

Amendments Made to Maternity and Paternity Leave Periods Under the Labor Law

A. Introduction

The Law No. 7578 on Amendments to the Social Services Law and Certain Laws (“**Amendment Law**”) was published in the Official Gazette dated 1 May 2026 and numbered 33240, and entered into force on the same date. The Amendment Law extended the leave periods for maternity and paternity, rearranged unpaid maternity leave, and introduced leave entitlements for employees who become foster families.

You can access the Amendment Law [here](#).

B. Amendments Regarding Leave Periods

Article 15 of the Amendment Law amended the periods relating to maternity leave regulated under Article 74 of the Labor Law No. 4857 (“**Labor Law**”). In this regard, while the eight-week leave period to be granted to a female employee before childbirth has been preserved, the leave period to be granted after childbirth has been increased from eight weeks to sixteen weeks. With this amendment, the period during which a female employee shall not be employed has been regulated as twenty-four weeks.

Prior to the Amendment Law, a female employee could work at the workplace until three weeks before childbirth, upon her request, provided that her health condition was suitable and with the approval of a physician; however, this period has been reduced to two weeks with the amendment.

The same article of the Amendment Law also extended the unpaid maternity leave periods regulated under the sixth paragraph of Article 74 of the Labor Law. Accordingly, the unpaid leave periods that a female employee may request following the expiry of paid maternity leave have been increased from sixteen weeks to twenty-four weeks in single births, and from eighteen weeks to twenty-six weeks in multiple births.

With the parallel amendment made to the Social Insurance and General Health Insurance Law No. 5510, the period of temporary incapacity allowance paid for the postnatal period has been increased from eight weeks to sixteen weeks. The provision regarding the separate calculation of the period previously applied in cases of multiple pregnancy has been repealed.

The five-day paid leave period to be granted to a male employee in the event that his spouse gives birth, as regulated under Additional Article 2 of the Labor Law, has been increased to ten days by Article 16 of the Amendment Law.

C. New Regulation Regarding Foster Families

A significant novelty introduced by the Amendment Law concerns foster families. Accordingly, it has been stipulated that an employee who becomes a foster parent, either together with their spouse or individually, for one or more children shall be granted ten days of unpaid leave upon request after the date on which the child is delivered.

D. Transition Period

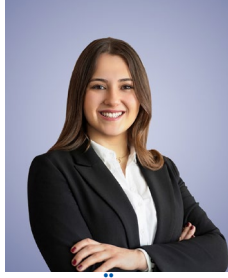
Although the period of maternity leave had expired in accordance with the relevant legislation as of 1 May 2026, the date on which the Amendment Law came into force, an employee who has not yet completed the twenty-four-week period calculated from the date of birth as of 1 April 2026 will be eligible to benefit from the new regulations. In this context, if the employee in question submits a request to the employer within 10 working days from 1 May 2026, an additional eight weeks of maternity leave shall be granted.

E. Conclusion

The Law No. 7578 on Amendments to the Social Services Law and Certain Laws has extended the periods of leave granted to employees in the event of maternity or paternity, revised the provisions on unpaid maternity leave, and granted foster parents

the right to leave for the first time. Employees wishing to benefit from these changes must apply to their employer.

For further information and support, please contact us.



Ece Özçelik
Senior Associate
e.ozcelik@lbfpartners.com



Birce Önkan
Legal Intern
b.onkan@lbfpartners.com