

Dear Clients,

Subject: Reform of parental leave – Increase of the children's age limit to 14 under Law No. 199/2025 (2026 Budget Law)

This circular is intended to draw attention to the changes introduced by Law No. 199/2025 (2026 Budget Law) regarding the protection of parenthood.

Parental leave is a period of optional absence from work granted to parents so that they can take care of their child in the early years of life and meet the child's needs. It is granted to employed parents for each minor child who is born, adopted or in foster care.

Parental leave is recognized for working parents who have an ongoing employment relationship and cannot be requested for days in which work activity is suspended (unpaid leave, contractual breaks in part-time or on-call work).

Parental leave

The age of the child that is relevant for entitlement to certain measures in support of parenthood is increased from 12 to 14 years. The new age limit applies to several categories provided for by current legislation.

In particular, each parent may take parental leave for each child from birth until the child reaches 14 years of age. The same limit applies to the extension of parental leave granted to parents of minors with a certified serious disability, which may be used, for a total maximum period of three years, until the child reaches 14 years of age.



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The increase in the age limit also affects entitlement to the parental leave allowance, which is provided for a period of three months and may be paid until the child turns 14; in the case of adoption, the right to the allowance is recognised within 14 years from the child's entry into the family unit.

The new age limit also applies to leave for a child's illness, giving each parent the possibility to be absent from work, up to a maximum of 10 working days per year, for the illness of each child between 3 and 14 years of age.

In the first 14 years of each child's life, both parents are entitled to be absent from work within an overall limit of 10 months, allocated as follows:

- the employed mother is entitled to a continuous or split period not exceeding 6 months, after compulsory maternity leave;
- the employed father is entitled to a continuous or split period not exceeding 6 months, which may be increased to 7 months if he exercises his right to be absent from work for at least 3 months. In this case, the overall limit is increased to 11 months.

Parental leave months are compensated by INPS at different rates:

- 3 months are compensated at 80% of pay;
- for further periods, up to the child's fourteenth birthday, an allowance equal to 30% of pay is granted, provided that the individual income of the parent requesting the leave is less than 2.5 times the amount of the minimum pension.

Please note that parental leave is due to the parent requesting it even if the other parent is not entitled to it, and that it may also be taken by both parents at the same time.

Extension of parental leave for children with disabilities

For each minor with a certified serious disability, the employed mother or, alternatively, the employed father is entitled, until the child reaches 14 years of age, to an extension of parental leave,



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which may be taken continuously or in separate periods, for a total maximum period not exceeding three years, provided that the minor is not hospitalized full time in specialized institutions, unless the health-care staff request the presence of the parent.

Leave for a child's illness

Both parents, alternately, are entitled to be absent from work for periods corresponding to the illnesses of each child up to three years of age.

For children between 3 and 14 years of age, each parent is entitled to be absent from work, as an alternative to the other parent, for up to 10 working days per year for each child.

Maternity handover period

Law No. 199/2025 also provides that, where a fixed-term employee is hired to replace a worker absent on maternity leave, the employment contract may be extended for an additional period of overlap/hand-over with the replaced worker, for a duration which in any case may not exceed the child's first year of life.

This circular is for information purposes only and does not constitute professional advice on specific cases. For further information or assistance in concrete situations, the Firm remains at your disposal.

Kind regards,

12 January 2026

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