

Protect the Future: Laws and Practices on Maternity Protection at Work in Taiwan

Dr. Sherri Shih-Fan Yeh (Taiwan)

Attending physician, National Taiwan University Hospital, Taiwan

Female participation in the labor force has been increasing steadily worldwide over the last few decades; in 2015, more than half of working-age women in the USA, the UK, Germany, Singapore, and Taiwan were in the labor force. As more women of reproductive age enter labor forces, their safety and health have become a priority in many nations. Changes in body shape and physiological condition during pregnancy may increase susceptibility to occupational hazards such as radiation, repetitive work, heavy metal exposure, and long working hours. Therefore, pregnant women need additional care and protection in the workplace. In Taiwan, many laws and regulations have been established to ensure pregnancy/maternity protection at workplace. Occupational Safety and Health Act and Maternity Protection Regulations state that employers shall conduct hazard assessments and prevent pregnant workers from performing jobs that are potentially hazardous to maternal health, including exposures to chemical, physical, and biological agents, industrial processes, movements and postures, and physical and mental stress. Pregnant employees are entitled to maternity leave and non-night shift schedule under Labor Standards Act and Act of Gender Equality in Employment. In today's speech, we will go over these laws and regulations in more details.