

The declaration of birth

It is mandatory, and also important that the father, mother or both parents together declare the birth of the child to the civil registrar of the municipality in which the child was born.

If the parents are not married and both want to recognize the child as theirs, then they must make this declaration together. In most cases, this recognition can also be affirmed before the birth, after which the declaration may be made by just one of the parents. Parents who are illegal residents will receive on declaration of the birth the documents required to collect the birth certificate in the municipality in which the child was born. This declaration must be made within 15 days following the birth. If this is not done by the parents, it is the hospital, the doctor or midwife who will make the declaration, in which case you risk having a very incomplete birth certificate.

The birth certificate

The birth certificate is a very important document for the future of the child. Even if both parents are living here illegally, the child is entitled to a birth certificate. In that case, however, the child will not be entered in either the register of the population or in that of foreigners. It may be that one of his parents has residence documents. In that case, the birth certificate is sent to the civil registrar of the commune in which that parent is registered. The child will then be registered in that commune from his date of birth and will receive the better residence status of the resident parent. In other words, it is important that this parent recognize the child and that his name is also entered on the birth certificate. In addition, it is desirable that the parent in illegal residence is also mentioned on the birth certificate, as this document can be used as evidence in a possible regularization procedure. The birth certificate mentions inter alia the date and place of birth of the parents and their names.

Useful addresses

- **ONE (Office de la Naissance et de l'Enfance)**
02/542.12.11 - www.one.be.
- **Kind & Gezin**
078/15.01.00 - www.kindengezin.be

Here you can receive both free prenatal consultations and postnatal care for children up to 3 years (exceptionally 6 years).

Services: vaccinations, advice on diet, health, safety, education... Doctors at Kind and Gezin and the ONE may not (normally) prescribe drugs or treatments. When the child is ill, it is better to go to the family doctor (or pediatrician).

Expertisecentrum Kraamzorg Volle Maan

(rue) Konings (straat) 294 -1210 Brussels
02/229.25.58 of 0478/88.11.86
info@expertisecentrum-vollemaan.be

Can help you in your search for information during the pregnancy, childbirth and the postpartum periods.

The leaflets below are available in Dutch, French, English, Spanish, Russian, Portuguese, Mandarin... These leaflets, as well as other publications, can be downloaded for free on our website

- Medimmigrant – Introduction leaflet
- Urgent Medical Care for people without legal residency
- Pregnancy, childbirth and postnatal care for women without legal residency
- Health insurance for people without legal residency or with a revocable residency
- (short) Residence for medical reasons
- Mental health care for people without legal residency
- A visa for medical reasons + pledge of financial support
- What to do in case of a workplace accident if you were employed unofficially?
- Medical support when returning



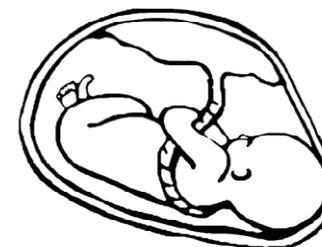
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(rue) Gaucheret (straat) 164, 1030 Brussels

Pregnancy, Childbirth & Postnatal care

For women with no legal
residence permit




Medimmigrant

Info by email and by phone

Telephonic permanence:

Mo: 10 am – 1 pm

Tue: 14 pm – 18 pm

Fri: 10 am – 1 pm

Tel. 02/ 274.14.33/34 • Fax 02/ 274.14.48

E-mail: info@medimmigrant.be

www.medimmigrant.be

Postal address:

(! no consultations on the spot)

164, (rue) Gaucheret(street) • 1030 Brussels

Fortis: 001-2389649-33

Pregnancy

Medical supervision during pregnancy is important. For this purpose, you can consult a medical doctor and/or a gynecologist. The payment of these consultations may, under certain conditions, be borne by the CPAS/OCMW under the procedure for urgent medical aid¹ granted to foreigners without legal residence (see leaflet 'Urgent medical aid to people without legal residence'). We advise you to make contact with the preventive care centres of the Office de la Naissance et de l'Enfance (O.N.E.) (Wallonia and Brussels) or Kind and Gezin (Flanders and Brussels). There, you can benefit from free consultations and (in some centres) from a number of basic examinations for the monitoring of pregnancy. You can also go there after your child is born.

