

**Press Information Bureau
Government of India
Cabinet**

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Amendments to the Maternity Benefit Act, 1961

The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has given its ex-post facto approval for amendments to the Maternity Benefit Act, 1961 by introducing the Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Bill, 2016 in Parliament.

The maternity benefit Act 1961 protects the employment of women during the time of her maternity and entitles her of a 'maternity benefit' - i.e. full paid absence from work - to take care for her child. The act is applicable to all establishments employing 10 or more persons. The amendments will help 1.8 million (approx.) women workforce in organised sector.

The amendments to Maternity Benefit Act, 1961 are as follows:

- Increase Maternity Benefit from 12 weeks to 26 weeks for two surviving children and 12 weeks for more than two children.
- 12 weeks Maternity Benefit to a 'Commissioning mother' and 'Adopting mother'.
- Facilitate 'Work from home'. • Mandatory provision of Creche in respect of establishment having 50 or more employees.

Justification:

- Maternal care to the Child during early childhood - crucial for growth and development of the child.
- The 44th, 45th and 46th Indian Labour Conference recommended enhancement of Maternity Benefits to 24 weeks.
- Ministry of Women & Child Development proposed to enhance Maternity Benefit to 8 months.
- In Tripartite consultations, all stake holders, in general supported the amendment proposal.

AD/VBA/SH