

Guidelines

Project extension due to maternity or paternity in SNSF research funding



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Team members of an SNSF-funded project who become mothers or fathers during the funding period are faced with many challenges. Whom to contact? What are the rules for maternity leave? Could I also take unpaid leave? Are there any other support measures for researchers who become parents? These guidelines explain what you need to do.

In principle, the local rules of the employer institution apply to researchers in SNSF projects. This means you will receive the legally defined insurance payments and, if the higher education institution provides further support, this will be matched by the SNSF (e.g. 16 instead of 14 weeks maternity leave or 100% salary instead of 80%). This document explains in detail what mothers and fathers need to do - and when - to access the support measures available to them with ease.

When you return to your lab or office after your maternity or paternity leave, you might be able to additionally apply for a Flexibility Grant. Parents who are eligible for a Flexibility Grant can use it to cover their childcare costs or to hire a qualified person to support them in the research project.

The different steps you need to take during pregnancy, maternity or paternity are described on the following pages for each type of SNSF grant.

Steps for mothers

Project employees funded by the SNSF (doctoral students, postdocs, other employees) and holders of career grants, without fellowship holders

Ideally, the process should be started as of the 4th month of pregnancy and completed before the child is born.

What?	Who?	How?
Tell line manager about pregnancy.	Employees/expecting mother	in person
Employee and line manager mutually clarify their expectations (return to the project, possibility of taking unpaid leave, etc.).	Line manager	in person
Report pregnancy to the HR case worker assigned to your institute or department at the higher education institution.	Employees/expecting mother	email
Report pregnancy to the relevant SNSF division.	Project leader	email
Project extension application (including maternity leave and, if applicable, unpaid leave).	Project leader	mySNF
Approval by SNSF and corresponding extension of employment (on submission of the final report, the difference between the maternity compensation received and the full four months is covered by the SNSF on request). Loss of earnings compensation (LEC) payments must be credited to the relevant SNSF grant.	Project leader	Personnel request to HR case worker assigned to your institute/department
After birth: Register for maternity pay and, if applicable, for child benefit.	Employee/mother	Send form to HR main office
Eligibility assessment for Flexibility Grant.	Employee/mother	SNSF website (www.snsf.ch/flexibility)

- Higher education institution
- SNSF (division responsible for the project)

Steps for fathers

Project employees funded by the SNSF (doctoral students, postdocs, other employees) and career grant holders, without fellowship holders

Ideally, the process should be started as of the 7th month of pregnancy and completed before the child is born.

What?	Who?	How?
Employee discusses planning of paternity leave with line manager (and of additional unpaid leave, if applicable).	Employee/future father	in person
Loss of earnings compensation (LEC) payments for two weeks' statutory paternity leave are credited to the relevant SNSF grant. These payments can be freely used.	Project leader	Apply to HR main office
An application for project extension can be submitted, should you wish to take additional unpaid paternity leave. Only applications for a minimum duration of 2 months are considered. No additional funding is granted for the extension.	Project leader	mySNF
Approval by the SNSF and corresponding extension of employment.	Project leader	Personnel request to HR case worker assigned to your institute/department
After birth: If applicable, register for child benefit.	Employee/father	Send form to HR main office
Eligibility assessment for Flexibility Grant.	Employee/father	SNSF website (www.snsf.ch/flexibility)

- Higher education institution
- SNSF (division responsible for the project)

Steps for fellowship holders

Postdoc.Mobility fellowships are intended for researchers who wish to conduct a research stay abroad (until the end of 2020, Doc.Mobility and Early Postdoc.Mobility fellowships were also awarded)

Ideally, the process should be started before the child is born.

As the SNSF is not the fellowship holders' employer, the two do not enter into an employment relationship for the duration of the grant. The fellowship holders are obliged to inform the SNSF in writing of any circumstances that could change or influence the grant conditions. This includes, in particular, events such as the **birth of a child**. The fellowship holders also need to inform the professor who is responsible for them abroad. For Postdoc.Mobility return grants, the rules for researchers employed in Switzerland apply (see steps for mothers and for fathers).

The fellowship holders are entitled to four months' **paid maternity leave** during the mobility fellowship. Fellowship holders who become fathers during the fellowship may receive a month's **paid paternity leave** on request. This must be taken within six months of the child being born and during the ongoing fellowship. If the child's mother takes less than four months' maternity leave due to gainful employment or education, or if she is not able to look after the child for health reasons, a longer period of paid paternity leave may be granted. However, the cumulated duration of maternity

and paternity leave may not exceed four months in such cases. In exceptional cases grantees may also apply for unpaid paternity leave.

Fellowship holders who give birth in the first nine months after the end of their fellowship may apply for **supplementary funding due to maternity**. The SNSF grants them supplementary funding corresponding to their monthly fellowship amount for a maximum of four months. Supplementary funding is conditional on the fellowship holders providing proof that they are interrupting their research work because of maternity and are not entitled to any remuneration or insurance benefits during the four months after birth of the child. If the total amount of such entitlements is lower than the SNSF's supplementary funding, the SNSF will cover the difference. Any entitlement to such supplementary funding is forfeited with the resumption of work.

In addition, fellowship holders with children whom they are obliged to support receive a **child allowance** defined by the SNSF. Child allowances contributed by third parties are deducted.

What?

Inform professor responsible for you abroad about pregnancy/fatherhood and clarify mutual expectations (return to work etc.).

As soon as child is born:

Report birth of child to SNSF.

Application for fellowship extension (including maternity leave or paternity leave and, if applicable, unpaid leave).

The fellowship holder provides the necessary information, particularly a scanned in copy of the birth certificate as well as a confirmation of the host institution in case of a paid paternity leave.

Child allowance: a child allowance of CHF 12,000 is paid per year and child. Child allowances from third parties, awarded either to the fellowship holder or their partner, need to be declared. They are deducted from the SNSF allowance, with the SNSF paying only the difference between CHF 1000 per month and the monthly amount contributed by third parties.

Who?

Expecting mother or father

Mother/father

How?

conversation/email

email

- Host institution abroad
- SNSF (Careers division)

Questions?

If you have any further questions, please call the division managing your project or send them an email. They can also give you information on topics such as adoption or sick leave due to pregnancy. You can find the contact information for your division here:

www.snsf.ch/contact

031 308 22 22

Other useful links:

www.snsf.ch/equality

www.snsf.ch/flexibility

