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General Law for the Protection of Adolescent
Mothers

GENERAL LAW FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE ADOLESCENT

MOTHER CHAPTER I

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 1-Concept. For the purposes of this Law, an adolescent mother shall be understood to be a pregnant minor or a woman who, without distinction of marital status, has at least one son or daughter.

(As amended by Article 1, paragraph a) of Law No. 8312 of September 30, 2002)

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ARTICLE 2.- Scope of application of the law

This law will regulate all policies, actions and preventive and support programs implemented by governmental institutions for adolescent mothers.

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CHAPTER II

INTER-INSTITUTIONAL COUNCIL FOR THE
CARE OF ADOLESCENT MOTHERS

ARTICLE 3. Legal nature

The Interinstitutional Council for Maternal Care is hereby created.

The Ministry of Health is the highest deconcentration body, with instrumental legal personality and attached to the Ministry of Health.

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ARTICLE 4.

The purposes of the Interagency Council for the Care of Adolescent

Mothers shall be:

a) Promote preventive, educational, informative and training programs on the implications of teenage pregnancy, aimed at both the schooled and non-schooled population as well as Costa Rican families.

(As amended by Article 1, paragraph b) of Law No. 8312 of September 30, 2002)

b) Coordinate, support, advise and contribute to the improvement of programs and actions of public and private organizations in favor of teenage mothers.

c) Coordinate with the Ministry of Public Education academic programs at the national and international level, whose content considers the adolescent mother as a subject of study; in addition, promote training courses aimed at this group, in order to incorporate them in educational centers, in the professional or vocational fields; for this purpose, it will coordinate with the National Learning Institute.

d) Promote and support community participation and adopt the necessary measures to strengthen the union of families, in order to meet the following objectives
adolescent mothers, both before and after childbirth, provided that the pregnancy was not the result of an incestuous relationship.

e) Promote comprehensive care for adolescent girls in clinics, medical centers and communities.

f) Facilitate the incorporation of adolescent mothers into paid work.

g) Recommend the construction of temporary shelters, for the

teenage mothers who do not have the support of their families, and request that they be included in the corresponding budget items.

h) Promote actions to encourage responsible parenthood aimed at at-risk adolescents.

(Thus added to item h), by item b) of Article 1 of Law No. 8312 of September 30, 2002)

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Article 5°-Integration. The Interinstitutional Council for the Care of Adolescent Mothers shall be composed of one person representing each of the following ministries or institutions, who shall have decision-making powers:

- a) The Ministry of Health.
- b) The National Women's Institute.
- c) The National Children's Trust.
- d) The Costa Rican Social Security Fund.
- e) The Ministry of Labor and Social Security.
- f) The National Learning Institute.
- g) The Instituto Mixto de Ayuda Social.
- h) The National Council of the Public Policy of the Young Person of the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports.

The representatives of the governmental agencies will be appointed by the head of the ministries and institutions and must have recognized experience in the social field.

In addition to the above persons, other members of the Board shall also be members of the Board:

- i) A representative of women's non-governmental organizations that run teenage mothers' programs.
- j) An adolescent mother representing the beneficiary population of the care programs contemplated in this Law.

The persons mentioned in the last two paragraphs shall remain in office for the same period established in this Law. The mechanism for the appointment of these representatives shall be defined in the executive regulations.

(As amended by Article 1, paragraph c) of Law No. 8312 of September 30, 2002)

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ARTICLE 6.- Term of office

The members of the Board shall hold office for two years and may be reelected consecutively, once only.

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ARTICLE 7.- Per diems

The members of the Board shall not receive a per diem allowance. In the case of public sector representatives, their participation in Board meetings shall be considered part of their duties.

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ARTICLE 8. Obligations

The Board shall have the following duties:

a) To present to the officials of the institutions represented in the the Council, an annual program that will serve as a general framework for each institution to develop its programs for teenage mothers.

