

Asylum Support Partnership

help and advice



January 2010

English

Maternity payments for parents seeking asylum

If you are receiving asylum support from the UK Border Agency (UKBA), and are pregnant or if you already have children under the age of three you may be entitled to extra money. This leaflet explains what payments are available depending on the type of support you receive and what you need to do to receive them. To get all the additional support you must follow all the steps explained below within the timescales given.

Additional weekly cash payments

While you are pregnant and when your baby is born, you can receive additional payments from UKBA. When you are pregnant you can request an extra £3 per week. When your baby is born, and until he or she is one year old, you will be entitled to an extra £5 per week. When your baby is one year old you will still be entitled to an extra £3 a week until the baby is three years old. When the baby turns three the additional support payment will stop and your weekly support amount will be the current weekly UKBA allowance for parents and children.

If you are receiving Section 4 support, you can apply for similar payments. In addition, once your child is born you can apply for an extra £5 per week to pay for clothing for your child until they are 16 years old. All additional payments will be added to your Azure card payments. If you already have children who are under 18, there should be no limit on the amount of support you can carry over on your Azure card from one week to the next. If this is your first child, UKBA should stop the £5 carry over limit once you are issued the maternity grant.

Single additional maternity grant

When the baby is born and you are receiving ordinary asylum support, you are also entitled to a single additional payment of £300 to cover the cost of buying clothes and equipment for the baby. If you are having twins you are entitled to £600, £300 per child. You must apply for this no earlier than six weeks before your baby is due or no later than two weeks after your baby is born.

If you are receiving Section 4 support, you can apply for a single additional payment of £250 per child. If you are having twins you are entitled to £500. This will be added to your Azure card payments. You must apply for this no earlier than eight weeks before your baby is due, or no later than six weeks after your baby is born.

What do I need to do and when?

To access these payments you must send a signed, written request to UKBA. If you receive Section 4 support from UKBA you must make all these requests using the Section 4 Additional Payments Form and tick all the relevant boxes. Requests should be sent to your named case owner. If you don't have a case owner you should write to the UKBA regional office.

Other translated leaflets are available at <http://languages.refugeecouncil.org.uk>

Asylum Support Partnership is a partnership project hosted by the British Refugee Council
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For any request you must send the original documents which UKBA should return to you. You should take a photocopy of your request and your documents for your records. You should send all requests and original documents by 'recorded delivery' (ask at the Post Office about this).

If you need help making these applications contact your local refugee organisation.

When you become pregnant:

Write to your UKBA case owner requesting the £3 maternity payment and the single maternity grant of £300/£250 and include a letter or a MATB1 form from your doctor or midwife confirming that you are pregnant and the expected date of birth (date of delivery).

Remember to request the maternity grant within the timescales UKBA specifies:

- If you are receiving ordinary asylum support, request £300 no earlier than six weeks before the baby is due, or two weeks after the baby is born
- If you are receiving Section 4 support, request £250 no earlier than eight weeks before the baby is due, or six weeks after the baby is born

If you apply early, UKBA may not process the application. Please check whether you need to send it again within the timescales. In some circumstances UKBA will not grant the maternity payment before the baby is born, and will require confirmation of the child's birth (eg. a birth certificate).

Please note that if you do not apply within the timescale given you will not get the payment.

When your baby is born:

Go to your registry office and register the birth as soon as you can. They will give you a free 'short' birth certificate. You can also get a 'long' birth certificate with more details on it for a small fee. **You will need to get both birth certificates.** If you are on Section 4 support you can request money from UKBA to pay for the long birth certificate.

To make sure that your baby is added to your support, you must then sign a written request and send this to your case owner. You must include the original 'long' birth certificate. Once UKBA has received the application, it will add the payments described above to your asylum support.

If the payments haven't started within two or three weeks go to see your local refugee organisation.

Single fathers looking after young children may also follow these guidelines for applying for additional support if the mother is not present.

Asylum Support Partnership consists of:

North of England Refugee Service, charity number: 1091200 www.refugee.org.uk
Refugee Action, charity number: 283660 www.refugee-action.org.uk
Refugee Council, charity number: 1014576 www.refugeecouncil.org.uk
Scottish Refugee Council, charity number: SC008639 www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk
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