

Migrant mothers

GUIDE FOR AN INFORMED MATERNITY



This handbook is designed to facilitate the relationship between immigrant women and health and social care services, in particular as regards access to birth services explaining the relevant rights and providing the main information about the existing facilities on the territory.

INTRODUCTION

Cittadinanzattiva, with the support of the Eight per Thousand income tax fund to the Waldensian Evangelical Church, has implemented the project *“Nascere in Italia: processi partecipati di inclusione sociale destinati alle donne immigrate”* - “Born in Italy: participatory processes of social inclusion for immigrant women” for improving access to pregnancy and maternity services by immigrant women. The project is inspired by the need to ensure that all women and their children have the same access to services during pregnancy and childbirth, regardless of ethnicity and social status and with equal dignity and safety. Furthermore, the project intends to contribute to build a set of pathways towards improvement in the field of maternity protection through a civic and participatory approach. The first step was a civic survey in health care facilities and hospitals, interaction with the stakeholders, joint definition of a Charter of Birth and Maternity Services and improvement programs of access to maternal and child services.

The project is structured on the following main points:

1. setting up a civic monitoring study on the access by pregnant immigrant women to hospitals and territorial health care facilities;
2. the definition of tools for empowerment and for the improvement of access for pregnant immigrant women and children to maternal care services through the setting up and the promotion of Charters of Birth and Maternity Services, integration of the already existing charters in the health structures involved and by agreements for the carrying out of regular Civic Audits;
3. foster direct involvement of immigrant women in the implementation of civic actions in order to improve accessibility of services for both mothers and their children.

RESIDENCE PERMIT

The residence permit is the document that certifies your legal presence in Italy.

WARNING: The residence permit is not to be confused with the “VISA” which only allows entry in Italy whereas the residence permit allows you stay.

The residence permit can be issued for:

- dependent, seasonal or self-employment;
- applicants waiting for employment;
- special activities (entertainment, nurses, sports, etc.);
- family reasons;
- study;
- foster care;
- acquisition of Italian citizenship or stateless status;
- religion or belief;
- business, assignment;
- political asylum, subsidiary protection and humanitarian reasons.

You can apply for a residence permit within eight working days from your arrival in Italy by using the KIT available at all the Italian Post Offices which have the “Sportello Amico” service entering the details of your entry visa issued by the Italian Consulate in the country of origin, of a valid passport or equivalent document and the documents which show that you have both accommodation and financial means of support at your disposal.

Should you need any assistance in completing the KIT apply at Trade Union offices or at the Italian Welfare Agencies (Patronati).

THE SSN - ITALIAN NATIONAL HEALTH SYSTEM

The SSN comprises the functions and welfare activities carried out by the Regional Health Services, national agencies and institutions and by the State to ensure the protection of health as a fundamental right of every individual. It is a public system which guarantees health care to both Italian and foreign citizens.

The SSN is funded by the State through taxation and by the Local Health Agencies through direct income from the “co-pay” system (i.e. amounts contributed by the patients to the total cost of each service) as well as through services paid directly by the patient.

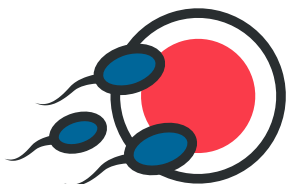
The State has the responsibility to ensure all citizens the right to health through a strong system of guarantees through the Livelli Essenziali di Assistenza (LEA) – Basic Welfare Levels. The LEA are the facilities and services that the National Health System is required to guarantee to all citizens, either free or partly paid by the patient through the resources collected through the taxation system.

