



Institute of Organic Chemistry  
Polish Academy of Sciences

***Institute of Organic Chemistry, PAS***

***A Family-Friendly Workplace***



## > INTRODUCTION

The Institute of Organic Chemistry of the Polish Academy of Sciences (IOC PAS) is an employer that strives to create a workplace supportive of balancing professional and family life. By allowing flexible working hours and implementing family-friendly policies, including parental leave and support for employees raising young children, the Institute provides conditions that facilitate the effective integration of professional responsibilities with personal life. By fostering a culture of understanding and offering additional benefits such as medical insurance and professional development opportunities, IOC PAS aims to be a place where career ambitions and family needs can go hand in hand.

One of the initiatives supporting parents in balancing work and family life is the creation of this guide, which aims to collect and organize information on the rights and benefits available to parents in Poland, as well as those offered by the Institute of Organic Chemistry PAS. This guide serves as a practical tool that helps Institute employees understand and take advantage of the available benefits, supporting them in their daily challenges of combining professional and family responsibilities.



## › SUPPORT MEASURES RESULTING FROM STATE POLICY

In Poland, there are various benefits available to working parents aimed at supporting them in balancing professional and family life. The most important ones include:

### › Parental Leave and Working Hours

- **Maternity Leave**

Maternity leave lasts 20 weeks (for one child) and can be extended in the case of multiple births. The mother must take at least 14 weeks of maternity leave, while the remaining 6 weeks can be transferred to the father (so-called paternity leave).

- **Parental Leave**

Both parents are entitled to a total of up to 41 weeks of parental leave (for one child) or longer in the case of multiple births. This leave can be divided into parts and taken at different times. Each parent has an exclusive right to 9 weeks of this leave – if one parent takes 32 weeks and the other does not use their 9 weeks, the unused leave is lost.

**Maternity Allowance** – For the first 20 weeks of maternity leave, the allowance amounts to 100% of the base salary. If a request for the full parental leave is submitted within 21 days after childbirth, the allowance is 80% for the entire period (52 weeks). If the request is delayed, the allowance decreases to 60%. This benefit is available to anyone paying ZUS social security contributions.

- **Paternity Leave**

Fathers are entitled to 2 weeks of paid paternity leave, which can be used within 12 months of the child's birth. This leave is paid at 100% of the base salary.

- **Parental Leave (Unpaid)**

Parents are entitled to up to 36 months of unpaid parental leave, which can be used until the child reaches the age of 6. This leave can be divided into a maximum of 5 separate



periods. The employer cannot refuse this leave. During the leave, the employee cannot be dismissed, and upon return, the employer must return them in their previous or an equivalent position.

- **Paid Leave for Childcare**

Parents are entitled to 2 days of paid leave per calendar year to care for a child under the age of 14.

- **Remote Work**

Parents of children under 4 years old have the right to request remote work under preferential conditions. An employer can only refuse if the nature of the job makes remote work impossible, such as laboratory-based work.

## › Financial Benefits

- **"Family 800+" Program**

Under the "Family 800 Plus" program, families with dependent children are entitled to a childcare benefit for each child up to the age of 18, regardless of the family's income. The benefit is granted separately for each child.

The right to receive the benefit is not limited to Polish citizens; foreign nationals may also qualify, provided they meet certain conditions. Specifically, they must hold a residence card with the annotation "access to the labor market" for a period exceeding six months. Applications for the "Family 800+" benefit can be submitted online via the ZUS system. More information is available [here](#).

- **"Active Parent" Program**

The program aims to support parents in their professional activity and childcare responsibilities. It is designed for parents of children aged 12 to 35 months. Under the program, parents can choose from one of three available benefits:



- › *Active Parents at Work* – A benefit of **1,500 PLN per month** for parents who are professionally active, such as those employed under a work contract or running their own business.
- › *Active in Nursery* – A benefit of up to **1,500 PLN per month** for parents whose child attends a childcare institution, such as a nursery, children's club, or day caregiver.
- › *Active at Home* – A benefit of **500 PLN per month** for parents who cannot or do not wish to use the other two benefits (those who remain professionally inactive and whose child does not attend a childcare institution).

