



## MATERNITY ALLOWANCE

(according to the Social Insurance Laws of 1980 to 2012)

- An insured salaried or self-employed woman, as well as a woman who works abroad in the service of a Cypriot employer and is voluntarily insured, **is entitled to a maternity allowance** by the Social Insurance Fund, **provided that she fulfils** certain conditions on the contributions.
- **The maternity allowance is equal to 75%** of her insurable earnings over the previous year and can be **increased** proportionally to the number of her dependants. The grant is paid for a period of eighteen (18) consecutive weeks starting at least two (2) weeks before the week of the expected birth. **In cases where the baby is hospitalised right after birth**, the mother may be eligible for additional maternity pay if certain criteria are met relating to the extent of time the baby spent in hospital, as described above under the section entitled Maternity Leave.
- **In order to receive the maternity allowance** the worker must fill-in and submit the relevant application to the Social Insurance Services **within twenty-one (21) days** from the date that the maternity allowance is requested. Submission of the application for maternity allowance is made after the completion of the twenty-fifth (25) week of pregnancy.
- **If the application is submitted after birth**, the period of the eighteen (18) weeks of payment shall be fixed on the basis of the birthdate and not of the date of expected childbirth.
- The pregnant worker, **after giving birth**, is also entitled to a **maternity grant from the Social Insurance Fund (in addition to the maternity allowance)**, paid as a lump sum, if she or her husband fulfil certain conditions. The application must be submitted within twelve **(12) months** from birth and in order to obtain the grant a different application should be submitted.

*(For further information on the maternity allowance please contact the Social Insurance Services)*

## Useful contact information

### For Information and queries relating to the Maternity Protection legislation Department of Labour

Department of Labour  
Tel: 22400847 / 22400883 / 25827320  
Website: <http://www.mlsi.gov.cy/dl>

### For Information and queries relating to the Maternity Allowance and the Maternity Grant

[Social Insurance Services](#)  
Tel: 22401725  
Website: <http://www.mlsi.gov.cy/sid>

### For information relating to Health and Safety of pregnant women

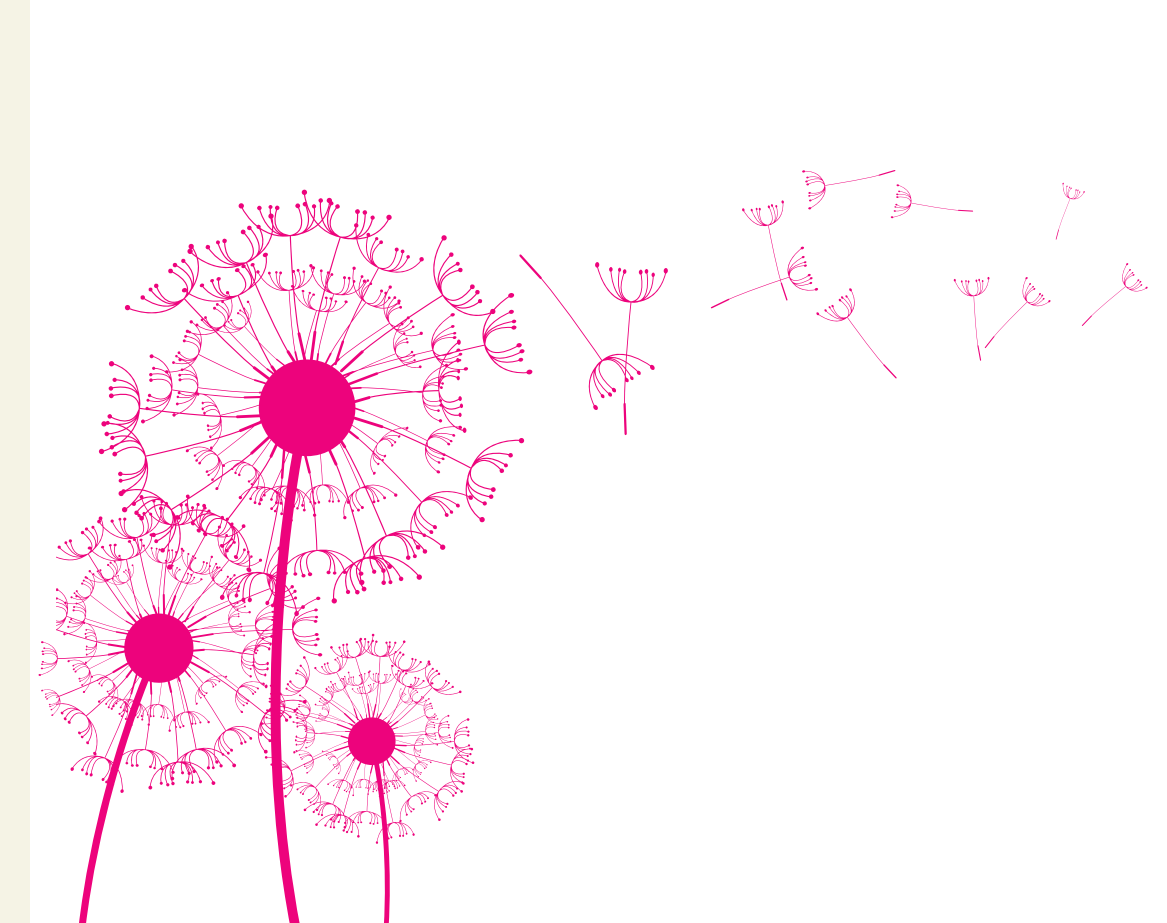
[Department of Labour Inspection's District Offices](#)  
*Lefkosia* - 22879191  
*Lemesos* - 25804430  
*Larnaka* - 24305128  
*Pafos* - 26822715  
Website: <http://www.mlsi.gov.cy/dli>