The services guaranteed in accordance with the basic levels of assistance belong to three groups:

1. collective health care in living and working environments, which includes all prevention activities targeted at both the community and the individual (protection from the effects of pollution, workplace accident risks, veterinary services, food protection, prevention from infectious diseases, vaccinations and early detection programs, forensics);
2. local assistance, namely the social and health services, such as GPs (Family doctor), pharmaceutical services,

specialized diagnostic services and outpatient provision for prosthesis to the disabled, home care service for the elderly and the seriously ill, local advisory services (family counselling, SERT -Servizio per le Tossicodipendenze – Support Services for Drug Users-, mental health services, rehabilitation services for the disabled, etc.), semi-residential and residential structures (homes for the elderly and the disabled, day care centres, residential homes and therapeutic communities);

3. hospital care, A&E, hospitalization, day hospital and day surgery, hospitalization in facilities for rehabilitation and long-term patients and so on.



HEALTH CARE AND IMMIGRATION

In Italy, health care is guaranteed to all Italian and non EU immigrants regularly or irregularly present in the country.

When you sign up to the SSN you will receive a document, the **“Tesserino Sanitario Personale”** (Personal Health Card), which entitles you to receive medical care either free of charge or against payment of a health ticket (contribution paid by the patient under the co-pay system). The cost of the ticket depends on the region in which you reside and on your income. Each region has different regulations related to the “Guidelines for the correct application of the rules and regulations regarding health care for foreign citizens by the Italian Regions and Autonomous Provinces” approved by the Permanent Conference for relations between State, Regions and Autonomous Provinces of Trento and Bolzano. This document foresees that every region supply a list of all health services for immigrants specifying also the methods by which the services are made available. This is a new document; therefore the guidelines have not yet been defined.

The right to health concerns the following services:

- specialist medical examinations;
- home visits;
- hospitalization;
- vaccinations;
- blood tests;
- X-rays and ultrasounds;
- medication;
- prosthetic rehabilitation assistance.

If you hold a valid residence permit (or if you have applied for renewal) you must compulsorily register with the SSN in the case of:

- dependent and self-employment or while waiting for employment;
- family reasons;
- political asylum;
- applying for asylum;
- subsidiary protection or humanitarian reasons;
- request for adoption or foster care;
- for religious reasons;
- the acquisition of the Italian citizenship.

Registration with the SSN is optional if you:

- are a student or if you are an au pair worker even for periods of less than three months;
- hold a residence permit for elective residence and do not work, if you are a member of religious, diplomatic or consular personnel or in all other cases when registering to the SSN is not compulsory.

Voluntary registration with the SSN requires a payment of an annual fee. Payment must be made into a regional current account and the number will be supplied by the ASL (Local Health Service) where you reside upon request.

If you are a foreigner legally residing in Italy for a period longer than three months and you are not registered with the SSN, you are obliged to insure yourself against the risk of illness, accident and maternity leave, by buying a private insurance policy.

How to register with the SSN:

- registration is free, it is also valid for dependent family members of immigrant citizens, as long as legally residing in the country;
- registration is valid for the duration of the residence permit and does not expire during the renewal period: it can therefore be renewed also by producing to the ASL evidence in support of the request for renewal of a residence permit;
- in the event of non-renewal or withdrawal of the permit, or in the case of deportation the registration ceases to be valid, unless the person concerned proves that he or she has filed an appeal against this measure;
- registration must be made at the Local Health Agency (ASL), in the area in which you reside or at one where you have actual residence (indicated in the residence permit), where you can choose your GP and your family paediatrician. The ASL releases a health card – Carta Regionale dei Servizi (CSR)- Regional Service Card - which allows you to make use of all the benefits provided by the health care system;
- the documents required to register with the SSN are: a personal identity card/document, fiscal code, residence permit/receipt of renewal of residence permit, self-certification of residence or of domicile.

If you do not have a residence permit:

- you can benefit from urgent or essential health care and outpatient or hospital care for as long as needed in case of illness and/or accidents as well as preventive medical programs, using the STP code - Straniero Temporaneamente Presente (Temporarily Present Foreigner National);

- access to health facilities will not in any case result in being reported to the Authorities;
- you cannot be deported if you are a **pregnant woman or within 6 months after childbirth**. In this case, you can apply for a **residence permit for medical care** (along with your **child's father if married and living together**), renewable until your child is 6 months old and registering yourself to the SSN producing documentation proving your pregnancy.

