



Information sheet maternity protection
Handling hazardous and biological substances and physical risks

J. Hosseinzadeh

Translation: Luzie Schmitt

Javanshir Hosseinzadeh

Edited by J. Hosseinzadeh
T +49 711 459 22975
F +49 711 459 24401
E-mail j.hosseinzadeh@uni-hohenheim.de
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1) Notification of pregnancy

Expectant mothers shall notify their employer (the institute and/or the Human Resources Department) about their pregnancy as soon as possible due to the fact that the department direction has to fulfill certain obligations in the case of a pregnancy. An **early notification of pregnancy** is particularly in the interest of mother and child if the expectant mother works in endangering surroundings.

It is for example particularly dangerous to **handle certain chemicals, biological agents, or ionizing materials**, especially in the first three months of pregnancy, the organogenesis, during which the embryo is extremely vulnerable to the reception of substances.

If an expectant mother does not want to notify the institute during this early stage but is not sure whether the work place poses risks to the pregnancy, she may contact Mr. Hosseinzadeh (T: 22975), at the Occupational Health and Safety Department (028), or Dr. Simon (T: 22976), the campus physician, in order to determine the eventual risks.

We advise department directors to put together a **risk assessment** according to the Protection of Pregnant Workers Regulations (Verordnung zum Schutz der Mütter am Arbeitsplatz, MuSchRiV), the Maternity Protection Law (Mutterschutzgesetz, MuSchG) and other legal provisions in combination with Sec. 5 of the Occupational Health and Safety Act (Arbeitsschutzgesetz, ArbSchG). It is advisable to **instruct** the employees on the outcome of the risk assessment. This way, it can be insured that expectant mothers are aware of the risks that some workplaces bear.

2) Risk assessment

The **institute direction** is legally obliged to examine the workplace in regard to possible dangers for expectant or nursing mothers and **to take precautions for the protection of mother and child!** The Occupational Health and Safety Department has put together a checklist to help the responsible persons with this task. This risk assessment can be viewed and downloaded on the page of the Occupational Health and Safety Department (028). In this document, potential dangers are listed and evaluated. The required protective measures are determined according to the risk assessment.

These measures may be:

- a) The rearrangement of the work station or the work environment and if necessary also of the working hours.
- b) Temporary change of work station/place.
- c) If it is not possible to change or reorganize the workplace, an employment prohibition may be declared.

This chronological order presents a prioritization!!

3) Information for pregnant students doing an internship

Lecturers directing internships carry the responsibility that students are not exposed to health risks, also in case of pregnancy. This responsibility starts when the expectant mother notifies the internship director of the pregnancy. During the routine safety instructions students shall be informed of the importance of an early notification of pregnancy due to possible dangers. Special instructions for women of reproductive age are not necessary.

The Protection of Pregnant Workers Regulations in combination with Sec. 2-4 Occupational Health and Safety Act are to be applied to students.

In practice, this means:

a) According to Sec. 1 MuSchRiV, the internship direction shall examine the work stations and the tasks to be performed in regard to possible dangers for pregnant women and develop possibilities for continued employment.

It has to be taken into account that the study place gives the students the right to participate in the required internships, regardless of being pregnant or not.

This is in accordance with the general prohibition of discrimination. *Written declarations on the status of a possible pregnancy demanded in an effort of prevention are not permitted and therefore legally irrelevant.*

b) Internships in the context of the minor (Nebenfach) usually do not require the use of hazardous substances or procedures subject to the regulations of Sec. 5 MuSchRiV.

4) Special regulations for handling hazardous substances

Due to the great number of hazardous substances and procedures used at the University of Hohenheim, it is not possible to include a structured and comprehensive overview of these. Therefore, individual substances shall be deliberately excluded from use. The H-statements (former R-phrases) listed below include essential information on dangers for expectant and nursing mothers. These H-statements can be found on the container identification or in the safety data sheet.



















In the individual case it can be necessary to put together and thoroughly go through a list of substances the expectant mother will be handling. This can be done either by help of filling out the questionnaire below or with the assistance of the Occupational Health and Safety Department.

Mr. Hosseinzadeh Tel.: +49 711/459-22975

Employment restrictions

Expectant and nursing mothers are not allowed to work with substances which are highly toxic, harmful to health, or chronically harmful in any other way if the limit values are exceeded during the required handling of the substances.

