



HONG KONG PROPOSES EXPANDED PAID MATERNITY LEAVE

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Proposals to expand Hong Kong's statutory paid maternity leave and clarify time-off work for pregnant employees to attend medical examinations feature in the [Employment \(Amendment\) Bill 2019](#), published on 27 Dec 2019.

Highlights of the proposals include:

- Statutory maternity leave would be expanded from 10 to 14 weeks. Eligibility requirements remain the same — employees must have been continuously employed by the same employer for four weeks or more and work for a minimum of 18 hours per week.
- The additional four weeks of leave would be paid at the same rate as the ten weeks — 80% of the employee's average daily wages, but the additional weeks are capped at HK\$36,822. Employers would pay employees and seek reimbursement from the government. The labor department aims to have the reimbursement scheme operational by the end of 2021.
- Clarification that pregnant employees would be entitled to receive a sickness allowance when they attend pregnancy-related medical examinations, if they provide an appropriate certificate of attendance.
- The miscarriage definition would be changed to shorten the pregnancy period to 24 weeks — down from 28 weeks. As a result, women suffering a miscarriage after 24 weeks would be entitled to maternity leave instead of sick leave.

RELATED RESOURCE

- [Employment \(Amendment\) Bill 2019](#) (Legislative Council of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, 27 Dec 2019)

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