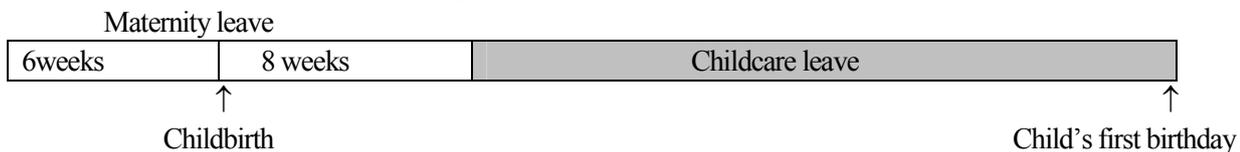


Maternity Leave and Childcare Leave

Maternity Leave: The Japanese Labor Standards Act allows female employees to take maternity leave for 6 weeks before the due date and 8 weeks after giving birth. The pre-childbirth leave is granted only when an employee requests to take the leave, but the post-childbirth leave is mandatory. The employer cannot ask an employee to work within 8 weeks after childbirth even though the employee requests to return to work. However, if a female employee wishes to return to work after 6 weeks and has medical approval, the company is free to accept such request.

Childcare Leave: After the maternity leave, an employee may apply for childcare leave to raise a child until he/she reaches one year of age. Employer cannot reject the leave request from employees, in principle. The leave is granted to male employee as well when his spouse gives birth to a baby. (Childcare and Family Care Leave Act)



The leave period may be extended for another 6 months under special circumstances, for example, if the employee has difficulty finding childcare facility. The applicant must meet standards set by the government to apply for the extension of period

■ Social insurance premium exemption

During the childcare leave, both the employee and the employer are exempt from monthly social insurance contribution for health insurance and welfare pension insurance. The leave entitlement described above is a minimum requirement by law. When a company voluntarily provides additional childcare leave for the period until a child reaches three years of age, the premium exemption is also applied to the additional leave period.

Special Note: Effective from April 2014, the premium exemption will be expanded to cover the maternity leave period.

■ Benefits from social insurance during the leave

The law does not set any regulation on salary payment to employees on the maternity and childcare leaves. As a general practice, most of the leaves is provided without pay in most companies.. To compensate for lost income for unpaid period, social insurance provides the following cash benefit plans.

Lump-sum child birth allowance	420,000 yen per child	This is a minimum amount set by the governmental health insurance plan. Health insurance association plan may provide higher level of benefit. This benefit is granted even if salary is paid during the leave.
Maternity allowance (from health insurance)	67% of daily wage during maternity leave	These allowances are provided when salary is not paid by the company. Reduced amount may be provided when a partial salary is paid during the leave. The allowance calculations are subject to ceilings under each insurance .scheme.
Childcare leave allowance (from employment insurance)	50% of daily wage during childcare leave	

Special Note: The government has a plan to increase the level of childcare leave allowance from 50% to 67% for the initial 6 months period, but it is not confirmed yet.