

# JOURNEY THROUGH PREGNANCY: A CHECKLIST FOR STATE EMPLOYEES

## Pre-pregnancy

### Benefit Tips:

- Sign up for [short-term disability](#) insurance at least one year prior to conception to ensure adequate coverage. Payment coverage will be based on the type of delivery that you have (typically six weeks for vaginal delivery or eight weeks for cesarean delivery unless there are complications.)
- Based on your family income, you may want to see if you qualify for [Medicaid](#) or [NC Health Choice](#) for you and your child.

### Health Tips:

- Make a preconception appointment with your [health care provider](#) to [discuss your care options](#).
- Give your pregnancy the best start. [Kick bad habits](#) like [smoking](#), drinking alcohol, or using [social drugs](#). Remember there is no safe level of alcohol during pregnancy. For more tips, see the [ABCs of a Healthy Pregnancy](#) from March of Dimes.
- Maintain a healthy weight and eat well-balanced meals including lots of fruits and vegetables and drinking 8-12 eight-ounce glasses of water daily.
- Maintain good oral hygiene and visit your dentist to prevent infections.
- Take a [multivitamin](#) containing at least 400 mcg of [folic acid](#) daily.
- Consider making an appointment for genetic counseling (for example, [sickle cell syndrome](#) or [cystic fibrosis](#), etc) if this is a concern to you and/or your partner.

*Here's space for your own tips:*



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## First Trimester (Weeks 1-12)

### Benefit Tips:

- Familiarize yourself with your agency's [Family Medical Leave Act](#) policy and its contents.
- Assess other possible health benefits for you and your family, i.e. North Carolina's Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program, also called the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program. WIC is a federal program designed to provide food to low-income pregnant, postpartum and breastfeeding women, infants and children until the age of five. For more information, visit [www.nutritionnc.com/wic](http://www.nutritionnc.com/wic) or call the North Carolina Family Health Resource Line at 1-800-FOR-BABY (1-800-367-2229).

### Health Tips:

- Start early prenatal care with a [provider](#).
- Learn more about pregnancy. [UNC Center for Child and Maternal Health](#), [March of Dimes](#), [NC Healthy Start Foundation](#), and [MyMidwife.org](#) are great resources.
- Research shows that domestic violence or abuse increases during pregnancy. If you feel threatened or if your partner hits, slaps, or shoves you, please seek support. Call the [North Carolina Coalition on Domestic Violence](#) at 1-888-232-9124 for a referral to counseling and shelter services in your NC community.

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## Second Trimester (Weeks 12-27)

### Benefit Tips:

- If you are having a boy and desire him to have a circumcision, assess insurance coverage and copayments. Talk with your insurance carrier about the requirements and cost. Check out the American Academy of Pediatrics' Web site for more information on [circumcision](#).
- Start gathering documentations you will need for submission of HR paperwork due in the third trimester.

### Health Tips:

- Know the signs of [Preterm Labor](#).
- Discuss [Fetal Movements](#) with your care provider.
- Sign up for childbirth education, breastfeeding, and infant CPR classes.



### Other helpful tips to consider:

- Select a [childcare service provider](#). Find out if you qualify for [childcare financial assistance](#).
- Child-proof your home and prepare your [family pet\(s\)](#) for your new arrival.

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## Third Trimester (Weeks 28-42)

### Benefit Tips:

- Prepare a memo regarding your intentions for leave and work coverage. This applies to your partner/spouse as well.
- Complete projected timesheets (based on your due date and amount of leave you are requesting). These must be signed by staff and manager --- prior to turning them in to HR.
- Complete the following forms. These forms may apply to your partner or spouse as well:
  - **Family Medical Leave/Family Illness Leave Request Form.**
  - **Voluntary Shared Leave (VSL) Paperwork** (if you want to participate). For State employees VSL can only be used during your disability period if needed, which will cover up to six weeks for a vaginal delivery or up to eight weeks for a cesarean delivery
  - Have your provider complete the “**Certification of Health Care Provider**” Form (this can be faxed in later).