### For information relating to Parental Leave and Leave on grounds of Force Majeure

[Department of Labour Relations](#)  
Tel: 22803100/101  
Fax: 22661977  
Website: <http://www.mlsi.gov.cy/dlr>

### [District Offices](#)

*Lefkosia*  
Tel: 22803127  
Fax: 22661965  
*Lemesos*:  
Tel: 25819252/253, 25819401/402, 25819440  
Fax: 25819274  
*Larnaka and Ammochostos*:  
Tel: 24817800/801  
Fax: 24621458  
*Pafos*:  
Tel. 26822620, 26822640/641/643  
Fax: 26822621



# The Protection of Maternity

## QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

Published by the Press and Information Office



PIO 313/2012-2.000

Printed by:  
Konos Ltd

Designed by: Lina M

Department of Labour



MINISTRY OF LABOUR  
& SOCIAL INSURANCE

This informative leaflet is prepared by the Department of Labour of the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance and provides information as to the laws' provisions regarding the issue of maternity protection. Greater emphasis within this guide is given to the Maternity Protection Law (L.100(I)/1997).

This leaflet only provides the reader with general information and cannot be considered as a complete and genuine interpretation of the provisions of the relevant laws mentioned herein.

## MAIN PROVISIONS

- **Prohibition of dismissal of a pregnant worker and/or a female employee who adopts a child.**
- **Right to 18 weeks maternity leave with the possibility of an extension under certain circumstances.**
- **Additional rights for breastfeeding and increased responsibilities for the care of the child.**
- **Safeguarding of rights, upon return to work, for the pregnant and the adoptive mother employee.**



## PRENATAL EXAMINATIONS

- The pregnant worker has a **right** to time off for prenatal examinations, without loss of pay, **provided** that the tests cannot be done outside working hours and that she notifies her employer of this by giving sufficient warning. Once back at work, the worker must bring with her an appropriate certificate from a doctor to justify her absence.

## PROHIBITION OF DISMISSAL

- Dismissal of a pregnant worker is **prohibited, provided** the worker has informed her employer of her pregnancy **in writing**. The term "in writing" includes producing a written letter, email, fax or similar notification and/or a medical certificate stating the fact of the pregnancy. **The said prohibition starts with the written notification of pregnancy to the employer and it is extended up to three (3) months after the end of maternity leave.**

During this time, the employer cannot dismiss or give notice of dismissal or go ahead with actions to ensure the permanent replacement of the pregnant worker. The employer may, if deemed necessary, request a medical certificate certifying the pregnancy of the worker and the worker must produce the said medical certificate.