This program will be delivered each year no later than November 30.

b) To meet ordinarily once a month and extraordinarily when deemed necessary. The meetings shall be called by the Chairman. The quorum shall consist of four members and resolutions shall be adopted by absolute majority.

c) *REPEALED by Article 2 of Law No. 8312 of September 30, 2002.*

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CHAPTER III

COMPREHENSIVE CARE FOR THE ADOLESCENT MOTHER

ARTICLE 9. Care centers

The clinics of the Caja Costarricense de Seguro Social and health centers shall:

- a) Develop comprehensive care programs for adolescent mothers, with the supervision of the Interinstitutional Council for the Care of Adolescent Mothers, created in this law.
- b) Provide free prenatal and postnatal care to teenage mothers.
- c) Develop training and orientation programs aimed at sensitizing teenage mothers and their families to the implications of motherhood.
- d) To provide informative sex education courses for teenage mothers in order to avoid the possibility of another unplanned pregnancy.
- e) To provide teenage mothers with the following services

The social security system provides them with important inputs that will enable them to raise and educate their children properly.

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ARTICLE 10. Comprehensive care programs

The programs developed by the institutions referred to in the preceding article shall be carried out by a professional team,

The committee is made up of at least one psychologist, one social worker and one physician, all of whom have recognized experience in adolescent issues.

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CHAPTER IV

SUPPORT FROM STATE INSTITUTIONS FOR

TEENAGE MOTHERS

ARTICLE 11. Donations

In order to fulfill the purposes of this law, the Council shall be empowered to manage and receive donations from public and private, national and international entities and organizations, through the Ministry of Health.

Article sheet

ARTICLE 12. Institutional cooperation

For the purposes of this law, state institutions shall be obligated to provide the necessary assistance in the following manner:

a) The Costa Rican Social Security Fund shall provide free medical care to adolescent mothers who request it and to their children, even if the adolescent is not affiliated; for such purpose, said Institution shall issue a provisional insurance card.

b) The National Apprenticeship Institute will finance and implement technical-labor training programs for teenage mothers and at-risk teenage women over the age of fifteen and will provide vocational courses for them.

(As amended by article 1, paragraph d) of Law No. 8312 of September 30, 2002)

c) The Ministry of Public Education will provide all the facilities required for the adolescent mother to complete the cycle.

basic education. To comply with this provision, they will be allowed to pursue evening studies or baccalaureate programs based on maturity, regardless of age.

d) The Ministry of Labor and Social Security will create a special employment exchange for teenage mothers over the age of fifteen.

Likewise, it shall guarantee the application of the measures contemplated in the legal system, with respect to the paid work of adolescents, protection and compliance with their labor rights, according to the Childhood and Adolescence Code, Law No. 7739. In addition, it will finance and develop programs and actions to promote an adequate labor insertion of adolescent mothers over fifteen years of age.

(As amended by article 1, paragraph d) of Law No. 8312 of September 30, 2002)

e) The other government institutions that run social welfare programs will grant, as a priority, benefits to teenage mothers who request them.

f) The Instituto Mixto de Ayuda Social will provide an economic incentive to adolescent mothers in condition of poverty participating in the personal strengthening and technical-labor training programs provided by the competent institutions. In addition, it will finance personal strengthening programs for adolescent mothers in condition of poverty.

g) The National Women's Institute will be in charge of the orientation, follow-up and technical evaluation of programs aimed at teenage mothers and will promote public policies for gender equality and equity aimed at the adolescent population in general. It will also provide counseling and promote training actions in personal and social empowerment for adolescent girls.

(Thus added paragraphs f) and g), by paragraph d) of Article 1 of Law No. 8312 of September 30, 2002)

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CHAPTER V FINAL

PROVISIONS

ARTICLE 13.

The programs in favor of teenage mothers, which are being developed at the time this law is enacted, will not be affected.

Article sheet

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ARTICLE 14. Regulation

The Executive Branch shall regulate this law within sixty calendar days from the date of its publication.

Effective as of its publication.

[Article sheet](#)

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