

English translation provided for informational purposes. If the English and German versions allow different interpretations, the German version should be followed.

INFORMATION SHEET ON MATERNITY PROTECTION FOR STUDENTS¹

Since 1st January 2018, the Maternity Protection Act (*Mutterschutzgesetz* MuSchG) also applies to female students. The purpose of the Maternity Protection Act is to protect pregnant and breastfeeding students and their (unborn) children from health issues that may arise during the course of their studies (eg, internships, coursework). At the same time, continuation of studies should be possible unless there are health reasons preventing it. The University of Göttingen is obligated to report the pregnancies of the students as well as the employees to the *Gewerbeaufsichtamt* (Commercial Supervisory Office).

NOTIFICATION OF PREGNANCY

- ⇒ The pregnant student should, in her own interest, inform the University of her pregnancy as early as possible by sending her name, date of birth and matriculation number by email to mutterschutz@uni-goettingen.de or in person at Student and Academic Services (*Abteilung Studium und Lehre*) in the Office of Student Affairs (*Servicebüro Studienzentrale*) Wilhelmsplatz 4. This should also include proof of the pregnancy (from the maternity certificate or medical certificate with the date of the expected delivery). The data will only be used for registration according to the MuSchG procedure and will be deleted after the expiration of the MuSchG data retention period.
- ⇒ Furthermore, the organisers of the courses and internships should be informed. Only in this way can their duty of care towards the pregnant students be fulfilled.
- ⇒ Student and Academic Services records the incoming notices, determines the legally prescribed protection periods and sends the data along with the form for the individual risk assessment to the responsible faculty. The faculty will advise the pregnant woman to inform her about the risk assessment and appropriate protective measures.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MATERNITY PROTECTION ACT FOR STUDENTS

- ⇒ As a general rule, course instructors and internship supervisors are obligated to carry out a risk assessment and to define appropriate protective measures for the students (which includes maternity leave in case of pregnancy or breastfeeding).
- ⇒ If notice of the pregnancy is given, the risk assessment must be reviewed (with the student) and individualised. The established measures must be adhered to. If possible, the student should not suffer any disadvantages for the course of her studies. If students are unable to participate in examinations, study-related internships or laboratory work, a reorganisation or adjustment of the coursework and, if necessary, alternative work should be offered.
- ⇒ After the individual risk assessment is reviewed by Occupational Medical Services, it is forwarded to Student and Academic Services, Wilhelmsplatz 4 and from there to the *Gewerbeaufsichtamt*.

¹ The Maternity Protection Act applies to all people who are pregnant, have given birth to a child or are breastfeeding, irrespective of the gender stated in their birth records (see BMFSF guidelines on maternity leave)

HAZARDOUS ACTIVITIES

The following activities, for example, could be associated with particular health risks for pregnant and breastfeeding women. For this reason, they must NOT be tasked with these activities.

Infection Risks

- ⇒ Laboratory work with potentially infectious material (human, animal, plant samples)
- ⇒ Handling of potentially infectious animals (without immunity)
- ⇒ Contact with infectious patients, especially in the paediatric clinic or in the infectious disease ward.
- ⇒ Patient work requiring the handling of contaminated sharp or pointed objects and equipment (eg, taking blood samples, administering injections, installing ports)
- ⇒ Working at the UMG emergency clinic
- ⇒ Unprotected handling of potentially infectious bodily fluids

Risks from Hazardous Substances

- ⇒ Handling hazardous substances, especially CMR substances (carcinogenic, mutagenic, toxic for reproduction)
- ⇒ Handling of cytostatics, fumigants, disinfectants or sanitizers (eg, ethylene oxide, formaldehyde)
- ⇒ Exposure to narcotic gases

Risks from Ionising Radiation

- ⇒ Working in the controlled area of X-ray equipment or radiation sources
- ⇒ Contact with radioisotopes or with patients after administration of radioisotopes before the isotope has decayed sufficiently

Other Hazards

- ⇒ Work which requires considerable stretching or bending, constant squatting or crouching
- ⇒ Regular lifting of loads over 5 kg, occasional lifting of loads over 10 kg
- ⇒ Standing constantly (for more than 4 hours a day, from the 5th month of pregnancy)
- ⇒ Increased risk of accidents (eg., from animal bites or aggressive patients, such as in psychiatry)
- ⇒ Working directly with the magnetic resonance imaging scanner while it is in operation
- ⇒ Working with noise ranges above 80 dB(A)
- ⇒ Night shifts, excessively long shifts (over 8.5 hours per day)

IMPORTANT REGULATIONS FOR STUDENTS UNDER THE MATERNITY PROTECTION ACT

- ⇒ Activities which require the handling of substances that are hazardous to one's health and/or dangerous activities are prohibited
- ⇒ Protective measures are to be taken in the event of hazardous conditions. If possible, there should be no disadvantages due to pregnancy, childbirth or breastfeeding. If participation in examinations, study-relevant internships or laboratory work is not possible or only possible to a limited extent, a reorganisation or adjustment of the credits can be made in consultation with the respective registrar's office/student records and examination office.
- ⇒ The Maternity Protection Act provides [maternity leave job] protection six weeks before the calculated date of birth and eight weeks after delivery. In the event of early labour, the protection period after delivery is extended accordingly by the shortening of the protection period before delivery. The protection period after delivery is automatically extended to

twelve weeks for premature births, multiple births and on application if within eight weeks of birth, the child is determined to have a disability.