Furthermore, if the employer is informed of the worker's pregnancy orally, either by the pregnant worker or through her colleagues or in any other way, or even if he/she did not know of the pregnancy and he/she proceeds with a dismissal, the pregnant worker is entitled, **within 5 working days** of receiving the dismissal or notice of dismissal, to notify her pregnancy to the employer by means of a valid medical certificate. Once she does this, **the employer must repeal the dismissal or notice of dismissal** so that protection from dismissal by virtue of the above law, continues to exist.

- Dismissal or notice of dismissal to a working woman who intends to adopt a child is **prohibited, provided that** the said worker has notified her employer by a certification by the Department of Social Welfare Services that she intends to adopt a child. **The said prohibition starts with the notification of intention to adopt and it is extended up to 3 months after the end of maternity leave.**

- The employer **may dismiss** a pregnant worker **only if** the specific case falls within the following exceptions:
  - the employee is found guilty of a misdemeanour or her behaviour justifies the severance of the employment relation;

- the business at which she is employed ceases to exist;
- her contract has expired, but the non-renewal must not be connected in any way to her pregnancy.

*It is noted that even if the dismissal of a pregnant worker is considered to fall within the above exceptions of the Law, the employer has to prove the reasons of the dismissal in writing.*

## MATERNITY LEAVE

- **It is ensured** that pregnant workers are entitled to **maternity leave of eighteen (18) weeks in total** (of which eleven (11) are compulsory and are allocated as follows: two (2) before the week of the expected birth and the rest after birth), **provided** that the pregnant worker provides the necessary medical certificate that states the estimated date of delivery.

- **In cases of premature labour and birth or any other case where the infant is hospitalised right after birth for health reasons**, the mother is entitled to additional maternity leave as follows: For the first twenty-one (21) days that the infant is hospitalised the worker is entitled to an extension of one (1) additional week of maternity leave. If the infant continues to be hospitalised, the worker, for every additional 50% of the twenty-one (21) days, is entitled to one (1) additional week with a maximum of six (6) weeks in total. The worker, in order to be granted the additional leave, must furnish her employer with a written certification from the hospital and from a doctor of relevant specialty.

- Working women who are about to adopt a child under 12 years old are also entitled to maternity leave. By giving notice in writing to their employer expressing their intention to undertake the care of a child for adoption purposes, at least six (6) weeks before, adoptive mothers are entitled to sixteen (16) weeks of maternity leave. If this is not practically possible, the future adoptive mother informs her

employer that she is about to undertake the care of child as soon as possible and furnishes the employer with a certification from the Social Services Department that this was indeed the case.

## ADDITIONAL FACILITATIONS FOR THE CARE OF THE CHILD

- For a period of nine (9) months from birth, or from the day the maternity leave starts in case of adoption, the working mother **has the right to either interrupt her employment for one hour or to arrive at work one hour later or leave work one hour earlier every day**. It is noted that the one-hour excuse period is **considered and is paid as working time**.

## SAFEGUARDING OF SENIORITY AND OTHER WORK-RELATED RIGHTS

- During the absence of the worker, it is ensured that the **period of this absence is considered working time** for seniority purposes and the right to promotion or return to the same or another job of the same nature, as well as the remuneration for her work shall not be unfavourably affected. A general rule is that the time of absence of the new (and adoptive) mother employee cannot be used as a reason for unfavourable alteration of her working conditions.

- **Accordingly, all benefits related to her work position are secured (for example 13th salary in full), with the exception of those benefits that are related to the quantity and/or value of the work produced.**

*Maternity leave and subsequent protection of rights is granted to all pregnant women and adoptive mothers regardless of the time spent as employees to a given employer or whether they are considered to be at a "trial period" at the time of becoming pregnant or of declaring intent to adopt a child.*