WHAT IS THE STP CODE AND HOW TO APPLY

The STP is a document used in place of the national health card by non-EU immigrants without a residence permit.

The STP card may be issued by any ASL and hospital, regardless of the domicile or place of residence of the applicant.

In order to obtain the STP card it is necessary to sign a "statement of destitution." By signing this document you will have the same rights as any Italian citizen. This means that, when applicable, a contribution (ticket) should be paid for the services. Foreign nationals are requested to supply the following information which will be registered by the ASL: name, surname, gender, date of birth, STP code, address, nationality, date of release of the STP card. **This information will not, in any case, be forwarded to provincial police offices (Prefettura) for reporting purposes.**

The ASL must in any case register the personal data supplied by the applicant also in the absence of identity documents. If the immigrant wishes to remain anonymous, the card can be issued without the indication of the name and the surname.

The STP code is valid throughout the country, lasts six months and can be renewed.

To obtain the STP card usually no document should be required. Sometimes, however, the passport is required to be able to write correctly name and surname of the applicant. This essentially serves to protect the patient (e.g. in case family members or the patient's Consulate must be contacted).

MATERNITY AND STAY IN ITALY

If you do not yet hold a residence permit and you are expecting a baby:

- you cannot be deported;
- you can apply directly to the local Police Offices (Questura) for a residence permit "for medical care/maternity", valid from the day the pregnancy is certified and up to when the child is 6 months old by presenting a medical certificate and a declaration of domicile (this residence permit can also be applied for by the child's father when registering the birth, if you are married and living together). The residence permit for medical/maternity reasons does not allow you to be employed and is neither renewable nor convertible;
- you are always entitled to continuous urgent inpatient and outpatient care or to those services considered essential during pregnancy and childbirth, at public hospitals or at those structures operating within the SSN. You will receive the same treatment as any Italian citizen even in the absence of documents;

- you can register the birth of your child at the hospital or at the local registry office without running the risk of being reported; likewise, the father of the child, even if illegally present in the country and also in the case you are not married with him, can recognise his natural child without any risk;
- you can apply to the courts for the recognition of paternity if the father does not wish to recognize the child.

If your children are minor and you hold a residence permit:

- up to 14 years of age, children are registered in your residence permit or in your and/or the father's EC permit for long-term residents (former residence card). (The child will be issued a personal card associated with that of the parent);
- after 14 years of age, children will be issued a residence permit for family reasons (or an EC residence permit for long-term residents if the parents already hold such a permit);
- at the age of 18, having come of age, children are entitled to a residence permit for study reasons, for dependent/self-employment or when waiting for employment. Moreover, they can renew their residence permit for family reasons, as long as their parents can prove to be earning a sufficient income to support them.

PLEASE NOTE: Foreign nationals who were born to parents who are legal residents and have legally and continuously resided in the country from birth until adulthood, can apply for Italian citizenship. The application shall be submitted within the nineteenth year of age to the municipality of residence.

If your children are minor and you do not hold a residence permit:

- you can obtain a residence permit for family reasons if your children are registered in the father's residence permit even if you are not married with him. It is essential, however, that you have had a previous residence permit which has expired within the previous year (even in the case of a residence permit granted for medical/pregnancy reasons) and the father can prove both the accommodation and income requirements foreseen for family reunification are fulfilled;
- in the case of serious reasons related to the physical and mental development of the child who is living in Italy, the Juvenile Court may authorize the entry or the residence of a family member, granting the latter a permit "for child assistance" which allows you to work regularly but cannot be converted into a residence permit for work reasons;
- even if their position is not regular, your children are entitled to health care and are subject to compulsory education.

FROM PREGNANCY TO CHILDBIRTH: HEALTH SERVICES

Pregnancy

If you are not sure whether or not you are pregnant, pay attention to the following signs:

- menstruation does not occur when expected;
- menstruation occurs in a very different way from previous ones. For example you have morning sickness, vomiting and the urge to urinate frequently.

