ADVICE

England 0800 144 8848

Wales 0800 702 2020 · Scotland 0800 028 1456

ADVICE NI

0800 915 4604

Northern Ireland

UK WORK RIGHTS — FREE GUIDE

**Menopause at Work
(England, Wales and
Scotland)**

ukworkrights.co.uk/guide-menopause-at-work-gb.html

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More free *toolbox talks*

TOOLBOX TALK

Mental Health & Stress

ukworkrights.co.uk/toolbox-mentalhealth.html

TOOLBOX TALK

Reasonable Adjustments

ukworkrights.co.uk/toolbox-reasonableadjustments.html

TOOLBOX TALK

Flexible Working

ukworkrights.co.uk/toolbox-flexibleworking.html

FREE GUIDE

Menopause at Work (England, Wales and Scotland)

ukworkrights.co.uk/guide-menopause-at-work-gb.html

Also: [Menopause at Work \(Northern Ireland\)](#)