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ROYAL GOVERNMENT OF BHUTAN
ROYAL CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION



Press Release

To commemorate the Royal Birth of HRH The Gyalsey and underline the importance of the health of mother and child, during and after pregnancy and birth, and to recognize the importance of a child's first thousand days as well as parenting as a shared responsibility, the Royal Civil Service Commission has extended the Maternity Leave, Paternity Leave and the baby feeding break.

These changes are part of the Royal Civil Service Commission's efforts to improve the work place conditions for civil servants, and in particular, for females and families. This has been made possible by the support of the Government.

The Commission reviewed, in particular, the provisions under maternity and paternity leave, keeping in mind the importance of exclusive breastfeeding and the underlying health impact to the child and the mother. It has also been motivated by findings such as that from the National Nutritional Survey (2015), which show that the exclusive breastfeeding rate in Bhutan has been found to be only 51.4%. Studies have shown that the prevalence of stunting, wasting and underweight can be improved by promoting six months of exclusive breastfeeding, among others.

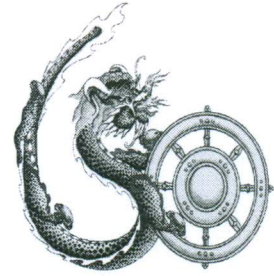
Therefore, the Royal Civil Service Commission has now extended the Maternity Leave from existing three months to six months and Paternity Leave from five working days to ten working days.

In addition, bearing in mind that good nutrition and care during the first thousand days of a child's development (between the period of a woman's pregnancy and her child's second birthday) sets a healthy foundation for all the years that follow, the RCSC has also extended the baby feeding break from until the child turns one to two years of age.

Accordingly, **Section 10.2.4 and 10.2.5** of the BCSR 2012 has now been amended and shall come into immediate effect from 1st March, 2016.



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ROYAL GOVERNMENT OF BHUTAN
ROYAL CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION



RCSC/LS-63/2016/ 2611

1st March, 2016

Notification

Subject: Amendment to Sections 10.2.4 and 10.2.5 of BCSR 2012 pertaining to Maternity and Paternity Leave

The Royal Civil Service Commission reviewed the Bhutan Civil Service Rules and Regulations (BCSR) 2012 pertaining to Maternity Leave and Paternity Leave with the view to promote family values and children's welfare in line with GNH policy of the country. The existing sections in the BCSR 2012 on Maternity Leave and Paternity Leave shall now be superseded by this notification with effect from 1st March 2016.

Maternity Leave – Section 10.2.4 under BCSR 2012 has been amended as follows:

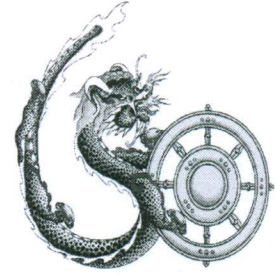
- 10.2.4.1. Maternity leave of six months shall be admissible to a civil servant and shall be uniform for all births including twins, caesarean and premature births. However, contract employees who have not completed 12 months of service before applying for the leave will be eligible for only three months of maternity leave.
- 10.2.4.2. Maternity leave shall be admissible during miscarriage for a maximum period of one month on production of a Medical Certificate.
- 10.2.4.3. In case of demise of child during birth or within three months from birth, the mother shall be eligible for three months of maternity leave including 21 days of bereavement leave, whichever is more. However, in case of demise of child after three months from birth, the mother shall be eligible only for

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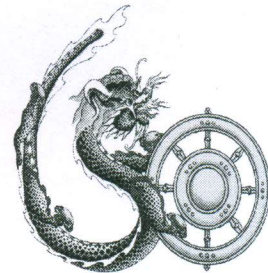
21 days of bereavement leave and shall resume her office after completion of the bereavement leave.

- 10.2.4.4. The maternity leave shall commence from the date of delivery.
- 10.2.4.5. Maternity leave can be combined with any other forms of leave.
- 10.2.4.6. All government holidays including weekends during the maternity leave shall be part of the maternity leave.
- 10.2.4.7. Maternity Leave shall be granted by the respective controlling officer on production of medical certificate, each time.
- 10.2.4.8. To facilitate baby feeding, a mother with baby/ies up to 24 months may be allowed to extend lunch time from 12 noon to 2 pm. In case of those providing direct services such as teaching and medical professions, the management shall ensure that the services are not affected as a result of such arrangement.
- 10.2.4.9. Agency shall facilitate and make appropriate arrangements for a feeding mother, where normal working time is not followed.
- 10.2.4.10. Maternity leave as per Section 10.2.4.1 shall be granted for a legally adopted new born baby until the baby is six months old.
- 10.2.4.11. Maternity leave shall be counted as part of active service for all HR actions including for the purpose of calculating earned leave, LTC, promotion, training and retirement benefits.





