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Maternity Protection & Maternity Benefit — Protection Periods and Benefits

Protection periods of 6+8 weeks, termination protection during pregnancy, and maternity benefit up to €13/day plus employer subsidy.

Deutsche Begriffe: Mutterschutz | Mutterschaftsgeld | Mutterschutzgesetz | Beschäftigungsverbot | Arbeitgeberzuschuss

Maternity Protection in Germany

The **Mutterschutzgesetz (MuSchG)** protects pregnant and nursing women in employment. It applies to all female employees — regardless of nationality.

Protection Periods

Period	Duration	Special Features
Before birth	6 weeks	Voluntary — you may continue working if you wish
After birth	8 weeks	Mandatory — employment ban, no exceptions
Premature birth / Multiple births	12 weeks after birth	Extended protection
Child with disability	12 weeks after birth	Upon mother's request

The 6 weeks before birth that were not taken due to premature birth are added to the protection period **after birth**.

Termination Protection

- From **start of pregnancy** to **4 months after delivery**

- Also applies during probation period!
- The employer **cannot terminate** — not even with notice
- Exception: Only with consent of the competent **supervisory authority** (extremely rare)
- **Important:** Inform your employer of your pregnancy — only then does protection take effect

Employment Bans

Beyond protection periods, there are additional bans:

- **Night work** (20:00–6:00): prohibited
- **Sunday and holiday work:** prohibited
- **Heavy physical labor:** prohibited
- **Hazardous substances:** prohibited
- A doctor may issue an **individual employment ban** (e.g., in high-risk pregnancies)

Maternity Benefit

From Health Insurance

- **Max. €13 per calendar day** (approx. €390/month)
- Requirement: statutory health insurance with own entitlement
- Application: at your health insurance fund with medical certificate of expected delivery date

Employer Subsidy

- Your employer pays the **difference** between health insurance maternity benefit (€13/day) and your average net salary
- **Result:** you receive your **full net salary** during maternity protection
- The employer is reimbursed for the subsidy through the U2 reallocation procedure

Privately insured or marginally employed?

- One-time payment of **up to €210** from the Federal Office for Social Security
- No employer subsidy for mini-jobs

After Maternity Protection

- Apply for **parental leave** (up to 3 years)
- Apply for **parental benefit** (up to €1,800/month)

- You have a **right to return** to your job

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