

Directive S2025-02

25 March 2025

Health protection of pregnant employees

Preamble

The Institute of Organic Chemistry and Biochemistry of the Czech Academy of Sciences (hereafter “IOCB” or “employer”), as an employer under Act No. 262/2006 Coll., the Labour Code (LC), as amended, and other regulations, ensures compliance with occupational health and safety conditions in accordance with applicable legislation. To ensure the maximum possible protection of the health of pregnant women and the healthy development of the foetus, IOCB issues these measures.

Article 1

A pregnant employee performing work at IOCB acknowledges that the employer is obligated to provide her with protection under the relevant legal regulations, and for this reason, the employer requires the employee to inform them of her condition without delay.

With consideration for her state of health and work activities, a pregnant employee has the right to decide independently whether and when to inform the employer of her pregnancy. The contact points for reporting pregnancy are the IOCB human resources department and each respective group or department supervisor.

If a pregnant employee reports her pregnancy to the human resources department, the department will reassign her to a non-hazardous work category. The pregnant employee acknowledges that the human resources department will also promptly inform her supervisor so that arrangements can be made for the performance of non-hazardous work if required by the employee’s job.

If a pregnant employee reports her pregnancy only to the group or department supervisor, the supervisor is obligated to ensure that the human resources department is also informed. Additionally, the supervisor is required to retrain the pregnant employee on occupational health and safety (OHS) principles related to potential work in the laboratory.

Upon notifying the employer of her pregnancy, the employee is entitled to request an adjustment of working conditions to protect her health and the healthy development of the foetus, and the employer is obliged to comply with this request.

If the employee does not inform the employer of her pregnancy, she cannot take advantage of the measures intended to protect her, which are contingent on reporting the pregnancy to the employer. Additionally, she acknowledges that in the event of a delayed notification to the employer, she assumes full responsibility for any potential threats to her health or the health of the foetus, as the employer will not have the opportunity to respond to her condition with timely measures.

Article 2

As part of their occupational health and safety training at the workplace, employees have been informed of the risks associated with their work activities and their possible effects on their future motherhood or ongoing pregnancy. IOCB has taken the necessary measures to eliminate or reduce these risks to an acceptable level.

Employees are required to protect the life and healthy development of their unborn child, particularly as their work may involve exposure to acutely toxic substances, carcinogens, teratogens, ionizing and non-ionizing radiation, etc., which may pose a risk to the health and life of both the foetus and the mother.

Employees acknowledge that regardless of whether they choose to inform the employer of their pregnancy, they must not perform activities at IOCB that could affect their motherhood, particularly activities involving contact with the following substances and/or the following hazardous work:

- A. substances causing acute or chronic poisoning with severe or irreversible health effects classified as H300, H301, H310, H311, H330, or H331, or their combinations, or substances with statements H370, H371, or H372;
- B. substances classified as carcinogens in category 1A, 1B, or 2 with statements H350 or H351;
- C. substances classified as germ cell mutagens in category 1A, 1B, or 2 with statements H340 or H341;
- D. substances toxic to reproduction affecting the foetus in the mother's body, classified in category 1A, 1B, or 2 with statements H360 or H361;
- E. substances sensitizing the respiratory system or skin with statements H344 or H317;
- F. work involving the production of pharmaceuticals or veterinary preparations containing hormones, antibiotics, or other biologically highly active substances, if an assessment of health risks cannot exclude potential harm to the pregnant employee or foetus;
- G. work involving cytostatics or antimetabolic substances, their preparation, or injection administration;
- H. work associated with exposure to viruses or other biological agents classified in risk groups 2, 3, and 4, or pathogens of toxoplasmosis.

Examples of harmful substances are listed in the appendix to this employer regulation.



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Institute Director

Appendix 1: Selected Examples of Harmful Substances by Categories and Statements

The following list is by no means exhaustive; rather, it provides examples of individual substances within the given categories. Details regarding the statements of each individual chemical can be found in its Safety Data Sheet.

A. Substances causing acute or chronic poisoning with severe or irreversible health effects according to specific statements:

H300: sodium cyanide and potassium cyanide, phosgene, mercuric chloride, arsenic trioxide

H301: methanol, chloroform, pyridine, ethylene glycol

H310: potassium cyanide, dichloromethane, dimethylmercury

H311: methanol, aniline, chloroform, ethylene glycol, formaldehyde, nicotine, dimethyl sulfate, phenol

H330: chlorine, carbon monoxide, hydrogen fluoride

H331: chlorine, methanol, sulfur dioxide, ammonia, toluene diisocyanate

H370: dimethylformamide, benzene, mercuric chloride, hydrogen cyanide

H371: ethylene glycol, acetonitrile, toluene diamide, formaldehyde

H372: asbestos, lead, benzene, crystalline silica

B. Carcinogens categories 1A, 1B, or 2 with statements H350 or H351:

H350: benzene, asbestos, chlorinated biphenyls, chromium oxide, 2-naphthylamine

H351: styrene, tetrafluoroethylene, ethylene dichloride, dichloromethane

C. Germ cell mutagens categories 1A, 1B, or 2 with statements H340 or H341:

H340: benzene, ethylene dibromide, chromium oxide, vinyl chloride

H341: formaldehyde, styrene, chloroform, ethyl methanesulfonate, dichloromethane

D. Substances toxic to reproduction affecting the foetus in the mother's body categories 1A, 1B, or 2 with statements H360, H361:

H360: thalidomide, diethylstilbestrol, methotrexate, valproic acid

H361: toluene, styrene, chloroform, dibutyl phthalate

E. Respiratory or skin sensitizers with statements H344 or H317:

H344: isocyanates, proteases, chloramine T, latex proteins

H317: nickel and its compounds, soluble chromium (VI) salts and dichromates, epoxy resins, linalool