

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE ACT 2008

EXPLANATORY NOTES

BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY

Part 4 – Health in Pregnancy Grant

31. The health and general well-being of pregnant women in the last months of pregnancy is widely acknowledged to have a correlation with the health and development of a child later in life. Providing pregnant women with additional financial support towards meeting the extra costs at this time, linked to the requirement to seek maternal health advice from a health professional, is intended to help provide them with the knowledge and means to invest in their pregnancy to meet their individual needs.
32. Under the Government's current strategy of financial support, families on low incomes may claim support during pregnancy in the form of the Sure Start Maternity Grant to help with additional costs at the time of the child's birth, and Healthy Start Vouchers to help with the costs of a healthy diet during pregnancy.
33. In the Pre-Budget Report 2006, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that additional financial support would be made available to all women in the last months of pregnancy in line with the principle of progressive universalism, delivering support for all pregnant women and more help for those who need it the most.
34. **Part 4** creates the Health in Pregnancy Grant. The Health in Pregnancy Grant will sit within the existing financial support system and will make support available to all expectant mothers in the UK in recognition of the importance of a healthy lifestyle, including diet, during the final weeks of pregnancy, and to help women to afford the other additional costs faced at this time. It is a new non-contributory, non-income related benefit payable where a woman has reached a specified stage of her pregnancy and has received the necessary health advice. It will be administered by HM Revenue and Customs. It is not taxable.
35. **Part 4** also contains measures regarding the conditions of entitlement, the rate and the administration of the Health in Pregnancy Grant to be provided for in:
 - Part 8A of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992 ('the Contributions and Benefits Act');
 - Part 8A of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits (Northern Ireland) Act 1992 ('the Northern Ireland Contributions and Benefits Act');
 - The Social Security Administration Act 1992;
 - The Social Security Administration (Northern Ireland) Act 1992;
 - The Northern Ireland Act 1998;
 - The Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.