These hazardous substances are marked with one or more of the following H-statements:

H-statement	Designation	Pictogram new	R-phrase	Pictogram
H330	Fatal if inhaled Acute toxicity 1		R 26	
H310	Fatal in contact with skin Acute toxicity 1		R27	
H300	Fatal if swallowed Acute toxicity 2		R28	
EUH032	Contact with acids liberates very toxic gas		R32	
H330	Fatal if inhaled Acute toxicity 2		R23	
H311	Toxic in contact with skin Acute toxicity 3		R24	
H301	Toxic if swallowed Acute toxicity 3		R25	
EuH029	Contact with water liberates toxic gas		R29	
H332	Harmful if inhaled Acute toxicity 4		R21	
H312	Harmful in contact with skin Acute toxicity 4		R22	
H302	Harmful if swallowed Acute toxicity 4		R33	

H351	Suspected of causing cancer Carc. 2		R40	
H360F	May damage fertility Repr. 1A		R60	
H361F	Suspected of damaging fertility Repr. 2		R62	
H362	May cause harm to breast-fed children		R64	
H341	Suspected of causing genetic defects Muta. 2		R68	
H350	May cause cancer Carc. 1A or Carc. 1B		R45	
H340	May cause genetic defects Muta. 1B		R46	
H350i	May cause cancer by inhalation Carc. 1A or Carc. 1B		R49	
H360d	Suspected of damaging the unborn child Repr. 1A		R61	
H360df	Suspected of damaging the unborn child, suspected of damaging fertility Repr. 2A and Repr. 3A		R61	
H361d	Suspected of damaging the unborn child Repr. 2		R63	

Women of reproductive age are **prohibited from working** with the following substances if the limit value is exceeded:

- Lead
- Lead compounds
- Mercury alkyls
- Antimitotics
- Carbon monoxide

Pursuant to the Maternity Protection Law, **expectant mothers are not allowed to handle NEW, UNKNOWN, or UNEXAMINED substances or procedures**, if it is unclear whether they are harmful or dangerous for the expectant mother, until this has been assessed.

5) Special regulations for protection against radiation

According to the Radiation Protection Ordinance (Strahlenschutzverordnung, StralSchV) and the X-ray Ordinance (Röntgenschutzverordnung, RöV) expectant or nursing mothers are subject to employment restrictions and access prohibitions. Radiation experts will inform about this during the regular safety trainings.

Expectant mothers are **neither allowed to be in the controlled areas nor to handle radioactive substances** which require licensing under nuclear law or radiation protection law. Nursing mothers are not allowed to be in controlled areas in which open radioactive substances are handled.

6) Special regulations for protection against biological agents

In order to avoid infections, there are several restrictions regarding tasks to be performed and substances to be handled in place.

a) Employment prohibitions

The following may not be handled at all:

- Toxoplasma
- Rubella virus
- Hepatitis virus
- Measles
- Mumps
- Chickenpox
- HIV virus

if the sufficient immunization does not exist.

b) Employment restrictions

There are restrictions in regard to the handling of biological agents of the risk groups 2 - 4 as defined in article 2(d) of the Directive 90/679/EEC if it is known that these agents or therapeutic measures as a cause of these agents endanger the health of the pregnant employee or the unborn child and if they are not listed under point 6(a).

7) Lifting and carrying

Expectant mothers are only allowed to lift and carry loads not exceeding a determined maximum load. It also has to be taken into account that pushing or moving loads in other ways may also be straining.

It is allowed to carry a load of

- maximally 5 kg on a regular basis,
- and a load of 10 kg if only sometimes.

8) Standing, sitting, and resting

From the beginning of the pregnancy, expectant mothers must have the possibility to sit and rest shortly and to take short work breaks.

Expectant mothers who are at least 6 months pregnant are only allowed to perform tasks which require them **to stand no longer than 4 hours a day**. Mainly sedentary activities must offer the possibility to take short work breaks.

Expectant mothers must have the possibility to rest in a room where they can lie down during breaks or even during working hours if necessary.

9) Workstations with display screens

Workstations with display screens must be equipped according to the provisions on workstations with display screens. It is very important that pregnant women maintain a balanced change of position and are able to sit, walk and stand on a regular basis during their work. This way, prolonged forced postures can be avoided.

10) Overtime, night work, Sunday work

Expectant and nursing mothers may **not work longer** than determined in the working hour regulations (see APO time sheet). Additionally, they are not allowed to work between 8 p.m. and 6 a.m., on Sundays, or on holidays.

