

Child benefit in the Netherlands



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THE PURPOSE OF CHILD BENEFIT

Bringing up children can be very expensive. In the Netherlands, the Sociale Verzekeringsbank (SVB) pays child benefit to help parents cover the costs. The National Child Benefits Act (AKW) sets out the conditions for child benefit payments. Child benefit is meant for all parents, regardless of income. In other words, your child benefit will not be reduced if your income increases, or increased if your income drops.

WHO CAN CLAIM CHILD BENEFIT?

If you have children and live in the Netherlands, you can claim Dutch child benefit. You can also claim Dutch child benefit if you work for a Dutch employer in or outside the Netherlands.

HOW TO CLAIM CHILD BENEFIT

If your first child is born in the Netherlands, you will automatically be sent a claim form. If you came to the Netherlands after the birth of your first child, or if you do not live in the Netherlands, you will have to ask the SVB to send you a claim form.

You have claimed child benefit. What now?

The SVB will send you a decision, stating how much you will receive per child and why. The decision will also state the commencement date of your child benefit.

If you do not agree with the decision, you can request a review.

Children up to 18

Child benefit is for all children up to 18, including your first child. You can also claim child benefit for adopted children, foster children and stepchildren. To qualify for child benefit, you must bring up and support the child as though it were your own.

When does the child benefit take effect?

For a newborn child, the child benefit payments start in the quarter following the date of birth. If you do not claim child benefit directly after the birth, the child benefit payments may start later. The decision you receive from us will show the commencement date of your child benefit.

AWARDED AND PAID PER QUARTER

The SVB pays child benefit on a quarterly basis. If your child benefit is affected by a change in your or your children's situation, you will receive a new decision. Child benefit is paid into your account after the end of each quarter. The SVB can also pay child benefit into accounts outside the Netherlands. Please note that international payments will take longer to arrive.

How much child benefit will you get?

The SVB establishes the amount for each child separately. The total amount you receive depends on how many children you have and their ages. Dutch child benefit rates are usually adjusted twice a year, on 1 January and 1 July. For the precise amounts, visit our website www.svb.nl or call your SVB office.

Child benefit amounts as from 1 January 2009

| | |
|-------------|----------------------|
| under 6 | € 194.99 per quarter |
| 6 to 12 | € 236.77 per quarter |
| 12 and over | € 278.55 per quarter |

IF YOUR CHILD LIVES AWAY FROM HOME

If you want to receive child benefit for a child who does not live at your address, we may ask you to provide proof of the costs you incur supporting the child, for example, study costs, rent, insurance contributions, costs of food and holidays. You will then be required to provide a statement of these expenses.

If the costs of supporting a child who lives away from home are very high, you may be able to get twice the basic rate of child benefit, providing you meet the necessary additional conditions. For example, you will have to prove that you contribute at least € 1,081 per quarter towards the child's support. This contribution requirement is valid until 1 October 2009, and is adjusted every year.

You can also be required to submit documentary evidence of your expenditure. You should therefore keep as much evidence of your payments as possible.

CHILDREN LIVING OUTSIDE THE NETHERLANDS

If you have children living abroad, you will have to meet the following three conditions in order to receive child benefit:

- The child must live in the EU or a country with which the Netherlands has concluded an agreement on the verification of entitlement to benefits, including child benefit. (For a list of these countries, contact your SVB office or visit our website).
- You must be able to demonstrate your contribution to your child's support with evidence of payments;
- You must not also receive child benefit from the country where your child lives.

WHEN YOUR CHILD TURNS 16

The age of 16 is a significant age when it comes to child benefit. As long as your child is under 16, whether he or she is in education is no criterion for child benefit.

When your child turns 16, however, you can only continue to receive child benefit as long as your child goes to a regular school, is incapacitated for work, or is registered with an employment agency as a job-seeker. You must be able to provide documentary evidence of this.

As soon as a child of 16 or 17 starts following higher vocational training or goes to university, entitlement to child benefit will end.

