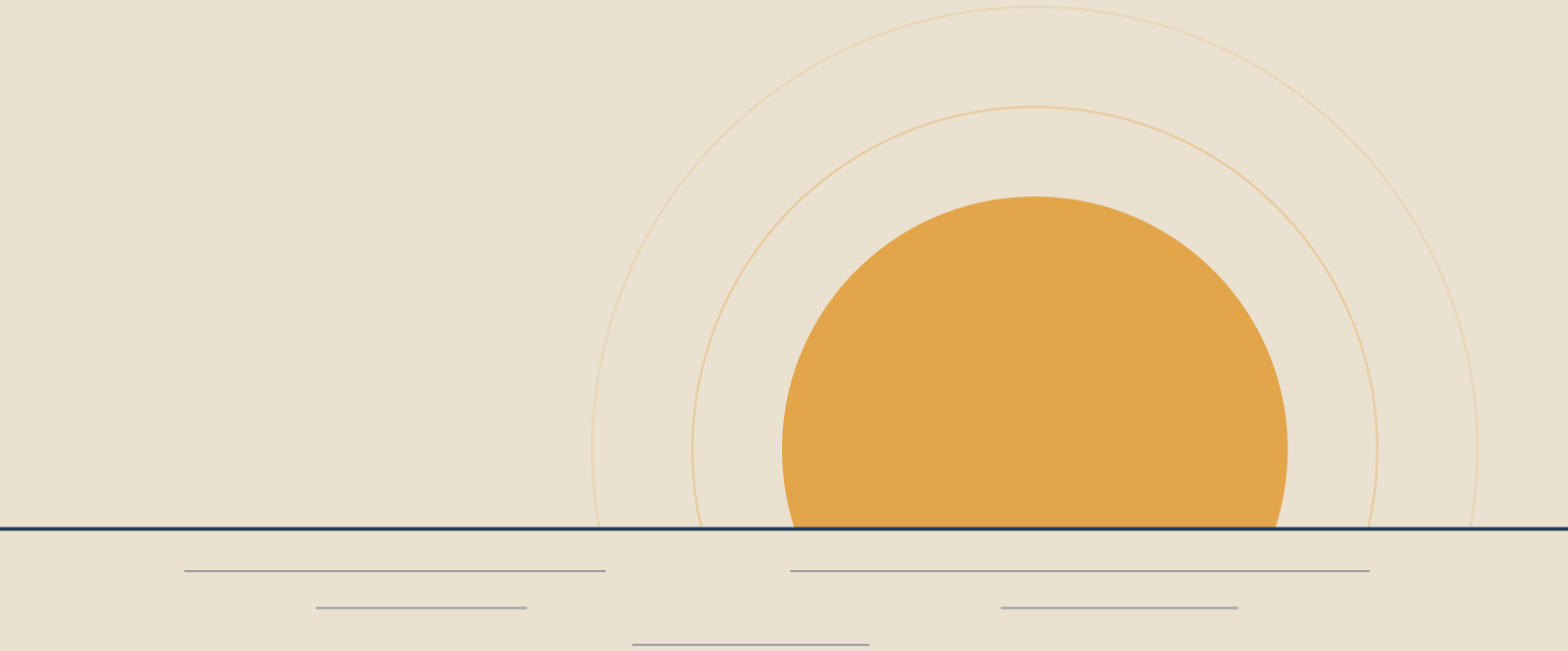
Mamavela

Having a Baby in Singapore as an Expat

Hospitals and costs, leave rules for foreigners, birth registration, the Dependant's Pass and citizenship.



Free sample

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Before you begin

Congratulations. Whether you have just seen two lines on a test in a Tanjong Pagar serviced apartment or you are counting down the last weeks before your due date, you are about to have a baby in one of the most efficient health systems in Asia, and one of the most rule-based for foreigners. Almost everything in Singapore is clear, online and fast. The difficulty is that the rules that matter most to you are written for two different families: families whose child is a Singapore citizen, and families whose child is not. The same page on the Ministry of Manpower website gives a working mother 16 weeks of leave in one case and 12 weeks in the other. The same birth gives one baby a pink identity card and another a 42-day Special Pass.

This guide is written for the second family, and for mixed families who are not sure which side of the line they are on. It puts the whole journey in one place, in the order you will need it: insurance, choosing a doctor and a hospital, the birth itself, your leave and your partner's, registering the birth, your baby's passport and Dependant's Pass, citizenship questions, and the first weeks at home.

It is built on three promises.

First, every figure is checked. When this guide says that a birth must be registered within 42 days, that the registration fee is SGD 18, or that Shared Parental Leave is 10 weeks for children born from 1 April 2026, the figure was read on the official page of the Immigration & Checkpoints Authority (ICA), the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) or the Ministry of Health (MOH) on 13 October 2026, and that page is listed in the bibliography. Rules in Singapore change often, usually with announcements at Budget time or at the National Day Rally, and several leave pages already say that further changes have been announced. When a figure matters to you, open the page and check it again.

Second, nothing is guessed. Where an official page did not state something clearly, this guide does not invent it. That is why you will not find a "typical cost of giving birth in Singapore" in these pages: costs depend on the hospital, the ward class, the doctor and your residency status, and the only reliable numbers are the ones MOH publishes through its own search tools and the estimate your hospital gives you. Chapter 5 shows you how to get them.