To make sure of your state you should take a pregnancy test.

Pregnancy test kits can be purchased at any pharmacy. If you discover that you are pregnant you can contact a family counselling centre where operators will welcome you and where you will be able to undergo periodic tests and examinations throughout the period of pregnancy.

Foreign women, even if they are not residence permit holders, may avail themselves of free medical care at any family counselling centre. The law forbids the medical staff to report any illegal immigrants using these services.

FAMILY COUNSELLING CENTRES: WHAT THEY DO AND WHOM THEY ARE FOR

Counselling centres are a public service directed mainly to women's health care, where singles, couples, young people, families can turn to for help and support on social and health problems. **These facilities guarantee confidentiality and professional secrecy.** Family counselling centres have a number of operators who you may find useful: health operators (doctors, midwives and nurses) social workers, psychologists – male and female, sometimes professional educators/pedagogues are available as well as psychotherapists, legal counsellors and family mediators. It is also possible to request being examined only and exclusively by female gynaecologists, midwives and nurses.

SERVICES OFFERED

Pregnancy, post-birth assistance and breastfeeding support, **contraception, voluntary termination of pregnancy (VTP/abortion)**, cancer prevention (pap test), menopause, family

mediation in support of situations of separation or divorce, fertility, infertility, **violence and mistreatment against women**, legal advice, counselling for **anonymous childbirth**.

All examinations regarding childbirth protection are free of charge.

Prescriptions for diagnostic and laboratory tests and specialist examinations are supplied by general practitioners or by specialists working at the medical structures operating within the SSN and in the family counselling centres. The list of such services is included in the Ministerial Decree dated 10 September 1998 and its attachments and are generally given free of charge:

- periodical obstetrical gynaecological examinations;
- tests to be carried out before conception in order to exclude the presence of factors which might affect negatively the pregnancy. If the couple's clinic or family history shows possible risks to the foetus, all necessary and appropriate care in order to ascertain possible genetic defects can be prescribed by the specialist doctor free of charge;
- all diagnostic tests for each period of pregnancy carried out to keep physiological pregnancy under control. In the risk of miscarriage all necessary specialist examinations to monitor the evolution of the pregnancy are included;
- all appropriate and necessary services for prenatal diagnosis during pregnancy when the foetus is at risk;
- all appropriate and necessary therapies for the treatment of diseases (pre-existing or arisen during pregnancy) which could put the mother or the foetus at risk, normally prescribed by the

specialist.

PLEASE NOTE: always ask your gynaecologist for the list of tests required during pregnancy.

PLEASE NOTE: the Ministerial Decree of 10 September 1998 has recently been modified and there are now new levels of assistance (LEA). The list of medical examinations and medical services recommended and offered for free during pregnancy has been updated, but the Decree has not yet come into force (at the time of writing this guide, the Decree was not yet effective). For any clarification contact your local clinic, your family doctor or your gynaecologist.

Childbirth

You can give birth, for free and in a safe environment, choosing from the hospital facilities available in the area and equipped for childbirth. If you contact the family counselling centre, operators will put you in contact with the structures available in the area where you live and list which childbirth facilities are available in the structure of your choice.

Your husband, your partner or a person of your choice may be with you during labour and delivery. In some hospitals the newborn may remain close to the mother, in others babies are kept in a special ward called "NIDO". In some cases, in the presence of conditions or clinical complications that prevent natural childbirth it could be necessary to resort to a caesarean section.

WHAT IS A CAESAREAN SECTION

The caesarean section (CS) is a surgical procedure whereby the gynaecologist extracts the foetus from the mother's womb. It can be programmed if decided upon before labour or can be an urgent procedure if the conditions of the mother or of the foetus during childbirth make it necessary. It is an intervention which can be performed either under general or local anaesthesia.