Return to the country of origin during pregnancy or after childbirth

Some airlines no longer accept women on board after the 7th month of pregnancy. For more information, please visit their respective website. If you are without legal residence in Belgium, you can contact organizations such as Caritas and IOM to receive medical support before, during or after the flight (see leaflet 'Medical support when returning').

Precarious residence status during pregnancy

If your pregnancy is already very advanced, you have just given birth or in case of serious complications, you can request a stay of execution of short duration for your departure by applying to the 'Office des étrangers'/ 'Dienst vreemdelingenzaak' (= Aliens' Office) (see leaflet '(short) Residence for medical reasons'). In this situation you can also consider requesting financial assistance from the CPAS/OCMW of your place of residence but your application will be probably rejected. When an appeal is brought against that decision, the labour courts usually grant (retroactive) financial assistance for the period preceding and following childbirth (two months before and three months after).

Childbirth

Giving birth without the benefit of health insurance is very expensive. Childbirth expenses often exceed 1000 Euro; to this may be added the charges for a few additional days of hospitalisation or medication for the mother or her infant if complications arise. Therefore, it is important to think about paying for this in good time. Some private health insurance will cover childbirth provided that the contract was taken out before the pregnancy started. People who have not sufficient financial means may request the CPAS/OCMW of their place of residence to examine whether costs can be paid under the 'Urgent medical aid' procedure for persons without legal residence. Indeed, childbirth clearly meets the criteria laid down in the Royal Decree of 12.12.1996.

How can this "urgent medical aid" procedure be successfully claimed?

Ask a doctor to fill out an urgent medical aid certificate with which you then go to your local CPAS/OCMW. This CPAS will verify via a social enquiry that you have not got legal residence, are indigent and that you live on the territory of the CPAS. If the answer is positive, they will issue you with a document which states that they will bear the costs of care (see leaflet 'Urgent Medical Care to people without legal residency').¹

What do I do in an emergency if I have not yet got agreement from my local CPAS?

- Go to the hospital emergency department.
- Explain your situation: that you are not legally resident in Belgium, that you don't have health insurance and that you won't be able to pay the Bill.
- Then contact the social service of the hospital and ask them to start the procedure for urgent medical care for people without legal residency. If you qualify, the CPAS (of the hospital) may pay your

¹ The procedure may vary according to the CPAS. Some CPAS, for example, will send you straight to a doctor and will agree to pay for this first consultation (provided that the doctor sends his bill accompanied by an Urgent Medical Care Certificate).

medical expenses. It is better to start this procedure as soon as possible! If you wait until you get the bill, it is then often too late to request that the CPAS pay this Bill.

A few remarks

Professional confidentiality

The medical profession must respect professional confidentiality and is not an offence to provide humanitarian assistance.

Private hospital

If your gynecologist is working with a private hospital, the procedure is the same as that described above. However, in practice, it appears that some CPAS's/OCMW's are less flexible when it comes to private hospitals. If for some time you have already been attending a gynecologist with whom the CPAS has no convention, it is worth asking the CPAS to allow you to continue in his/her care. The Department does not differentiate between public and private hospitals when a bill is presented.

Childbirth at home

It is possible to give birth at home and apply the A.R. (Royal Decree) in the matter of urgent medical care. Nevertheless, the attestation of urgent medical aid may only be filled in by a doctor (and not by a midwife). In any case always contact the CPAS before delivery.

The notice of birth

It is the hospital, the midwife or the gynaecologist who notifies the civil registrar of the municipality in which the child was born. This notification of birth states that a child has been born, who the mother is and whether it is a boy or a girl. This must be done on the first working day after the birth.