- ⇒ During these protection periods, students may only take part in examinations, courses, field trips, and internships if they expressly request this and there is no objection on health grounds. For this purpose, an informal request must be submitted to the responsible dean's office. This request can be revoked at any time if the student no longer wants to or can participate.
- ⇒ Restrictions of study activity: No activity (eg, course) may take place after 20:00 or on Sundays or public holidays (eg, weekend seminars). However, the restriction can be suspended at the student's express request. The absolute restriction of employment after 22:00 remains regardless.
- ⇒ For examinations related to pregnancy and breastfeeding (during the first twelve months at least twice a day for half an hour) female students can be released from work.
- ⇒ They are entitled to an uninterrupted rest period of 11 hours.

AUTHORISATION

There is also the option to take leave of absence due to pregnancy, maternity leave or parental leave. Leave of absence can be applied online (eCampus) at the Office of Student Affairs of the Student and Academic Services <https://www.uni-goettingen.de/de/52008.html>.

Since students on leave of absence for the above stated reasons have the option to continue to pursue up to 50% of their credit hours during their leave of absence, the regulations under the Act apply here as well, and a corresponding notice will be sent to the *Gewerbeaufsichtamt*.

COUNSELING SERVICES / CONTACTS

For students and teaching staff

- ⇒ Occupational Medical Services (*Stabsstelle Betriebsärztlicher Dienst*) offers students advice and support (confidential consultation, medical confidentiality) during their entire pregnancy and breastfeeding period (if necessary, even before pregnancy). To arrange an appointment, please call 39-60120.
- ⇒ Teaching staff of all faculties can contact Occupational Medical Services for advice on the risk assessment, especially with respect to maternity leave.
Occupational Medical Services for the University Medical Center and the University of Göttingen <http://www.betriebsarzt.med.uni-goettingen.de/>
- ⇒ For information regarding the organisational process and the contact persons in the faculties, please contact Student and Academic Services (Kerstin Albrecht, call: 39-23057)
- ⇒ From the respective dean's office of the responsible faculties, students receive support in organising their studies.
- ⇒ At the dean's office of the UMG, students also receive an internal maternity protection pass and a parental pass for students with children (chip card). Contacts for the dean's office of the UMG:

Medicine Preclinical: Ms. Hey: Tel. 39-65882 and Ms. Roselieb: Tel. 39-65881 or
Email: vorklinik.studiendekanat@med.uni-goettingen.de

Dentistry Preclinical: Mr. Büttcher: Tel. 39-63584 or
Email: christoph.buettcher@med.uni-goettingen.de

Medicine Clinical: Ms. Junga-Parschau: Tel. 39-63383
Email: ujunga@med.uni-goettingen.de

Dentistry Clinical: Ms. Corinna Weis (Skr.): Tel. 39-60884 or
Email: corinna.weis@med.uni-goettingen.de

Practical Year: Ms. Niemeyer: Tel. 39-63387 or
Email: christina.niemeyer@med.uni-goettingen.de

Molecular Medicine BA/MA: Dr. E. Meskauskas: Tel. 39-63386 or
Email: meskauskas@med.uni-goettingen.de

Cardiovascular Science MA: Dr. C. Würtz: Tel. 39-65849 or
Email: christina.wuertz@med.uni-goettingen.de

⇒ Information and advice for pregnant women and on the work-life balance between studies and child(ren) (including financing options, childcare facilities, networking opportunities) is provided by the Family Service of the Equal Opportunities and Diversity Unit of the University of Göttingen (contact: Ms. Hansmann, Tel. 39-26328) and the Equal Opportunities Office of the UMG (Tel. 39-69785).

Equal Opportunities and Diversity Unit of the University of Göttingen

<http://www.uni-goettingen.de/de/124435.html>

Equal Opportunities Office of the University Medical School Göttingen

[http://www.med.uni-](http://www.med.uni-goettingen.de/de/content/service/frauengleichstellungsbuero.html)

[goettingen.de/de/content/service/frauengleichstellungsbuero.html](http://www.med.uni-goettingen.de/de/content/service/frauengleichstellungsbuero.html)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Detailed information on maternity and parental leave, on counselling services, employment restrictions and employment limitations can be found on the Internet:

⇒ **The Maternity Protection Act: (German)**

https://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/muschg_2018/MuSchG.pdf

⇒ **Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth**

<https://www.bmfsfj.de/bmfsfj/meta/en>

⇒ **Guide to Maternity Leave (German)**

<https://www.bmfsfj.de/blob/94398/3b87a5363865637dd3bf2dd6e8ec87e0/mutterschutzgesetz-data.pdf>

⇒ **Commercial Supervisory Office of Niedersachsen (Gewerbeaufsichtamt): Brochure on Maternity Leave (German)**

http://www.gewerbeaufsicht.niedersachsen.de/live/live.php?navigation_id=11338&article_id=52094&psmand=37

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