ALWAYS ASK BOTH THE SURGEON AND THE ANAESTHESIST INFORMATION ON THE TYPE OF INTERVENTION WHICH HAS BEEN DECIDED TO BE PERFORMED AND ALWAYS REMEMBER TO READ AND SIGN THE INFORMED CONSENT FORM. IF YOU HAVE ANY DIFFICULTY IN UNDESTANDING THE CONTENTS OF THIS FORM ASK THE HEALTH OPERATORS TO EXPLAIN IT TO YOU.

The Informed consent form is a document that informs you of the type of intervention and its risks.



Health care after childbirth

Upon returning home after childbirth you may need support, information, and assistance for both yourself and your child. After giving birth, you will be in a PROTECTED DISCHARGE position. This means that, upon request by the doctors, you must go back to the hospital so that both your health and that of your child can be checked. You can also contact a counselling centre in the area near your home and ask if there are any midwives who can visit you after childbirth for a health evaluation and counselling on contraception (prescription, application method of contraception), if there are any activity groups in your area (postnatal and baby feeding support groups; groups organising child massage; theme groups for parents), if there are any associations which can support you during the child feeding period.

Depression after childbirth

Postnatal or post-partum depression is a mood disorder which affects 10-20% of women in the period immediately following childbirth.

Symptoms of postnatal depression are crying spells, mood changes, general irritability, and loss of appetite, insomnia or difficulty in staying awake, the absence of interest in daily activities and/or towards the new-born.

In the cases when proper postnatal depression is diagnosed antidepressants can be prescribed taking into account the possible side effects on both the mother and the newborn, especially if you are breastfeeding (most of the drugs are counter indicated for breastfeeding and in any case all the molecules taken by the mother pass through the blood into the her milk). Medical therapy should be combined with

psychological support or proper psychotherapy offered directly by the health service.

Medical care for the new-born: your Paediatrician of choice

Each child from 0 to 14 years of age has the right to have his/her own doctor, who is called a **paediatrician**. **In Italy every child has the right to be taken care of by a paediatrician, even in the case of migrant mothers, registered with the SSN or holders of the STP card.**

The rules regulating health care for your child are the same rules established for you:

- if you hold a residence permit and you fall within the categories for whom it is compulsory to register with the SSN, also your child must be registered and have his/her paediatrician, according to the rules described above.
- If you hold a residence permit but you belong to a category who may choose not to join the SSN also your child will follow the same procedure: i.e. buying an insurance policy or payment of an annual set sum as contribution for the registration.

If you do not hold a residence permit you can apply for a STP card for your child as well, as previously stated. Contact the nearest ASL where you will be given the address of a counselling centre or that of a paediatrician.

PLEASE NOTE: a paediatrician does not only take care of a child when he/she is ill but has also the task of monitoring the child's growth through periodic examinations and screening tests.

Vaccinations are very important for the health of the child and the community.

In Italy vaccinations are divided into:

- mandatory: the law provides that all children be vaccinated and ASL send an invitation with the date and the place in which they will be given;
- recommended: for all recommended vaccinations ASL will send an invitation with the date and place in which they could be given;
- optional: parents are not obliged to give their children certain types of vaccination but the paediatrician may advise them that they should be given the basis of the child's clinical history. In this case, the parents must contact the ASL to fix an appointment.

Voluntary termination of pregnancy (abortion)

If you are expecting a baby, but you are not sure you want to continue the pregnancy, you will find specialised staff operating with the counselling centres who will listen to you and support you in your choice. The decision to terminate the pregnancy is always a difficult and dramatic moment in the life of a woman and no woman can deal with it superficially, lightness and solitude. The reasons which may bring you to such decision are manifold.

The counselling centre operators will help you to check if there are any services in your area which can help you to overcome your problems, be they economic, social or regarding family. In Italy it is legal to terminate a pregnancy within the first 90 days after conception which correspond in terms of ultrasound

scan to 12 weeks and 6 days. Voluntary interruption of pregnancy is confidential and does not need the father's consent. Foreign women, even without a residence permit, may apply for a free abortion. After 90 days of pregnancy, termination is only permitted for therapeutic purposes, i.e. when the mental and physical health of the woman is at risk. In Italy termination of pregnancy can be practiced exclusively in health structures such as hospitals, clinics etc.

