

Childbirth and Childcare Services for Male and Female Employees

1. Prenatal and postpartum health management

- Pregnant women and those within one year after childbirth may request their employer to allow them time to receive health guidance and medical checkups at the following intervals.
 - Once every four weeks until the 23rd week of pregnancy
 - Once every two weeks from the 24th to 35th week of pregnancy
 - Once every week from the 36th week of pregnancy to childbirthThe frequency of health guidance/checkups may be increased if deemed necessary by the doctor or midwife in charge.
- If a female employee is instructed by her doctor to take special precautions to prevent or mitigate a certain pregnancy- or birth-related symptom, the employer should take measures to allow her to comply with such instructions upon receiving her application.

2. Work before and after birth and during the infancy period

- Expectant or nursing female employees are entitled to be excluded from overtime work, late-night work (from 10 p.m. to 5 a.m.), and certain hazardous work. Female employees with children under one year of age are entitled, upon request to their employer, to take childcare time twice a day, for at least 30 minutes each time.

3. Maternity leave

- Female employees may take maternity leave upon request to their employer for up to six weeks before childbirth (14 weeks in the case of multiple pregnancies). Employers are prohibited from having women work for eight weeks after childbirth. However, the employer may allow the female worker to return to work after six weeks following the birth, if she so requests and if her doctor permits it.

4. Childcare leave and other parenting support programs for male and female employees

- Either of the parents may take childcare leave until the child turns one year old (or two years old if there is a special reason), if they make a request to their employer. (Fixed-term contract workers who meet certain requirements can also take the leave.)
- If both parents take childcare leave, the period of childcare leave is extended until the child turns one year and two months old. (Each parent is allowed to take leave for a period of up to one year.)
- Employees with a child under three years of age may request their employer to allow them to work shortened hours (six hours per day in principle).
- Employees who are raising a child up to the age of entering elementary school may request exemption from late-night work if they meet certain conditions. They may also request a limitation on overtime work (up to 24 hours per month and 150 hours per year) and exemption from non-scheduled work (overtime exemption).

Employees who are raising a child up to the end of the third grade of elementary school may take child nursing leave for up to five days a year (in case of one child) or up to 10 days a year (in case of two or more children) subject to certain conditions.

If you are given instructions to follow to maintain maternal and/or fetus health by your doctor, please use the Maternity Health Care Guidance Contact Card. This will help you communicate your doctor's instructions to your supervisor accurately. The form can be downloaded here.



Inquiries Guidance Division, Employment Environment and Equal Employment Department, Aichi Labour Bureau ☎ 052-857-0312
(For items 2 and 3, depending on the nature of your inquiry, you may be directed to a different contact point.)

For more information,
please visit:



Support site for the mind and
body of working women

<https://www.bosei-navi.mhlw.go.jp>

Postnatal paternity leave (Childcare leave at birth)

Separately from childcare leave, male employees can take paternity leave of up to 28 days within eight weeks after the child's birth. The leave can be taken in two separate periods.

In principle, an application must be submitted at least two weeks before the start of the leave.



Learn more

The Act on the Welfare of Workers Who Take Care of Children or Other Family Members has been revised and will be implemented in stages from April 2025.

The Act has been revised to expand measures that promote flexible working arrangements during the child-rearing period, so that both men and women can better balance work and family responsibilities.

Starting October 1, 2025, employers will be required to implement at least two of the following measures (1)–(5) for employees who are raising children from age three until they enter elementary school. Employees may then choose and make use of one of the measures implemented.

- (1) Change in starting time or other working hours
- (2) Arrangements such as remote work (10 days or more per month)
- (3) Establishment and operation of childcare facilities, etc.
- (4) Provision of leave to make it easier for employees to work while raising children (childcare support leave) (10 days or more per year)
- (5) Short working hours system

There are other revisions to the Act. For details, please visit the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare website "Revisions to Act on the Welfare of Workers Who Take Care of Children or Other Family Members."