

## **Instructions for filling out the application for payments from the Childbirth Leave Fund**

A parent who has been employed in the Icelandic labour market for at least 6 continuous months prior to the birth of the child shall select **Childbirth Leave Fund**.

The following shall also be considered employment time:

- Vacation or unpaid leave of absence pursuant to a wage agreement or employment agreement.
- The time during which a parent receives unemployment benefits, or the waiting period for such benefits. Also considered as employment time is the time during which a parent would have been entitled to unemployment benefits if he/she had been registered as unemployed.
- The time during which a parent receives accident/illness per diem payments, or the waiting period for such payments. Also considered as employment time is the time during which a parent would have been entitled to accident/illness benefits if he/she had applied for them, provided that the parent terminated his/her employment for health reasons.
- The time during which a parent receives payment from an insurance company for loss of income resulting from temporary inability to work as a result of an accident.

If any of the above apply, the applicant must submit a confirmation from the employer, allocation committee, labour union, insurance company, or the Social Security Institute, as appropriate. It is not necessary to submit a statement from the Social Security Institute confirming receipt of accident/illness per diem payments from the Institute.

A parent who does not meet the above requirements for payments from the Childbirth Leave Fund, does not participate in the labour market, is employed in a position of less than 25%, or is a student may be entitled to childbirth subsidy. A person wishing to apply for childbirth subsidy must fill out a separate application form. If the applicant has been a student enrolled in a study programme of more than 75% during the past 6 months, he or she is entitled to apply for childbirth subsidy as a student.

### **Field 5**

**This field specifies how many months of individual and joint childbirth leave the parent intends to take.** The mother is entitled to three months of individual leave, the father is entitled to three months of individual leave, and the parents are entitled to three months of joint leave that they may distribute between them as they wish (or one parent may utilise all of the joint leave).

**If the parents are expecting more than one child, the applicant must enter the number of children here.**

The statement confirming the estimated date of delivery must include the number of children expected. The parents' joint right to childbirth leave is extended by three months for each live birth in excess of one child.

The applicant is expected to confirm the number of days of leave he/she intends to take by entering the total number of days of childbirth leave he/she intends to take.

### **Field 6**

**Information concerning pension funds, labour unions, and bank accounts**

The "Notification of childbirth leave" (the form can be found on the Childbirth Leave Fund website) must accompany the application.

The parent must specify to what **pension fund** he/she wishes to contribute. If there is more than one employer, it is possible to list more than one pension fund so that contributions will be made to all of them during the childbirth leave period.

Should the parent wish to contribute to a **personal pension fund**, he/she shall enter the name of the fund and the percentage of salary contributed. According to law, it is not required to remit matching payments for an employee's contributions to a personal pension fund. The Childbirth Leave Fund does not make matching contributions for payments to a personal pension fund.

The applicant shall enter the name of the labour union if he or she wishes to pay union dues. It is appropriate to point out that if the employee does not wish to pay union dues, his/her accrued rights will expire. If the parent indicates the wish to pay union dues but does not specify the name of the union, payments will be made to the union specified on the pay slips accompanying the application.

**Bank accounts** The parents may not use the same bank account. The parent must be the registered owner of the bank account number provided. It is not sufficient to have the right of procuration for a bank account owned by the other parent.

#### **Field 7**

##### **It is important to sign the application.**

If the application is not completed correctly, the Childbirth Leave Fund reserves the right to return it to the applicant for correction.

#### **Field 8**

##### **The following three forms of documentation must be received by the Childbirth Leave Fund before payments can begin:**

A certificate stating the expected date of birth of the child, the "Notification of childbirth leave" (available on the Childbirth Leave Fund website), and copies of the applicant's pay slips for the last two months. It is important that the applicant submit these documents to the Childbirth Leave Fund in a timely manner.

#### **Field 9**

##### **It is only necessary to specify the name and national ID number of the applicant in this field if the information specified in Fields 10 –14 is submitted with the application.**

#### **Field 10**

##### **A mother who requests an extension of childbirth leave due to illness during pregnancy or for health and safety reasons shall check this field.**

This only applies to a mother who is employed in the labour market and is entitled to payments from the Childbirth Leave Fund. A mother who applies for childbirth subsidy is not entitled to an extension. A mother who applies for an extension due to illness during pregnancy must submit a physician's statement, as well as a statement confirming the date her salary payments were suspended due to the illness and the date her right to sick leave was utilised in full. A mother who applies for an extension for health and safety reasons must include, with the application, a risk assessment of her job. In some cases, it could suffice to submit a detailed statement by the employer describing how the job is carried out and how it endangers the health and safety of a pregnant woman.

*Important:* The employer must attempt to transfer the mother to a less hazardous position before an extension of childbirth leave for health and safety reasons will be considered.

#### **Field 11**

**This field asks whether the parents have, in the past 12 months:**

- Resided abroad. If the answer is yes, specify the country and the period of residence in that country.
- Accrued the right to receive childbirth leave payments in a foreign country. The application must be accompanied by a statement from the authorities in the country concerned, confirming whether or not the applicant has accrued such rights. If the applicant is entitled to such payments, specify the period of time and the amount of the payments.

#### **Field 12**

**This applies to parents who both apply for childbirth leave payments but who are not married, in a registered consensual union, or in a registered partnership.**

A parent who is entitled to payments from the Childbirth Leave Fund but does not have custody of the child must submit a confirmed statement of recognition of paternity in order to receive the payments. Confirmation of a statement of recognition of paternity can be obtained from the municipal Commissioner; furthermore, the birth certificate issued by Statistics Iceland states whether the paternity of the child has been confirmed. The custodial parent must then sign the form at the bottom of Field 12.

#### **Permission for visitation by the non-custodial parent**

If the parents are not married or in a registered consensual union, the custodial parent may grant the non-custodial parent the right to visit and interact with the child by signing in this field. This applies only if the non-custodial parent is entitled to payments from the Childbirth Leave Fund. A birth certificate issued by Statistics Iceland must also be submitted. It is appropriate to emphasise that a parent must always have custody of the child in order to be entitled to childbirth subsidy; therefore, in that case, a signature in this field is not sufficient.

#### **Field 13**

**If the parent wishes to include further information, he or she should enter it here.** It is also permissible to include further information on a separate sheet of paper accompanying the application.

#### **Field 14**

##### **Other documents accompanying the application**

This is a list of various documents that must accompany an application filed under unusual circumstances; e.g., in cases where the mother or the child is ill. If the parent wishes to apply for an extension of childbirth leave, it is always necessary to include documentation in confirmation of the request for the extension.

It is appropriate to point out that **it is not required to submit a tax card;** however, if no tax card is submitted, the full income tax amount will be deducted from the payments. In order for the applicant to qualify for the personal tax deduction, the tax card **must be received by the Childbirth Leave Fund before the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month in which childbirth leave begins.** The tax card will be returned when the allocated childbirth leave is complete. A parent who wishes to have his or her tax card returned before that time must make a special request to this effect.