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Entitlement/benefits/allowance during maternity leave shall be as follows:

10.2.4.12. A civil servant availing the maternity leave shall be eligible for Basic pay, House Rent Allowance, Difficulty Allowance and High Altitude Allowance from the date the maternity leave commences.

However, for teachers, the allowance attached to professional practice while on maternity leave shall be as per the Section 11.6.1.1 of BCSR 2012.

10.2.4.13. Civil servants who become parents during the period of study leave or EOL shall not be eligible for maternity leave. However, on rejoining service after study leave or EOL, they will be eligible for the balance maternity leave if their child has not attained 6 months.

Paternity Leave: Section 10.2.5 under BCSR 2012 has been amended as follows:-

10.2.5.1. A Civil Servant shall be granted paternity leave of 10 working days uniformly for all births and shall commence from the date of delivery.

10.2.5.2. Paternity leave shall be granted as per Section 10.2.5.1 for a legally adopted new born baby until the baby is six months old.

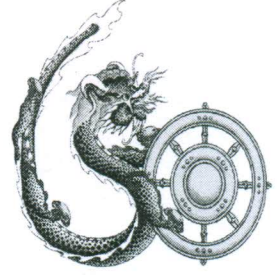
10.2.4.14. Civil servants who become parents during the period of their study leave or EOL shall not be eligible for paternity leave.

10.2.5.3. In case of demise of mother during delivery or within six months from birth of the child, the father shall be eligible for six months or the remaining months of the maternity leave as extra-ordinary paternity leave until the child is six months old.





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This notification will also extend to those civil servants who have balance of the maternity leave and paternity leave calculated based on this notification and fulfilling the required conditions. There shall be no retrospective application of the maternity leave and paternity leave. An explanatory note has been attached herewith for easy implementation of this notification.

For any clarifications/queries regarding this notification, please contact Dorji Pem, Asst. HRO (dpem@rcsc.gov.bt/ #17426233).

(Karma Tshiteem)

Royal Civil Service Commission

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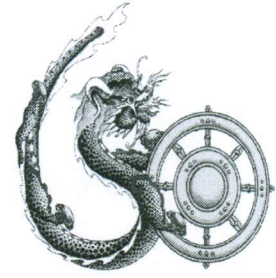
1. Hon'ble Cabinet Secretary, Cabinet Secretariat, Thimphu;
2. Hon'ble Secretaries, all Ministries, Thimphu;
3. Heads of all Autonomous Agencies, Thimphu;
4. Dzongdag, all Dzongkhag Administration;
5. Executive Secretary, all Thromdes; and
6. Chief HR Officer/HR Officer of Ministries/Agencies/Dzongkhags for information and compliance.

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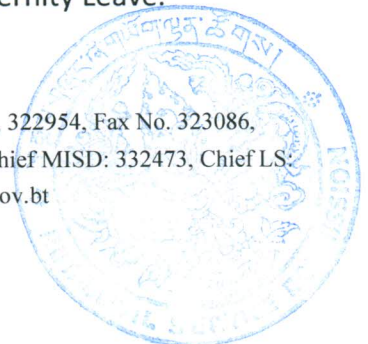
Explanatory Note:

1. The civil servants who are currently on maternity leave shall now be eligible for six months of maternity leave as counted from the date of birth of the child. HROs should issue office order for the remaining maternity leave.
2. Furthermore, those who have resumed office but whose child/ren have not turned 6 months as of 1st March 2016 can avail the balance leave. They will have to apply for the balance maternity leave.
3. Those who are currently on Earned leave/Extraordinary leave in respect of child care can convert their remaining leave into maternity leave from 1st March 2016. However, there will be no retrospective application of maternity leave. They will to apply for the balance maternity leave.
4. If a child is born on 1st November 2015, the maternity leave of three months would have been completed on 31st January 2016. The mother would have joined office from 1st February 2016 or availed Extraordinary Leave/Earned Leave/Casual Leave from February 2016 to April 2016.

But with this revised notification the 6 months Maternity leave will be from 1st February 2016 till 30th April 2016. Since this notification is effective only from 1st March 2016, the eligibility will be computed as follows:

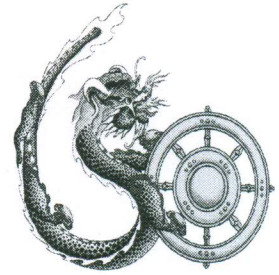
- If the mother has joined office, she can avail the balance maternity leave from 1st March 2016 till 30th April 2016.
- If the mother has availed EOL from Feb to April 2016, then from 1st March till 30th April 2016 she can convert the EOL to maternity leave. However the EOL for the month of February 2016 cannot be converted to Maternity Leave.

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5. The mothers whose children are born before 1st September **2015** will not be eligible for any balance maternity leave w.e.f 1st March 2016 because their child would have crossed six months.
6. Calculate the period of 6 months maternity leave from the date of birth of the child.
7. The HROs from respective agencies should provide all assistance to the civil servants in the implementation of the amendments.