*Note: Most agencies/departments have their own versions of the forms. Talk with your Human Resources representative to make sure you're using the correct form for your agency/department.*

- Supervisor completes the **Employee Action Request Form**. This information is turned in to HR.
- If you are assigned a state car, talk to your supervisor regarding maintenance and mileage tracking before going on leave.

### Health Tips:

- Create your postpartum support system of family members, friends, and coworkers. Give them suggestions on what would be most helpful after your birth—preparing meals, laundry, and childcare, if you have other children, etc.
- Develop a [birth plan](#) for your labor and delivery options to be shared with your prenatal provider. Many providers may have birth plan forms or you may create a list of your own. Remember, this is a short list of your preferences for labor and birth. An internet search will yield a variety of sample plans.

- Develop a [checklist](#) of items that you will need to take to the hospital for comfort measures, and pack your hospital bag at least four weeks prior to your due date. Remember to include a copy of your birth plan, short-term disability claim form and any other necessary documentation that may need a provider's signature.
- Learn about proper [child passenger safety seat installation](#). Local Police/Highway Patrol, Fire Departments, some hospitals, and [SafeKids Coalitions](#) are great resources!
- Complete the hospital patient registration form at least **one month** prior to due date.
- Take a tour of the birth center at your hospital.
- Map out a hospital route with a backup plan.
- Select a [pediatrician](#) for your baby's healthcare needs.
- Consider your [family planning options](#) (there are different options available for moms who will solely breastfeed).
- Consider [breastfeeding](#) for the health of your baby.
- Contact your local hospital, pediatrician's office, [WIC](#) program or [La Leche League](#) to locate a breastfeeding support organization in a community near you.



***Other helpful tips to consider:***

- Develop your call list of family members, friends, and coworkers to contact while you are in the hospital.
- Consider talking with your provider about donating your newborn's cord blood.
- Consider classes such as boot camp for dads and prenatal yoga as well as those for grandparents and siblings.
- Participate in free educational seminars that may be offered at hospitals, health departments, and retail stores that sell infant products in your community. Consider websites for free promotional and educational materials.
- If you're planning on nursing, purchase several nursing bras/gowns with adequate coverage and support. Also, talk with a lactation consultant regarding the pros and cons of renting versus purchasing breastfeeding equipment.
- Consider taking a pregnancy portrait.

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## Postpartum

### Benefit Tips:

- Complete health insurance plan's [change form](#) to add dependent(s). Depending upon your plan, this may have to be completed within 30 days of delivery.
- Consider adding dependent expenses with [NC Flex](#). This is a pre-tax dollar advantage for uncovered medical and childcare expenses.
- If you have short-term disability insurance, file a claim.
- Make sure that your timesheets will be submitted on a monthly basis to prevent delays in payments.

### Health Tips:

- Return to your provider for your six week postpartum checkup. Address the following topics:
  - Exercising to return to your pre-pregnancy weight
  - Continuing to take your prenatal vitamin (especially if you are breastfeeding) or a multivitamin
  - Nutritional needs (eating well-balanced meals and 8-12 eight-ounce glasses of water)
  - Sexual relations after birth. Remember, you can get pregnant even if you are breastfeeding. Please discuss birth control options and the benefits of birth spacing before engaging in sexual activity.
- Know the signs of [postpartum depression](#) and seek help as soon as possible if you experience any symptoms. Investigate postpartum support resources in your community to help you cope with “baby blues” or postpartum depression if you experience the following symptoms:
  1. I have blamed myself unnecessarily when things went wrong.
  2. I have been anxious or worried for *no good reason*.
  3. I have felt scared or panicky for no *very good reason*.



- Implement the guidelines for your postpartum support system that includes family members, friends, and coworkers.

***Other helpful tips to consider:***

- Be sure to complete the required form to [request a social security number](#) for your child.
- If breastfeeding, consider talking with your provider to obtain more information about vitamin D supplements for your baby.
- Consider classes such as infant massage and baby sign language.
- Consider ordering birth announcements to share with family members, friends, and coworkers.
- Consider taking new family portraits!
- Explore life insurance options for your child.
- Research tax advantages regarding child dependents.
- Share your experience through [www.TheBirthSurvey.com](http://www.TheBirthSurvey.com).

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***Congratulations! Remember to take care of yourself and enjoy your new family!***