



Horizon 25

Information bulletin for migrants in Geneva

Family reunification: do not miss the deadline

If you have children over 12 years of age, and that you want to be reunited with them in Switzerland, please note that the time limit for family reunification is very short. If none of the adults in the family are EU nationals, **the request for family reunification must be introduced within the year following the marriage or the obtention of your permit.**

If you are in this situation, please contact a legal service as soon as possible to get help with the procedure. Our information service can tell you about the various legal services available in Geneva.

Back-to-school allowance

The « Back-to-school allowance » (allocation de rentrée scolaire) is an aid from the City of Geneva to help families buy what their children need for school (school supplies, clothes, school bag, etc.). It is delivered via a credit card worth CHF 130.- (primary-school children) or CHF 180.- (children attending cycle d'orientation), allowing you to buy items in certain stores.

Since 2021, all children who live in the City of Geneva, with or without a permit, who attend primary or high school, and whose parents meet the income-related criteria can access this aid.

If you have a file at CCSI, you can ask for an appointment with us so that we can help you request the 2023 “Back-to-school allowance”. The allowance must be requested before end October 2023. On the day of your appointment, please bring a copy of the 2023 health insurance subsidy, your valid passports, and salary slips if you have them.

Information sessions

CCSI organises collective information sessions. They are free of charge, in several languages, and on topics that interest you. The next sessions, in October, will present the administrative steps you need to take after obtaining a permit and the way health insurance works for adults.

To find out the dates of the next sessions, please check the screens in the waiting areas, or our website, where you will find a special tab for information sessions (ccsi.ch/help-and-information/sessions).

Childhood consultation at CCSI: changes ahead!

CCSI's *Childhood, education and health* consultation is undergoing some changes as of September 2023. If you usually see Ms Amanda Schroeder, you will be seen by Ms Tamara Husain, as Ms Schroeder will be absent for a few months. Families with Ms Sandra Garlejo, as well as some families usually seen by others in the consultation, will be attended to by Ms Martina Nunes Da Silva-Tyrisevä. These two new members of our team will take over the work, picking up where they their colleagues left off.

If these changes concern you, you will receive an SMS telling you who will be following your case. Please rest assured that all the members of our consultation do the exact same procedures and will continue to do their best to offer you quality services.



Health insurance subsidy

You must request the subsidy (financial aid from the State for health insurance) for your child's health insurance each year by 30 November. If you haven't done so yet, please make an appointment with CCS as soon as possible. Please note that you will need to bring documents to your appointment to complete the procedure. Reception at CCSI can tell you which documents are needed. If you have a permit or are taxed at source (directly deducted from your salary), please tell reception when you ask for an appointment.

As soon as you receive the subsidy, please bring a copy of the certificate to our reception. The subsidy is a right based on your income. **Requesting it will not affect other proceedings, such as the request for a residency permit.**

The subsidy covers your child's premium up to 114.- maximum. Every month, you will have to pay whatever exceeds 114.-. If you have supplemental health insurance, you will have to pay for it entirely; it is never covered by the subsidy.

It often takes time for the insurance company to register your subsidy. In the meantime, it is best to pay the first bills yourself (they will be reimbursed later). If you are not able to do that, you must contact the insurance or CCSI to try to block the bills.

How to change health insurance providers

Every year it is possible to change health insurance providers, for example 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 2023.

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.

Supplementary insurance

Supplementary insurance (assurance complémentaire, or LCA) are not required. These insurances only cover costs that are not included in mandatory health insurance (LAMal), such as dental care or alternative medicines.

Caution! The **subsidy** (financial aid for health insurance costs) **does not cover supplementary insurances**. If you subscribe to supplementary insurance, all the costs will befall you.

If you have signed a supplementary insurance contract, you have up to 14 days to cancel the contract. If however you decide to keep the insurance, it will be valid three years minimum. After that, if you wish to get rid of it, you can ask for a termination of the contract. Caution, this must be done at least a month before the end of the contract period.

In both cases, you must send a registered letter (recommandé) to your insurance company. If needed, we can provide a model for you. Just ask at CCSI reception desk.

After-school activities

Are you looking for an activity for your child outside of school hours? Are you wondering how to organize for childcare during the school holidays? Do you want to know whether help is available to pay for the costs of these activities?

CCSI has prepared a document explaining the different possibilities for your child, and helping you find the information you need. Please ask for this document next time you visit CCSI, or look it up on our website: ccsi.ch/_/help-and-information/activities-for-children/

Daycare

It is very difficult to find a place in daycare for pre-school children in Geneva. CCSI can help you increase your chances but cannot guarantee a place. If you live or work in Geneva city, go to the Bureau d'Information de la Petite Enfance (BIPE, rue du Cendrier 8). If you live in another area in the canton of Geneva, you must go to the Secteur de la Petite Enfance of your commune – if there is one. If not, pre-register your child in the daycare center(s) closest to your home or workplace. To do so, you must present your child's insurance certificate.

CCSI can write a letter of recommendation to support your request. For this, you will need to make an appointment with the *Childhood, education and health* consultation at CCSI. Please note that there is no guarantee that your child will have a place in daycare. The cost of monthly payments depends on your income. There are currently no financial aids for those costs.

Parascolaire and school meals for children

Depending on your income, you could benefit from **free** parascolaire (after-school) activities, regardless of where you live in Geneva. CCSI can help you with the application, but the **request must be renewed each year** and must be done before November.

Depending on where you live and, on your income, there are also aids for school meals. Ask CCSI if such aids are available for you.