

### **Does the law protect pregnant women in the workplace?**



**Yes.** The law protects you against discrimination related to your

- pregnancy (or possible pregnancy),
- the things that you need because you are pregnant, and
- childbirth.

The law treats your pregnancy like a temporary disability. Your employer **must not**:

- ask you about your pregnancy or your plans to have children;
- fire you, refuse to hire you, or deny you a promotion because you are pregnant or may become pregnant;
- treat you differently from other employees (for example, if you take time off because of your pregnancy, your employer must not treat you differently than other employees who are on disability leave); or
- make you take time off because you are pregnant. If your job is unsafe or difficult to do because of your pregnancy, your employer must change your job duties or offer you another position.

**Note:** Your employer does not have to create a new position for you because of your pregnancy.

### **Can I take time off from work?**

Yes. The law says you can take time off during or after pregnancy.

### **Can I take paid leave?**

You can use your sick leave or disability leave (if you have it) for your pregnancy and maternity leave. You may also be able to use vacation or other personal leave.

### **Can I take unpaid leave?**

**Yes.** After the baby is born, you and the other parent have the right to take family leave to care for the child. You also have the right to take family leave before the birth if you have complications related to your pregnancy.

### **How much leave can I take?**

You should be able to take at least 6 to 8 weeks of family leave. You may be able to take up to 16 weeks of family leave. The amount of leave you can take depends on how many employees work for your company and how long you have worked there. Talk to your human resources department (if you have one) for more information.

### **Do I have to be married to the other parent in order to take family leave?**

No. Both parents have the right to family leave. It doesn't matter if you are married, living together, have a civil union, or have another arrangement.

### **Who decides when I have to stop working?**

You do. You can work as long as you want to and you can do the work.

**Note:** If your pregnancy interferes with your job, your employer must

- modify your tasks, or
- transfer you to a different job (if one is available) that you are able to do.

## NEED HELP?

### Call us for help



Statewide Legal Services  
1-800-453-3320  
860-344-0380

### Search our website for help



[www.ctlawhelp.org](http://www.ctlawhelp.org)

**Can I keep my benefits during my leave?**

Your employer must treat pregnancy like any other temporary disability. If employees with other kinds of temporary disabilities keep their benefits, then you must also be able to keep them.

**Can I have my old job back after my leave?**

Yes. When you go back to work, your employer must give you the same (or similar) job with the same pay, benefits, and seniority.

**Can I collect unemployment compensation?**

Probably not. Unemployment compensation is for people who are able and available to work.

**Exception:** If you want to do light work but your employer does not have a light job for you, you may be able to get unemployment.

**What if I think my workplace is not safe for me or my unborn baby?**

All employees have the right to a safe workplace, whether they are pregnant or not. Your employer cannot

- make you work in unsafe conditions, or
- punish you if you refuse to do so.

If there is anything unsafe at your workplace, tell your employer in writing. Your letter should also ask the employer to

- fix the safety problem, or
- transfer you to another job (at least while you are pregnant).

**Can my employer treat me differently because I am pregnant?**

No. An employer must not treat you differently because of your pregnancy. For example, the employer must not

- change your work duties, hours, or pay; or
- change where you work (for example, moving you to a location where people can't see you).

**Can my employer make me promise not to get pregnant?**

No. An employer must not

- ask you not to get pregnant, or
- ask you to get sterilized so that you can get or keep your job.

**What can I do if my employer does not follow the law about pregnancy?**

Get legal help from a lawyer, your union, or one of the agencies below. They can give you advice, information, and help with filing a complaint. You should contact them as soon as possible, as most discrimination cases must be filed within 180 days.

*This information is based on laws in Connecticut as of November, 2017. It is not intended as legal advice for an individual situation. Please call Statewide Legal Services or contact an attorney for additional help. [www.ctlawhelp.org](http://www.ctlawhelp.org)*

Help for people with low income	Help for discrimination cases	Help for Family and Medical Leave Cases
Statewide Legal Services: Central CT: 860-344-0380 Other areas of CT: 800-453-3320	<i>Commission on Human Rights &amp; Opportunities</i> <i>Eastern CT 860-886-5703</i> <i>Hartford Area 860-566-7710</i> <i>West Central CT 203-805-6579</i> <i>Southwest CT 203-579-6246</i> <a href="http://www.ct.gov/chro/lib/chro/pdf/chromap.pdf">http://www.ct.gov/chro/lib/chro/pdf/chromap.pdf</a> <i>U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission</i> <i>1-800-669-4000</i>	<i>CT Department of Labor</i> <i>860-263-6790</i>  <i>U.S. Department of Labor</i> <i>1-866-487-9243</i>