

# PREGNANT AND PARENTING STUDENTS' RIGHTS

Title IX is a law that bans sex discrimination in schools that get federal funds. Title IX makes it illegal to exclude students who may be, are, or have been pregnant from an educational program.

## Title IX Basic Rights

- You must have equal access to classes and activities. If your school has special services for students with temporary medical conditions, they have to offer the same services to pregnant students.
  - For instance, if your school records lectures for students who miss class because they are sick, they must do the same for students who miss class due to pregnancy.
  - Another example is if your school allows a student with a broken leg to change their seat or use a different desk, your school must do the same for pregnant students.
- Your college must excuse your absences due to pregnancy or childbirth for as long as your doctor says is necessary. **Schools must reschedule exams missed due to pregnancy or childbirth.** When you return, your college must allow you to return to the same academic and extracurricular status you had before you left. The college must also give you a chance to make up missed work.
- Your college cannot make you to take time off if you don't want to.
- Your college cannot exclude you from a special program because you are pregnant or a parent.
- If your college has a program or activity for students who are pregnant or parents, you get to decide if you want to take part in them. Your college cannot make you attend if you do not want to.

- Your college can make you turn in medical records *only if* they make students with medical conditions do the same. If they do not make students with other medical conditions submit medical papers to take part in a class or activity, then it is illegal to make pregnant students do so.

## School Activities

- You can take part in activities for as long as you want. Your college cannot stop you from joining clubs, going to events, or participating in research, *unless* the school has the same rules for all students who have a condition needing medical attention..

## Classes

- Your college cannot make you change your major or degree program because you are pregnant or a parent. They cannot force you to attend an alternate program, like an evening program.
- If a professor doesn't want you in class because you're pregnant, tell a school official ASAP. You have a right to take whatever course you want if you meet course prerequisites. The school official should monitor the class and make sure the professor does not show bias in grading. Stick with it so you can graduate and reach your goals!
- If students with temporary medical conditions get online classes or tutoring, students who miss class because of pregnancy or childbirth should get the same.

## Remember

This is the least colleges must do to prevent discrimination against pregnant and parenting students. But colleges can and should do more. Some states have laws that provide even more protections or support for pregnant and parenting students. Talk to a lawyer to find out the law in your state.

For more information, please go to <http://nwlc.org/issue/pregnant-parenting-students/> or contact the National Women's Law Center at [info@nwlc.org](mailto:info@nwlc.org).