In order to resort to abortion it is necessary to produce a certificate stating the date when the pregnancy began; this document can be issued by the gynaecologist and after seven days you can undergo the operation at the hospital you have chosen. However, you can change your mind at any time before the operation and continue the pregnancy having discussed the issue with the health operators.

If you are a minor and are expecting a baby and you want to resort to an abortion you can do it with the permission of both your parents. If you do not want to inform your parents or they are not present at the time, an authorisation is required by a judge supervising cases concerning guardianship (giudice tutelare); you will find support from social workers and psychologists at counselling centres.

Voluntary interruption of pregnancy is not a contraceptive, does not preclude the possibility of having further pregnancies, but if repeated it may compromise the health of the woman.

CONTRACEPTION

You can avoid unwanted pregnancies with the proper use of contraceptives. The most common contraceptive methods are:

The condom

The condom (effectiveness from 85% to 98%) is a contraceptive. It consists of a thin sheath of natural rubber which covers the erected male organ before each sexual intercourse to prevent the sperm from entering the vagina. The condom is the only effective contraceptive method against the risk of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases (hepatitis, syphilis, and gonorrhoea).

The vaginal diaphragm

The vaginal diaphragm (real effectiveness 84%) is a soft rubber cap with a thick rim covering the opening of the vagina up to the uterus. It should be smeared with cream, or spermicidal lubricant before being inserted into the vagina prior each intercourse (2/3 hours before). It must not be removed before at least 6 hours since the last intercourse.

You should visit a gynaecologist to establish the size and type to use. Its use can be discontinued at any time.

Hormonal contraception

Hormonal contraceptives are small doses of hormones which, taken continuously, reduce by 99.9% the chance of a pregnancy. These contraceptives are:

- the Pill (effectiveness from 92% to 99.7%) is the most common hormonal birth control method; it is taken by mouth daily and each pill has its own instructions for use. There is a type of pill, called POP ideal for women who are breastfeeding and has no side effects on the child. Most of the pills are not free, although there are certain types which are free of charge

whose prescription can be obtained at the counselling centres.

- the Vaginal ring (effectiveness from 92% to 99.7%) is a ring of transparent and flexible material to be inserted in the vagina between the first and the fifth day after the beginning of menstruation. It should be changed every three weeks with an interval of seven days.
- the Contraceptive patch (effectiveness from 92% to 99.7%) is applied to any part of the body and must adhere well to the skin. It should be replaced every seven days, observing a break every three weeks during which the contraceptive efficacy remains intact.

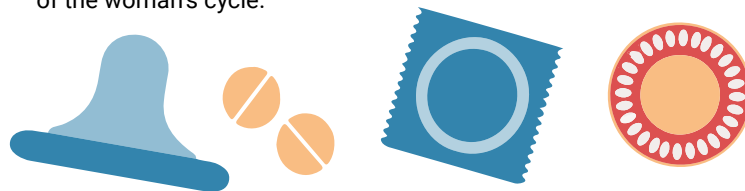
The IUD coil

The IUD coil (effectiveness 99.4%) is a birth control device made of plastic and copper that prevents the fertilization process. It must be inserted and removed from the uterus by the gynaecologist and its duration is from 3 to 5 years. It is not recommended to young women who have not yet given birth.

Natural birth control methods

Natural birth control methods (BBT- Basal Body Temperature, Knaus-Ogino, Billings, effectiveness 75% to 91%) are based on abstinence from natural intercourse during the fertile period, calculated according to the method chosen.

These methods are not very reliable because it is not easy to recognize the signs of ovulation and also due to the variability of the woman's cycle.



