



Horizon 15

Information bulletin for migrants in Geneva

Education becomes compulsory until 18 years of age

As of the start of the 2018-2019 school year this August, education becomes compulsory for all young persons in Geneva until 18 years of age. A brochure presenting all the new courses and professional training opportunities is available at our information desk, please don't hesitate to ask for it. It is the parents' responsibility to make sure that their child is indeed in academic or professional training between the end of compulsory school and their child's 18th birthday. If you have any questions about these changes, please ask us at your next appointment at CCSI.

Changes in the CCSI team

The team at CCSI has changed in the last few months. Two persons have left CCSI: Christine Pittet, from the school and social follow-up has reached a well-deserved retirement, and Laetitia Carreras, from the Pre-school, health and gender consultation has left CCSI for a new job. We thank them both for all they have brought to CCSI and wish them all the best.

As of November 2018, Camille Grandjean-Jornod will join the team at CCSI in the Childhood, education and health consultation. We look forward to working with her, and thank our former intern, Loïse Sierro, for taking care of the transition with energy and competence.

Here is a text written by our colleague Christine Pittet, for the persons she used to see at CCSI:

Dear families

This summer, I reached retirement age and left my job at CCSI, after 11 years at the School and social follow-up consultation.

Thinking back on all those years, I would like to thank you, the parents, the mothers and the fathers that I had the pleasure to meet. Thank you for your trust, and for sharing your joy, your outrage and your difficulties with me. I am going to miss you! I got to learn about your realities and I wanted to tell you I admire you for your courage and for fighting to give your family a better life. I, for my part, put all my energy into defending your rights, and especially those of your children as best I could. But there is still so much to do! At CCSI I had a job I liked, and that was consistent with my values. I will never forget all these contacts – often easy and always rewarding – that I had with you, families from all around the world, each one with its own story.

Finally, I sincerely hope all of you will be able to build a great life for yourself and your children, be it here in Geneva or in another country.

With all my affection, con mucho cariño,

Christine Pittet

Primary school: registration

Any child living in Geneva, regardless of his/her legal status, has the right and the obligation to go to school. Children born before 01.08.2014 start school on August 27th 2018.

To be accepted at school, your child must have health insurance. CCSI is in charge of affiliation for children without a residence permit. Make an appointment, and come with the official identification for the child and his/her legal guardian, as well as your address. Your child will be able to start school as soon as you have come to CCSI.

School meals for children

If you live in the city of Geneva and your income is within the range, CCSI can request free school meals for your child. Please come with a copy of the health insurance subsidy and valid pass-ports. The request must be submitted by end of June. For residents of other cities, please ask CCSI if financial aid is available.

Once you have obtained the exoneration, you do not need to bring the invoices to CCSI, you can discard them without paying them. Caution, you will still have to pay the fixed fees (*cotisation*), and the meals your child didn't attend without a valid excuse.

Health insurance subsidy

You must request the subsidy (financial aid from the State for health insurance) for your child's health insurance each year. If you haven't done so yet, please make an appointment with CCSI as soon as possible and bring the 2018 insurance policy with you. This year, you need to **provide the following documents:**

- a) If you have family benefits (allocations familiales), you need to bring a statement of the sums you received in 2017.
- b) If you (as an adult) have health insurance, please bring your 2017 insurance policy/ies.
- c) Please bring your bus passes.

If you have a permit or are taxed at source (directly deducted from your salary), other documents may be requested.

As soon as you receive the subsidy, please bring a copy of the certificate to our reception with your name and phone number.

The subsidy is a right based on your income. **Requesting it will not affect other proceedings, such as the request for a residency permit.** Only children residing in the canton of Geneva have the right to the health insurance subsidy. CCSI cannot request the subsidy for children living in neighboring France.

The subsidy covers your child's premium up to 100.- maximum. Every month, you will have to pay whatever exceeds 100.-. If you have supplemental health insurance, you will have to pay for it entirely; it is never covered by the subsidy.

In some cases, it is possible to pay a lower monthly premium. If you already have a pediatrician, you can give his/her name to the insurance or make an appointment at CCSI. She will help you to request a lower premium.

It often takes time for the insurance company to register your subsidy. In the meantime, it is best to pay the first bills yourself (the will be reimbursed later), or to contact CCSI so that we can try to block the bills.

Health insurance: caution!

If a person calls you on the telephone or comes to your door saying you must change insurance or take on a new contract, **DO NOT SIGN ANYTHING!** Contact CCSI for all matters regarding your health insurance.

How to change health insurance providers

Every year it is possible to change health insurance providers, for example in order to lower the cost of your monthly premiums. To change health insurance providers, you must send a registered letter («recommandée») to the insurance company you want to leave before 20 November 2018.

For your request to be accepted, it is necessary to **pay all the bills** from your former insurance (including the one for the December premium!). If you do not pay all the pending bills, the change will not be registered and you will not be able to leave that provider.

Official mail: beware of the deadline!

When you get an official letter about your family benefits or your retirement pension (AVS), it is important to come to CCSI **as soon as possible** to discuss it. Administrative letters often include a strict **deadline** for answering. Once that deadline has passed, there is nothing CCSI can do anymore. Do not wait until the last minute to come see us!

Help for managing your bills

Are you having a hard time dealing with health insurance bills? Do you wonder what the difference is between a "décompte de primes" and a "justificatif de remboursement"? Do you want to know how to request reimbursement for a doctor's bill?

We offer a **free** and **individual service** to help families that are being followed by CCSI manage your child's health insurance bills. You receive many documents from the health insurance provider (policy, benefit statements, refund requests, etc.). It is very important to organize these documents properly, so as to respect payment deadlines. At CCSI, we will help you understand these various documents, and explain how to file and organize your child's health insurance bills.

To access this service, please make an appointment or come directly to the reception at CCSI on Wednesdays as of 3.30 pm. Please note: this service is **only for families who are already being followed by CCSI.**