Third, your situation is not an afterthought. Expat families are not one family. You may be on an Employment Pass or an S Pass, or the partner of someone who is. You may be married, or not. One of you may be a Singapore citizen or permanent resident. You may be self-employed, or working for a company back home. Chapter 11 is written for the situations the standard explanations skip.

> **This guide informs; it does not replace professional advice.**
>
> Your obstetrician and midwives know your pregnancy. MOM, ICA and your employer are the only ones who can decide your own eligibility for a pass or a leave scheme, and your insurer is the only one who can confirm your cover. Use this guide to understand the system and to ask the right questions, then confirm your own case with them. In an emergency in Singapore, call 995 for an

> emergency ambulance.

How to use this guide

You do not need to read it in order.

- **Just found out you are pregnant?** Read Chapters 1, 2 and 3, then copy the dates from the timeline in Chapter 13 into your calendar.
- **Planning your leave?** Chapters 6 and 7 explain which scheme applies to you, and why the answer depends on your baby's citizenship.
- **About to give birth?** Chapters 8 and 9 cover the paperwork you must complete in the first six weeks. Read them before the birth, not after.
- **One parent is a Singapore citizen or PR?** Start with Chapter 10, then Chapters 6 and 7.
- **Not married, parenting alone, or not covered by the Employment Act?** Go straight to Chapter 11.

All amounts in this guide are in Singapore dollars and written "SGD", as stated on the official page on 13 October 2026.

Chapter 1. How Singapore works for a foreign family

Before the details, here is the map. Most of the confusion foreign parents run into comes from mixing up these six systems, each with its own agency and its own website.

What	Who runs it	Where you deal with it
Health care in pregnancy and at the birth	Public hospitals and polyclinics, private hospitals and private specialists, regulated by the Ministry of Health (MOH)	Your obstetrician and your chosen hospital
Paying for care	Your own insurance, your employer's plan, or out of pocket; MediShield Life and MediSave for citizens and permanent residents	Your insurer, your HR team, and the hospital's financial counselling service
Leave from work	The Employment Act (12 weeks of maternity leave) and the Government-Paid Leave schemes (16 weeks for a Singapore citizen child)	MOM and the Government Portal for Parental Leave Schemes, through your employer
Registering the birth	The Immigration & Checkpoints Authority (ICA)	Online through LifeSG, within 42 days
Your baby's right to stay	ICA for the Special Pass, MOM for the Dependant's Pass of a work pass holder's child	myMOM Portal (through your employer) and ICA
Your baby's nationality and passport	Your home country, and ICA if a parent is a Singapore citizen or permanent resident	Your embassy or high commission in Singapore

Three things that surprise expat parents

1. Your baby's citizenship decides your leave. Singapore's most generous parental leave schemes, called Government-Paid Leave, are designed for parents of Singapore citizen children. MOM states that a working mother is entitled to "either 16 weeks of Government-Paid Maternity Leave or 12 weeks of maternity leave, depending on whether your child is a Singapore citizen and other criteria". If neither parent is a Singapore citizen, your baby will usually not be one either, and the 12-week Employment Act rules apply. Chapter 6 explains both, side by side.

2. Being born in Singapore does not make your baby Singaporean. The official procedures for newborns make this plain: ICA says that "a child who is not a Singapore citizen at the time of birth shall be deemed to be issued with a special pass" valid for 42 days from birth, and that for a non-citizen child you must apply for a passport "from the Embassy or High Commission of your nationality/citizenship". Your baby takes your nationality (or nationalities), according to your own

country's law. Chapter 10 explains what this means in practice.

3. The paperwork clock starts at birth, and it is short. The legal deadline to register the birth is 42 days. The Special Pass that lets a non-citizen baby stay in Singapore lasts 42 days from birth. MOM asks Employment Pass and S Pass holders to get a passport for the baby and apply for the Dependant's Pass within 6 weeks of birth, and advises registering the birth within 14 calendar days to leave time for the rest. Chapter 9 turns this into a day-by-day plan.

What is the same for everyone

Some things do not depend on your passport at all:

- **Every birth in Singapore must be registered.** ICA states that "all parents of newborns, regardless of their immigration or marital status, are required to register their child's birth online via LifeSG".
- **The Employment Act covers foreign employees.** MOM states that the Act "covers local and foreign employees", with exceptions for seafarers, domestic workers, civil servants and statutory board employees.
- **Hospital care follows the same clinical standards.** The tests, scans and newborn checks described in Chapters 3 and 4 are offered to all patients; what changes with residency is mostly how the bill is paid.

> **In one sentence.**
>
> If neither of you is a Singapore citizen, plan for 12 weeks of Employment Act maternity leave, private health insurance or out-of-pocket hospital bills, a birth registration within days of the birth, and a passport plus Dependant's Pass for your baby within 6 weeks.

End of the sample

Thank you for reading this far. We hope these first pages already feel useful, and that you can see how the rest of the book is built: clear steps, pages to fill in, sources you can check.

The full book has 43 pages.

Get it here: https://mamavela.com/shop/having-a-baby-in-singapore/

One-time payment, instant PDF.