



Maternity Leave in Private Sector

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Maternity benefits to workers in the private sector are regulated under Employees' State Insurance (ESI) Act, 1948 and Maternity Benefit (MB) Act, 1961. The Government has already enhanced paid maternity leave from 12 weeks to 26 weeks for up to two surviving children under the ESI Act, 1948 vide notification dated 20.01.2017. So far as enhanced benefits under MB Act, 1961 are concerned, the Government introduced Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Bill, 2016 before Rajya Sabha. The said Bill was passed by the Rajya Sabha on 11.08.2016 and Lok Sabha has also passed the Bill with some amendments on 09.03.2017.

Both the Acts provide for protection of rights of working women through robust and proper mechanism including inspections by the field officers. The Acts provide for stringent penalties, including imprisonment, for violations of its provisions to ensure proper implementation.

This information was given by Shri Bandaru Dattatreya, the Minister of State (IC) for Labour and Employment, in written reply to a question in Rajya Sabha today.

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