Foreign nationals can also benefit from the **"Active Parent"** program under the same conditions as the **"Family 800+"** program. More information about the program can be found [here](#).

- **Large Family Card**

The Large Family Card (Karta Dużej Rodziny – KDR) is a discount and benefit system for families with three or more children, available in both public institutions and private companies. It is granted regardless of the family's income. Holders of the KDR can access discounts on services and products in various sectors, including food, fuel, banking, and recreation.

- **Child Tax Credit**

Parents are entitled to a tax deduction based on their income and the number of children they have. This deduction can be applied when filing an annual tax return. For parents with one child, eligibility for the deduction depends on income— it is available if the annual income of an individual taxpayer does not exceed 56,000 PLN. For parents with two or more children, income limits do not apply, and the deduction amount is calculated separately for each child.



## > SUPPORT MEASURES OFFERED BY ICHO PAN

- **Flexible Working Hours**

The Institute offers a flexible working schedule. Employees can work 8 hours per day within a broad timeframe – between 7:00 AM and 8:00 PM – allowing them to adjust their working hours to their individual needs. This flexibility significantly improves the ability to balance professional duties with family life.

Additionally, the management allows short breaks during the workday for urgent personal matters. After prior approval from a direct supervisor, employees may take such breaks, ensuring efficient management of both work responsibilities and personal obligations.

Upon request and with the approval of the Institute's management, employees may also perform some of their duties after 8:00 PM or on weekends, provided that occupational health and safety regulations are followed. This flexibility supports employees in achieving a healthy work-life balance, enhancing their well-being and productivity.

- **Remote Work**

The Institute offers the possibility of remote work, but its availability depends on the nature of the tasks being performed. In the case of laboratory work, which requires physical presence, remote work is not possible. However, scientists focusing on writing publications, preparing grant applications, or analyzing data during a given period can apply for permission to work remotely, adjusting their work mode to the current research needs.

The Institute is understanding of the individual needs of employees, taking into account situations that may require remote work, such as family illness or the temporary closure of a childcare facility. However, using such arrangements always requires establishing the work conditions with the direct supervisor.



- **Private Healthcare Package**

All employees with employment contracts receive a free private healthcare package. Additionally, for a small fee, employees can extend coverage to their family members (spouse, partner, or children). The cost of these additional packages is highly competitive compared to similar private insurance plans.

- **Funding Program for Additional Research Positions**

The program was developed to support the smooth execution of research projects when the Project Leader is absent for an extended period. It ensures the continuity of scientific work and the achievement of the planned research goals.

**Main objectives of the program:**

- › **Program Goal:** The program aims to provide support in the implementation of research projects during the absence of the Project Leader, ensuring their smooth progress.
- › **Target Group:** The program is aimed at individuals conducting independent scientific research, serving as the Leader of a Research Group or Research Grant.
- › **Eligibility:** The program is designed for individuals on maternity, paternity, or parental leave.
- › **Mechanism:** In the case of an extended absence of the Project Leader, the Institute appoints a person responsible for continuing the scientific work within the project upon the Leader's request. This person is selected through a recruitment process, which can be carried out internally or externally.

The program provides significant support for scientists, allowing them to temporarily suspend their duties due to parenthood while ensuring the continued research activities are carried out in an effective and organized manner.



- **Financial Benefits**

Employees employed at the Institute under an employment contract, as well as their children, are entitled to benefits from the Employee Social Fund. The financial benefits supporting families include, in particular:

- › *Additional benefits for children on Children's Day and St. Nicholas Day* – Children of employees receive financial benefits twice a year, around June 1st and December 6th. The benefit is granted for each child, and its amount depends on the employee's income.
- › *Subsidies for children's vacations* – The amount is determined based on the employee's income.
- › *Emergency financial assistance* – Employees facing significant financial or life difficulties may apply for special aid.