Additional rules for children of 16 and over

- You can only receive child benefit if:
 - Your child attends a regular day school;
 - Your child is incapacitated for work;
 - Your child is unemployed and registered as a job-seeker;
- Your child benefit will end if:
 - Your child goes to university;
 - Your child starts following higher vocational education;
 - Your child starts working more than 19 hours a week;
- Your child is allowed to earn a limited amount of money.

YOUR CHILD'S INCOME

Money earned by your child may affect your child benefit entitlement. If your child lives at home and is under 16, it does not matter how much he or she earns. Children aged 16 and over, however, are not allowed to earn more than € 1,240 net per quarter. If a child earns more than € 1,240, payment of child benefit will stop. This income limit is valid until 1 October 2009, and is adjusted every year. For the purpose of child benefit, income is defined as the child's net earnings during the quarter concerned.

If your child lives away from home, your child's personal earnings will affect your child benefit, even if the child is under 16. For children living away from home, other income limits apply. For a calculation of your child's income limit, go to our website www.svb.nl.

During the summer, many children have a holiday job, or they work more hours than usual. A child is allowed to earn an extra amount of up to € 1,150 net in the summer holidays.

You must notify the SVB if your child starts earning more than € 800 net per quarter.

REPORTING CHANGES

The SVB aims to pay you the right amount of child benefit each quarter, so that you get precisely what you are entitled to. However, to do so, the SVB must have the correct information at its disposal. Changes in your family circumstances can affect your child benefit entitlement. You must therefore report these changes to us within 4 weeks. You can do so via our website www.svb.nl, by calling your SVB office, or by using a change notification form. The website and the form give a complete list of the changes you are required to report. You can download the form from our website or request it from your SVB office.

If you report a change after the four-week time limit, or if the information you provide is incomplete, you may be fined. If you receive too much child benefit, you will always have to repay the amount overpaid.

CHILD BUDGET

If you receive child benefit, you may also qualify for a child budget. This is a monthly payment from the Tax Administration (Belastingdienst). The amount payable will depend on your income and the number of children you have. The child budget will take effect from the month following the birth of your first child. If you have come to the Netherlands to live or work, the child budget will be paid with effect from the month after your entry into the Netherlands. You can find more information about this (in Dutch) at www.toeslagen.nl.

If you already receive rent allowance, healthcare allowance, or childcare allowance, you will receive the child budget automatically. The SVB will inform the Tax Administration that you receive child benefit. If you qualify for a child budget, you will hear from the tax administration within eight weeks. If you do not receive rent allowance, healthcare allowance, or childcare allowance, and you believe that you are entitled to a child budget, you should contact the tax administration service line (BelastingTelefoon): 0800-0543.

FURTHER INFORMATION

If you need more specific information relating to your personal situation, go to our website page www.svb.nl for more information, or call your SVB office. Other information leaflets are also available on our website www.svb.nl, for instance:

- *Kinderbijslag en uitwonende kinderen* (Child benefit for children living away from home, available in Dutch, German, English, French, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish, and Turkish)
- *Kinderbijslag- en TOG-bedragen* (Child benefit and TOG care allowance for disabled children living at home, available in Dutch)

ADDRESSES OF SVB OFFICES

BREDA

++31(0)76 548 50 20
Rat Verleghstraat 2
4815 NZ Breda

DEVENTER

++31(0)570 50 60 20
Snipperlingsdijk 2
7417 BJ Deventer

GRONINGEN

++31(0)50 316 90 20
Cascadeplein 5
9726 AD Groningen

LEIDEN

++31(0)71 512 98 20
Stationsplein 1
2312 AJ Leiden

NIJMEGEN

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Takenhofplein 4
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ROERMOND

++31(0)475 36 80 20
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ROTTERDAM

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Posthumalaan 100
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UTRECHT

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ZAANSTAD

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Or go to our website:
www.svb.nl