11) Periods of protection and other employment prohibitions

- a) Due to the statutory employment prohibition, women are not allowed to work six weeks before and eight weeks after giving birth. This may be revoked by an explicit declaration of the mother.

b) For certain tasks there are employment prohibitions in place:

- As of the fourth month of pregnancy, tasks on transport machines (trucks, cranes, etc.). Expectant mothers may not work with machines where they are exposed to high levels of vibrations.
- All tasks with higher accident risks, in particular the danger of slipping or falling.
- All tasks of which the risk assessment concludes that they bear a danger for the security or the health of mother and child due to hazardous substances, biological agents, physical aspects, or other working conditions.

12) Nursing

Nursing mothers are entitled to nursing periods of at least half an hour twice a day or one hour once a day. The employer has to make sure that the nursing woman may do so undisturbed and in a suitable room.

Closing remarks

The given information is of general nature. Due to the many different types of jobs at a university, it is always necessary to state detailed information on the tasks to be performed and the substances to be used in the questionnaire. It is the only way to carry out an accurate risk assessment and take the necessary measures.

Please also use our risk assessment checklist according to the Protection of Pregnant Workers Regulation (see annex).

Legal basis:

- Occupational Health and Safety Act (Arbeitsschutzgesetz)
- Maternity Protection Act (Mutterschutzgesetz)
- Protection of Pregnant Workers Regulations (Mutterschutzrichtlinienverordnung)
- Ordinance on Hazardous Substances (Gefahrstoffverordnung)

Institute/ institution:	
Broad description of the work station	
Broad description of the tasks and activities	
If necessary, other information about hazardous substances, work equipment	

II. Information on the current work station according to Sec. 19(1) Maternity Protection Act

Before the notification of pregnancy working as (profession, activity) Place of employment (branch, department, office)		The work contract is permanent <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> fixed-term										
Homeworking <input type="checkbox"/> yes		<input type="checkbox"/> no										
Working hours	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>weekly working hours</td> <td>Hrs</td> <td>daily working</td> <td>Hrs.</td> <td>Flexitime <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Working hours before 6 a.m. or after 8 p.m. <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no</td> <td colspan="2">Sunday work</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no</td> </tr> </table>	weekly working hours	Hrs	daily working	Hrs.	Flexitime <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	Working hours before 6 a.m. or after 8 p.m. <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no		Sunday work		<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	
weekly working hours	Hrs	daily working	Hrs.	Flexitime <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no								
Working hours before 6 a.m. or after 8 p.m. <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no		Sunday work		<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no								

Risk assessment of the current work activities according to Sec. 5 Occupational Health and Safety Act in combination with Sec. 1 Protection of Pregnant Workers Regulations:

a) Did the employee have to lift, move, or transport loads heavier than **5 kg on a regular basis** by hand? yes no

b) Did the employee **sometimes** have to lift, move, or transport loads heavier than **10 kg** by hand? yes no

c) Was the employee exposed to extremely hot, cold, or wet conditions?
If so, please specify: yes no

d) Was the employee exposed to noise exceeding 80 db(A) or impulsive noises?
If so, please specify (continuous noise level, impulsive noises): yes no

e) Was the employee exposed to ionizing radiation (e.g. X-rays)?
If so, please specify, in particular whether working in controlled areas: yes no

f) Is it possible that the employee could have been endangered by hazardous substances at her work station?
If so, please specify: yes no

g) Is it possible that the employee could have been endangered by biological agents of the risk groups 2 - 4, e.g. bacteria, viruses, fungi, or parasites? yes no
If so, please specify:

h) Did the employee perform activities which included frequent stretching, bending over, continuous squatting, or remaining in stooped position? yes no

i) Was the employee exposed to higher accident risks, in particular the danger of slipping, falling, plummeting, or being in contact with aggressive/agitated persons?

If so, please specify: yes no

j) Did the employee have to handle infected or potentially infectious materials, e.g. blood or animal excretions?
If so, please specify: yes no

k) Does the employee work alone in the greenhouse or the stables?
If so, please specify: yes no

l) Does the employee work with grains or plants contaminated with pesticide?
If so, please specify: yes no

III. Has the campus physician given an individual statement? yes no

IV. As a result of the risk assessment (see II.) the following was implemented:

1. no change of working conditions _____ no change of working hours
2. change of working conditions * _____ change of working hours*
3. change of work station *
4. partial exemption from work *
5. complete exemption from work (employment prohibition according to Sec. 4 MuSchG)
* (detailed information under V.)

V. Detailed information on the current workstation and the current working hours

The risks confirmed above were ruled out _____ yes no

Does the mother have the possibility to lie down? yes no

VI. Did the attending physician declare an employment prohibition according to Sec. 3 MuSchG?
_____ yes no