Coitus interruptus (rejected sexual intercourse) is the timely removal of the penis from the vagina before ejaculation. It has low efficiency since in the lubricating fluid produced by the man at the beginning of the relationship there may already be sperm capable of fertilization.

Emergency contraception

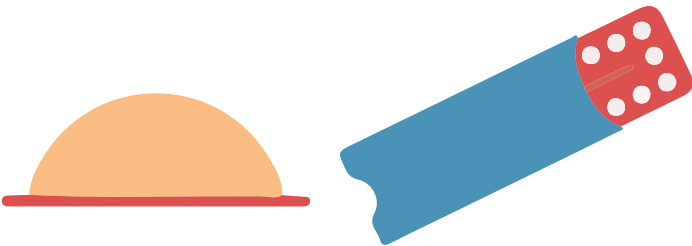
The “morning-after pill” is not a contraceptive method and should only be used in emergency. The tablets are to be taken after unprotected sexual intercourse and should be taken within 48 - maximum 72 hours after the intercourse.

A good alternative is the insertion of the coil (by the gynaecologist) within 5 days from the intercourse.

Anonymous birth

The birth of a baby is an extraordinary event in the life of a woman but not all women are able to acknowledge their maternity and adequately respond to the needs of the child during pregnancy; this can happen for many reasons and in particularly in difficult situations.

Therefore, in hospitals, it is possible to give birth without disclosing your identity, with the guarantee of maximum confidentiality and free from guilt induced by judgement.



The law allows you not to recognize the child but leave him/her in the hospital where he/she was born thus ensuring assistance and legal protection (396/2000 DPR, art. 30, parag. 2).

The mother's name will always remain undisclosed and the child's birth certificate will show *“born from woman who does not want to be identified.”*

The child who is not recognized can be adopted by a couple deemed fit by the Juvenile Court and he/she will be raised and educated in a family and gain the status of legitimate child of the parents who adopted him/her.

Should you have serious reasons preventing you from formalizing the recognition, you can ask the Juvenile Court, where the procedure for the declaration of adoptability of the new-born is open, a period of time to provide for said recognition.

Declaration of birth and recognition of the child

The declaration of birth made within maximum 10 days from birth, allows the completion of the birth certificate which will include identity particulars, name and citizenship.

Foreign parents regularly residing in Italy must make the declaration of birth:

- within ten days from birth at the Municipality where the birth took place or at the Municipality of residence of both parents, if they reside in the same Municipality. In the event that the parents do not reside in the same Municipality the declaration of birth is made in the Municipality of residence of the mother, unless otherwise agreed between them;
- or:
- within three days, at the hospital or health department of the nursing home where the birth took place. In the latter case, the declaration may also contain the contextual recognition of the

biological child and, together with the birth certificate, this will be forwarded, to be registered by the chief medical officer to the civil register office of the Municipality in which the birth took place or, at the request of the parents, the Municipality of residence within the next ten days.

Recognition by foreign parents with illegal resident status

According to a circular of the Ministry of Interior (circular no. 19 of 7 August 2009), foreign citizens with illegal resident status who are declaring a birth and the recognition of the biological child **cannot be reported to the Authorities**.

Therefore, if you are a mother without a residence permit you have the right to make a declaration of birth at any hospital within three days after delivery or within ten days of the birth at the civil register, **and you will not be reported to the Authorities**.

You will be entitled to a residence permit for medical treatment up to six months following the birth of your child, under the conditions specified above.

To make the declaration of birth and recognition of the biological child, you must present a valid passport.

MATERNITY AND WORK

Maternity protection is regulated by law and by national labour contracts. Therefore, many of the rights of immigrant women expecting a baby depend also on their type of work.

