

# Checklist for parents of angel babies

When you lose your baby, you go through very difficult moments. This checklist will help you with practical things that you prefer not to think about now.

parentia

## Your child was born alive



### Declaration of birth

You must register the birth of your baby at the municipality where your baby was born.



### Naming

At registration your child receives an official first name and sur name



### Declaration of death

You must register the death of your baby at the municipality where your baby passed away. This can be done by the parents or the funeral director. If you register the birth and death at the same time, your baby will be immediately recorded in the death register.



### Funeral or cremation

You are legally required to bury or cremate your baby, with the involvement of a funeral director. The baby can be buried in a cemetery of your choice, usually in the children's section. In the case of cremation, the ashes can be scattered, placed in a columbarium, or buried. It is also possible to take the ashes home to keep or scatter there, but in order to do this a special request has to be filed.



### Birth or death announcement card

You can consider making a birth or death announcement card. Depending on your specific situation you can also put everything on one card. This is a personal choice made by the parents.



You can also bring your baby home for a few days for a home wake, which can be healing. Some hospitals, such as Jessa Hospital, also have a special room where you can say goodbye to a baby who has passed away in the womb, just before, during, or after birth.



### Support and guidance

Various organizations are ready to support you during this difficult time:

- **Boven de wolken:** Offers free professional photo sessions for parents who have lost their baby to capture precious memories. Founded by other bereaved parents. — [www.bovendewolken.be](http://www.bovendewolken.be)
- **Berrefonds:** Supports parents in their loss with practical advice, a listening ear (e.g., in the "Koesterhuizen"), and through a "Koesterkoffer" (a box with items to create tangible memories). — [www.berrefonds.be](http://www.berrefonds.be)
- **OVOK** (Ouders van Overleden Kinderen): Provides a listening ear, individually or in groups. — [www.ovok.be](http://www.ovok.be)
- **Fara:** Listens, informs, and guides parents through pregnancy choices and loss.
- **Parents Désenfantés:** Supports bereaved parents through conversation and listening.
- Support from the **hospital team** after returning home from childbirth (e.g., UZA, AZ Jan Portaels, UZ Gent, etc.)
- **Your midwife:** You are also entitled to maternity care for medical and psychological follow-up after childbirth.
- Postnatal **physiotherapy** can be helpful.

[www.bovendewolken.be](http://www.bovendewolken.be)  
[www.ovok.be](http://www.ovok.be)  
[www.berrefonds.be](http://www.berrefonds.be)

## Who to inform?



Your daycare center in case you already reserved one.



Your employer as well as the one of the father or co-parent.



Cancel your birth registry in case you already had one set up.

## Leave

### ✓ Maternity leave

You are entitled to maternity leave starting from the date of birth: this lasts 15 weeks (17 in case of multiples), of which 9 weeks are mandatory, possibly extended with the unused weeks of your pregnancy leave before the birth.

### ✓ Paternity leave

The father or co-parent is entitled to 20 days of paternity leave starting from the date of birth: these must be taken either all at once or spread out within 4 months after birth. The first 3 days are paid by the employer, the next 17 days by the health insurance fund, for which you must submit an application yourself.

### ✓ Bereavement leave

The parents are entitled to 10 days of bereavement leave: 3 days must be taken in the period between the day of death and the day of the funeral, the other 7 days can be taken within a year from the day of death.

## The Growth Package and starting amount

You are entitled to a starting amount (Flanders) or maternity allowance (Brussels/Wallonia). If you have already applied for this during your pregnancy, you can receive it starting 2 months before the estimated date of birth. You can also apply for it after birth (in some cases it can be automatically paid after registration with the population service).

If you live in **Flanders**, you are also entitled to the Growth Package (even if your baby only lived for a few minutes), from the month of birth until the month of death. For example, if your baby is born on April 30 and passes away on May 1, you are entitled to the Growth Package for the months of April and May.

If you live in **Brussels** or **Wallonia**, you are entitled to child benefits from the month following the month of birth. For example, if your baby is born on April 30 and passes away on May 1, you are entitled to child benefits for the month of May.

At Parentia, we are ready to guide you through this and provide further administrative support during this difficult time.



**Tip:** Sometimes it happens that health insurance funds or other institutions send invoices in the name of your deceased child. This is unpleasant but sometimes unavoidable and certainly not due to negligence or bad intentions. Also, unsubscribe from newsletters related to your pregnancy.

## Financial

### ✓ Dependent child

Your baby is considered a dependent for tax purposes in the year of birth and must be included on your tax return.

### ✓ Insurance

Inform your insurance companies of the death if your child was covered by certain insurances such as hospitalization insurance, etc.

### ✓ Bank

Inform the bank of the death of your child in case you opened a baby or diaper account during your pregnancy.



## Do you already have other children

It is important to talk to them sufficiently. There are some **children's books** written to help guide children in the family through this:

- Onno, een bijzonder broertje
- Bedje in de wolken
- Dag Manon, daaag
- Mijn kleine grote zus/grote broer
- Un petit frère pour toujours



Child benefit fund Parentia pays child benefits on behalf of the COCOM government. The amounts and conditions are determined by ordinance and are identical for all Brussels child benefit funds. More information: [www.iriscare.brussels/allocations-familiales](http://www.iriscare.brussels/allocations-familiales)

GROEIPAKKET



Elk kind heeft recht op een Groeipakket. De Vlaamse overheid voorziet hiervoor de middelen. Parentia is een erkende Vlaamse uitbeter. Je kiest zelf één van de vijf uitbetalers (Parentia, Infino, MyFamily, Kidslife, Fons). Veranderen kan na één jaar. — [www.groeipakket.be](http://www.groeipakket.be)