

Parental allowance 2026 at a glance



Amount, duration, options and deadlines of German parental allowance (Elterngeld) – to print out and discuss.

As of October 2026 · for births from 1 April 2025

65–67 %

of net income before the birth (up to 100 % below €1,000 net)

€300–1,800

basic parental allowance per month · ElterngeldPlus: €150–900

14 months

of basic parental allowance together (12 + 2 partner months) · Plus up to 28

1 The three options compared

	Basic parental allowance (Basiselterngeld)	ElterngeldPlus	Partnership bonus (Partnerschaftsbonus)
For whom?	Parents who work little or not at all after the birth	Parents working part-time or wanting longer payments	Both parents work part-time at the same time
Amount	65–67 % of net income, €300–1,800	at most half as much, €150–900	same as ElterngeldPlus
Duration	12 months, 14 with partner months	1 basic month = 2 Plus months	2 to 4 additional months per parent
Work allowed	up to 32 hours a week (income is deducted)	up to 32 hours a week, income is deducted	both 24 to 32 hours a week, at the same time
Good to know	Both at the same time in only 1 of the first 12 months of life	Often worthwhile with part-time work (less is deducted)	Single parents can use the bonus on their own

2 How the amount is calculated

- **Basis:** average net income in the 12 calendar months before the month of birth (**assessment period**, Bemessungszeitraum).
- **Self-employed:** profit in the last completed tax year assessed (usually the previous year).
- **Skipped:** months with maternity protection, parental allowance for an older child or pregnancy-related illness.
- **Supplements:** sibling bonus +10 % (at least €75), multiple-birth supplement +€300 for each additional child.
- **Deducted:** maternity benefit (Mutterschaftsgeld) and the employer's top-up.

Example (simplified)

Net income before the birth: **€2,000** a month
 Replacement rate: 65 %
 Basic parental allowance: **€1,300** a month
 ElterngeldPlus without part-time work: **€650** a month – for twice as long.

The net income for parental allowance uses flat-rate deductions and differs from your payslip. Exact calculation: einfach-elterngeld.de/en/calculator

Income limit: No parental allowance if taxable income (zu versteuerndes Einkommen) in the last assessed tax year before the birth exceeded **€175,000** (couples: combined).

Tax: Parental allowance is tax-free but increases the tax rate on your other income (Progressionsvorbehalt). From €410 of parental allowance a year, a tax return is mandatory.



Parental allowance – the guide

einfach-elterngeld.de/en/parental-allowance · Detailed explanations, calculators and examples online.
 All information carefully checked, without guarantee. The decision of the responsible authority is what counts.

3 The most important deadlines

What	Deadline	Why it matters
Apply for parental allowance	within the first 3 months of life	It is paid retroactively only for the last 3 months of life before the application arrives.
Notify parental leave (Elternzeit) up to the 3rd birthday	7 weeks in advance	It releases you from work. For children born from 1 May 2025, text form (e-mail) is enough.
Parental leave straight after maternity protection	1 week after the birth	So that parental leave follows the protection period without a gap.
Change tax class (married couples)	at least 7 months before maternity protection	It only counts if the new class applied for most of the assessment period.
Apply for child benefit (Kindergeld)	soon after the birth	It is paid retroactively for no more than 6 months.

4 Application in 5 steps

- ☐ Plan both parents' months (basic, Plus, bonus)
Planner in the parental allowance calculator
- ☐ Get the birth certificate "for parental allowance" from the registry office (Standesamt)
often free of charge
- ☐ Collect the documents
payslips, health insurance certificate on maternity benefit, employer's certificate if needed
- ☐ Fill in the form of your parental allowance office (Elterngeldstelle)
state form or online, e.g. mein-elterngeldantrag.de (German)
- ☐ Sign and submit
The other parent signs too. Processing times vary between offices.

5 Avoid common mistakes

- **Applying too late** – months are lost.
- **Both parents on basic allowance at the same time** for more than one month – only in exceptional cases.
- **Working more than 32 hours** in a month of payment – no entitlement for that month.
- **Income after the birth** not reported – leads to repayments.
- **Partnership bonus** not kept up – the 24–32 hour range applies in every bonus month.

6 Our plan (to fill in)

Month of life	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Parent 1														
Parent 2														

Enter: B = basic parental allowance · P = ElterngeldPlus · PB = partnership bonus · M = maternity protection. Months of life start on the child's birthday, not on the first of the month.

Want to know exactly? The parental allowance calculator works out your parental allowance to the cent, compares basic parental allowance and ElterngeldPlus and, if you wish, fills in the application form of your federal state.



Parental allowance calculator and planner

einfach-elterngeld.de/en/calculator · Detailed explanations, calculators and examples online.

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