If you are a regular employee:

- you cannot be dismissed from work from the beginning of pregnancy until one year of age of your child, except for just cause;
- you are entitled to maternity leave (you do not work but you still receive your salary) two months before the expected date of

birth and three months after the birth of your child, or a month before giving birth and four months after birth; during this period you are entitled to a maternity allowance (80% of your salary depending on your employment contract);

- you can also ask for parental leave (optional leave) until your child is eight, for a maximum of 6 months; also the father of the child can apply, for a total of 7 months. The parental leave requested by both parents cannot exceed 11 months. During this period your salary will be reduced to 30% for six months and also for the subsequent periods only if you do not exceed a certain income;
- you are entitled, after the birth of the child, to two hours a day for feeding time; if you work six hours a day you are entitled also to time off if your child is ill;
- if you have a difficult pregnancy or if your work is classified as heavy you can ask for advanced leave from work (i.e. the prohibition to work) by contacting the competent labour inspectorate.

If you are a house cleaner/maid:

- you are entitled only to a 2 month maternity leave before and 3 months after childbirth. To be entitled to maternity benefits (i.e. to receive your salary) you should have paid at least 6 months of weekly social security contributions during the previous year or, alternatively, 1 year of social security contributions in the two year period preceding the period of leave. You cannot be dismissed from work during the period going from pregnancy to the end of the maternity leave;
- in the case of high-risk pregnancy you can contact the competent labour inspectorate;
- in the event of resignation submitted before the end of the maternity leave you are not obliged to give notice to your employer.

Mandatory abstention flexibility from work has recently been introduced: you can delay the mandatory period of absence from work for up to one month before the expected date of birth and up to four months after the birth of your child. It is necessary though that the National Health medical specialist or a private medical specialist operating within the National Health Service and medical officers for the prevention and health protection in the workplace declare that such an option will not be detrimental to your health and that of the unborn child (art. 12 Law no. 53 of the March 28, 2000).

If you are a term-contract worker:

- you are entitled to early maternity leave in the case of a difficult pregnancy and your work is classified as heavy;
- you are entitled to maternity leave as any regular employee (i.e. you can leave work for 5 months);
- you can apply for parental leave for 3 months, but only until your child is one year old;
- the maternity allowance is not paid by your employer but you have to present a request directly to INPS (National Institute of Social Security).

Should you have any difficulty regarding the services mentioned in the previous pages, or if you need any information or protection of your rights please contact the relevant office at the Tribunal for Patients' Rights of Cittadinanzattiva closest to you or the national headquarters of Cittadinanzattiva.

CITTADINANZATTIVA NPO

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Alto Adige - Südtirol

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(Ex Via Amba Alagi 20) 6th floor room no. 619
Tues.10.00am/12.00 am - Thurs.3.00pm/5.00 pm
Phone: 333-5438189 web: www.cittadinanzattiva-altoadige.org
cittadinanzattiva-altoadige@cittadinanzattiva-altoadige.org
PEC: tdm@pec.cittadinanzattiva-altoadige.org
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Calabria

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Campania

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phone: 051 19985606 e-mail: segreteria@cittadinanzattiva-er.it;
f.malagrino@cittadinanzattiva.it
opening hours: from Monday to Friday 9:30 am - 1:00 pm

Friuli Venezia-Giulia

UD Tavagnacco, c/o Municipio Piazza Indipendenza 1 33010
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Molise

Campobasso - cittadinanzattivamolise@gmail.com
web: www.cittadinanzattivamolise.it

Piedmont

c/o SGAS, Via Cavour 31, 10123 Torino
Sportello Tribunale per i diritti del malato: Tues- Wed -
Thurs 3:00pm – 6:00pm Phone: 011/8177075 - pit.torino@
cittadinanzattiva.it, tdm@cittadinanzattivapiemonte.org

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CT Catania via Pasubio 19 - 95129 Catania
Phone. 095/2540627 - segreteria@cittadinanzattivasicilia.com
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Trentino

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cittadinanzattivadel trentino.it
Tues. 4.30 pm/6.30 pm Sat. 9.30 am/11.30 am

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Phone 338/1519010 ca.regioneveneto@alice.it

Valle d'Aosta

(By appointment only) Via Saint Martin de Corléans, 248 Aosta
c/o "Ex Maternità" - 2° piano
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